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Fall Fiesta Success Spans the Country

This past October marked the first year of an exciting new CoEd tradition—Fall Fiesta was held in Atlanta, GA and Cincinnati, OH. Together, the two Fiestas raised **over \$80,000** for the Cooperative for Education's programs in Guatemala!

Special thanks go to **George and Michele MacMaster**, who expertly planned the first ever Fall Fiesta Atlanta. With the support of their friends and family, the MacMasters welcomed more than 75 people to Fall Fiesta Atlanta on October 7 for food, drinks, and an exciting live and silent auction.

The line at the 20th Century Theatre was out the door as **over 225 people** arrived for Fall Fiesta Cincinnati on October 23. Patron Hour attendees participated in an exclusive live auction and were treated to a private book reading from Martha H. Peak, the author of

[FYk f\[hb\['h Y: i h fYž](#) an upcoming book about CoEd's work in Guatemala. All Fall Fiesta participants enjoyed live music from Mike Heile and [Travis Flynn](#) while browsing silent auction items worth over \$50,000 in donated merchandise and services.

The Cooperative for Education extends a very special thanks to our [Yj Ybh'gdcbgcfg'UbX g\]YbhUi Wjcb'UbX'fUZZY'Xcbcfg'](#) And of course, none of this would have been possible without the hardworking volunteers who made up our **Fall Fiesta Cincinnati Committee**: Alyssa Deutsch, Karen Gibbons, Gina Lieser, Julie Luebbers, Ed McCarter, Kathy Santen, Rosie Swan, and Erin Swietlik.

Thank you for supporting CoEd's efforts in Guatemala and for making this year's **Fall Fiesta Atlanta and Fall Fiesta Cincinnati** huge successes!

[Check out our photo album from Fall Fiesta!](#)

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Marcelino Axpuc: Once a Skeptic, now a believer in the power of working together to improve the lives of Guatemalan children.

Marcelino Axpuc is one tough customer. When CoEd staff showed up at his school in the town



of Santiago Sacatepéquez in February 2009 to roll out the elementary school's new curriculum. He sat in the back row at the welcome ceremony. His arms were crossed defiantly, a grim look tattooed on his weathered face. He'd seen it all before.

Development organizations show up in his village, make big promises they can't or won't keep, and then move on, leaving the

townspeople to pick up the pieces. Marcelino used to let his guard down. He would, in the past, allow himself to get excited about potential opportunities for his students and their families. But not anymore. He'd learned his lesson.



Sensing his disapproval, CoEd staff members took pains to engage Marcelino and explain how CORP is different from other development projects. Carolyn Johnson, CORP Project Manager, thought it would be an easy sell. After all, CoEd does not engage in dump-and-go development. The organization has a 13-year track record of building sustainable programs and long-term relationships with project communities. Marcelino wouldn't budge.

"Organizations like yours lose interest quickly," he retorted. "Then you leave. We're no better off than we were before."

Carolyn and her team persevered. They conducted their training, showing the teachers how to read books to their students and engage them in active classroom learning. Surprisingly, Marcelino attended every session, and took copious notes.

Training over, it was now time for the teachers to go back to their classrooms and practice what they had learned. But first, the CoEd team handed each participant a stack of 12 high-quality children's books. Marcelino couldn't hide his surprise, or his enthusiasm.

"Other organizations tell us what to do, and some even show us how," he explained. "But they don't give us the tools we need to be successful. Imagine telling a poor carpenter to build a house, but not giving him a hammer."

Carolyn could sense some major cracks forming in Marcelino's steely façade.

The CoEd training team traveled back to Santiago Sacatepéquez three months later to conduct follow-up training and classroom observations. All teachers—especially Marcelino—showed a remarkable grasp of the CORP concepts they had learned. And the students seemed actively engaged and interested in the learning process.

In September, Carolyn visited the community again to deliver its final round of training. As she set up her presentation materials, Marcelino approached her. Choking back tears, he thanked Carolyn, and CoEd, for bringing CORP to his community. "My kids are reading!" he enthused. "And for the first time, they care about school. And their parents do, too. This program is going to make such a big difference in their lives. CoEd is the best thing that has ever happened to us."

Marcelino has agreed to help CoEd train other teachers entering the program. He has even filmed some instructional videos demonstrating CORP techniques, such as how to hold a book (face forward, so that the kids can see the illustrations). Who knows? In his new role, Marcelino may even manage to convert a skeptic or two.

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Looking for gift ideas for the upcoming holidays? You can now support CoEd's educational programs in Guatemala by purchasing two great items for everyone on your list.

Book: Rewriting the Future by Martha H. Peak

Join Rotarian and CoEd volunteer Martha H. Peak as she travels to Guatemala with CoEd to share engaging stories of the lives and dreams of the children and youths in CoEd's programs,, accompanied by beautiful, full-color photographs. Travel to Guatemala in the comfort of your living room!



[Order your copy of Rewriting the Future today](#) for just \$25!

- **Great gift for:** anyone who has been on a CoEd Tour, people considering going on a tour, or anyone interested in learning more about CoEd. And don't forget to get a copy for yourself!
- **Cost:** \$25, includes shipping.
- **Bonus #1:** All proceeds benefit CoEd.
- **Bonus #2:** Free signature and inscription by the author! If you would like the book inscribed, please indicate the desired inscription in the comments section of your online payment.



Xavier X-Shirt

Support CoEd through the purchase of Xavier University's X-shirt. Each year, the university unveils a new design for their fan t-shirt. This year, Xavier chose Cooperative for Education as the beneficiary of the proceeds from the t-shirt sales. Shirts can be purchased from [Xavier University 's website](#) for only \$18, with 100% of the proceeds supporting CoEd.

- **Great gift for:** the Xavier Fans in your life, and anyone who wants to support education in Guatemala.
- **Cost:** \$18
- **Bonus:** 100% of the proceeds benefit CoEd.

When you get these great gifts for your friends and family (and yourself) you'll be giving the gift of education to children and youths in Guatemala.

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What Inspires Your Tour?

Relive the life changing experiences of the Cooperative for Education's most recent Snapshot Tour! Told through the voices of the volunteers who live out the CoEd mission, this video will have you clearing space on your calendar for the next Project Tour!

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Join the CoEd Network!

Want to stay connected to our mission in Guatemala? It's easy with social networking sites such as [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Become a fan of our page on [Facebook](#) and tell your colleagues, friends and family.

We also recently launched our twitter account, where you can receive updates on events, sponsorships and more! Follow us [@CoEdNews](#).

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