



Nicaraguan Children's Friendship Committee
September 2013

Dear Friends:

This year, NCFC celebrates its 10th year of transforming the lives of impoverished students in Nicaragua through educational and personal growth opportunities.

Featured in this newsletter are success stories of two NCFC graduates, Kathia & Jairo. I had memorable visits with them during my May trip to Nicaragua. Over the years, I've witnessed their heartaches, triumphs and growth.

Their journeys from poverty to self-sufficiency demonstrate the ways that NCFC is making a lasting impact. Their accomplishments are a tribute to NCFC's generous donors and supporters.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, students and Nicaraguan teachers and counselors, we thank you for helping us reach this ten-year milestone! Thanks to your generosity, 42 students in Nicaragua are completing their educations, learning new skills, and gaining the confidence to grow into self-sufficient adults!

Sincerely,

Veronica Sanchez, President

NCFC Board of Directors

Veronica Sanchez (President), Jody LeWitter (Secretary),
Raul Hernandez (Chief Financial Officer), Jeff Bornstein
Nanci Clarence, Dr. Sophia Chang, Maria Cordero and Dinah Stroe

EMPLOYED!

Kathia, former resident of Casa Jacinta Shelter for Abandoned Youth, works as a Librarian



We met Kathia when she was 13, abandoned and sent to live at Casa Jacinta by child protective services. NCFC supported her with funds for educational and personal expenses. This May, Kathia completed her vocational degree in Office Administration and a three-year English course. Her strong computer and English skills helped her obtain this job with Pan y Amor Foundation to set up a digital library. Now, Kathia pays for her own living expenses and tuition for Saturday law school classes.

Kathia succeeded in breaking the cycle of multi-generational poverty because NCFC gave her intensive, individualized support throughout her teen years. It took seven tough years but at last Kathia is happy, self-confident, and optimistic about her bright future.

Kathia writes: "From an early age, I struggled to confront problems and overcome obstacles. Everything I've accomplished, I've done so with the help of God, NCFC, and my personal sacrifices. I refused to be defeated!"



EMPLOYED!

Jairo Antonio, NCFC's Carpentry Apprenticeship Program Graduate, Works as a Public Accountant at Peanut Processing Plant

"The carpentry program was the bridge for me to continue my studies. It opened the door for me to get jobs," says Jairo.

In 2008, Jairo completed a year at NCFC's Carpentry Apprenticeship Program, "Los Caminantes." He continued working with other program graduates on home repairs, commercial jobs and woodcrafts. He funded his college courses in public accounting and computers with earnings from a home remodeling project.

Jairo (25) is married and has a two-year-old daughter. He is a positive role model for NCFC's 18 scholarship students. He recently told them at their monthly meeting: "Often, the only obstacle is oneself. There are times when you only need a pat on the pack to move forward and believe in yourself."



Jairo attributes much of his success to Professor Juan, NCFC's dedicated teacher at the Carpentry Program.

SEE BACK FOR HIGHLIGHTS OF NCFC'S OTHER PROJECTS

FROM CRAFTS TO COMPUTERS

“These girls are talking about converting bits to bytes, bytes to kilobytes, kB to gB, gB to Terabytes, it’s amazing!” writes Professor Lenin on NCFC’s website. Mr. Lenin tutors high school students from NCFC’s Las Esperanzas High-Risk Girls Project and other NCFC scholarships students.

In July, three high school students from Las Esperanzas and a 21-year-old student from the Carpentry program started a six-month intensive course in computing at a private vocational school. The girls attend a public high school with no computer access, so this course will prepare them for future studies and the workplace.



Perla Veronica shows embroidered tablecloth NCFC bought them because her mother, a fruit juice vendor, could not afford the \$80 cost.



Perla Veronica needed prescription eyeglasses to attend computer classes. NCFC bought them because her mother, a fruit juice vendor, could not afford the \$80 cost.

The girls were ready for this new challenge having mastered the art of making pleated uniform skirts and piñatas. They love their math tutorials and are prolific commenters on NCFC’s Facebook page (check us out at facebook.com/ncfckids). Prior to completing Las Esperanzas Literacy Program, two of these girls had dropped out of elementary school and were selling food in the streets and recycling plastics at the garbage dump. Today, they enthusiastically talk about becoming math teachers and a pharmacist.



MORE NCFC NEWS

Scholarship Students Start Community Service

To instill leadership skills and a sense of community responsibility, the NCFC has begun to connect our 19 scholarship students with volunteer opportunities in their barrios. They tutor neighborhood children, help the elderly, and more. Two students are helping NCFC’s administrator with bookkeeping and the Facebook page.

Ivania graduated from Las Esperanzas in 2010. This August, Ivania started the three-year accelerated English course taken by Kathia. She said: “By learning English I will be able to read labels on medicines and the latest health information.”

Mother’s Day Fiesta for NCFC’s Board President, Veronica Sanchez

Complete with piñata, pizza, cake and a boom box, NCFC’s students organized a surprise “fiesta” in a student’s backyard for their honorary mother, Veronica Sanchez. The oxen and their owner were her guests.

This special picture is dedicated to all of NCFC’s donors who make these lasting memories possible for our 42 students and 8 dedicated teachers. MUCHISIMAS GRACIAS!



Ivania, a third-year nursing student, volunteers on Saturday afternoons taking blood pressures at her home in her neighborhood.



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