



SHOULDER TO SHOULDER SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Shoulder to Shoulder Scholarship Program Update

“Muchas Gracias por su Apoyo”, “Mis Más Sinceros Agradecimientos”, “Dios le Bendiga grandemente”, and “Estaré Agradecida con Hombro a Hombro” are frequently used phrases by students on their thank you notes to sponsors. If you don’t know Spanish, the students are expressing their sincere appreciation for the support they have received and the opportunity to continue their education.

As we get ready to celebrate Thanksgiving here in America, we want to express our gratitude for your kindness and generosity toward the scholarship students in Honduras. Thanks to your support in 2016, we were able to provide scholarships to 127 students from remote villages in Santa Lucia, Concepción, Camasca, Santa Antonio and Magdalena. The community of San Antonio is new this year. Although it’s more difficult to reach because of its geographical location, the need is great there.

Every year we receive so many requests from parents and students needing support. **How do we select students?** All the students in this program are carefully screened, taking into consideration input from local board members, key community leaders (including the mayors of each community) and teachers. Home visits are made to assess their

financial capacity. All of our students come from very humble backgrounds where their parents’ main source of income is farming (no monthly/ steady income). In most cases, it’s barely enough to meet their family’s most immediate needs. Some students come from multifamily settings and/or their parents have alcoholism problems. Once they finish 6th grade, most of these students would be forced to work in the fields to help provide for their younger siblings.

We are very proud of our students. Even with all the challenges they face on a daily basis, they do their best to succeed. Several of them will be celebrating their graduation at the end of this month with high honors. They will be receiving a three-year degree (equivalent to a HS diploma in the U.S.) in areas such as: computers, community development, nursing, teaching and small business development. This will enable them to apply for a salaried jobs and eventually help themselves, their families and community. (continued on page 2)



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THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Shoulder to Shoulder recently celebrated 25 years in working in the same region of Honduras, which is contrary to so many organizations that come and go. This region has been changed in a positive way thanks to dedication and hard work of so many American volunteers partnering with locals to improve the lives of the people in Intibucá. Without Shoulder to Shoulder's long term commitment and your generosity, these students would never had a chance to pursue their dream of continuing their education beyond six grade.

Thank you so much for your continued support. The school year in Honduras will start in February, and we will need to confirm our commitments to existing and new students in the program very soon. As you review your year-end giving, we ask that you please consider sponsoring a student in Honduras again. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

With Great Appreciation,
Fide Gehner

Several of our students made it to the honor roll in their High Schools and were given the privilege to march on the Independence Day parade.

HONOR ROLL STUDENTS



Jessica Sorto, 1st Place Magdalena



*Sindi Martínez
with 98% GPA
Santa Lucia HS*



*Francis, 2nd
Place Magdalena*



*Gifted
Musician*



Graduandos de Concepción

shown above
José Ernesto Laínez Argueta, left
Jairo Alejandro Romero, middle
Juan Martínez, right



Graduandos de Magdalena
shown right

* Detección y notificación por vectores (Chagas, Malaria, Dengue, Leptospirosis)
- Vacunación canina.
- Atención o/ y Estabilización de Emergencias.



Graduandos de Camasca

Edilson Reyes, left
Emma Zelaya bottom, left
Edy Naun Sorto, below
Martha Díaz, right



**NOVEMBER IS
GRADUATION
MONTH IN
HONDURAS**



15 YEARS OF HARD WORK! WHAT IS YOUR STORY?

I was born in 1989 in El Ocote, one of the most remote villages of Concepcion. I have six sisters. My parents came from a very humble background. Their only source of income was farming. They were only able to help us get through primary school (6 grade) In 2001, I graduated from primary school with excellent grades. I really wanted to continue in school, but I knew my parents couldn't help. I've always been a hard worker and optimistic person. I then started working as a housekeeper in order to help my family meet its basic needs.



Fermina transmitting a radio program about education, its importance and overcoming challenges.

In 2006, I moved to Magdalena to work for a couple – both teachers. In 2010 (four years of savings) my dream of continuing with my education began. It was very difficult at first. I was afraid that too much time had passed and that I was too old to be in school. This is where the challenge really began. Working full time as a housekeeper and studying at the same time wasn't easy, but my dream of going

to school (overcoming poverty) was greater than my fear. Despite so many challenges, I was able to finish three years of secondary school in Magdalena.

MEET OUR COORDINATOR IN HONDURAS DAMARIS QUINTERO

Damaris is our scholarship coordinator in Honduras. She has done a great job making sure the students had what they needed in order to finish the year strong. She doesn't mind traveling several hours by bus to a bigger city to purchase shoes, uniforms and school supplies for the students. Then she distributes them among the five communities. She also provides training and mentoring classes for the students throughout the year.



In 2013, with generous support from Shoulder to Shoulder's scholarship program I was able to move to Camasca to start my professional career in Information Technology. Within a couple of weeks, I will be receiving my diploma. Thank you STS scholarship program donors for lightening my load and helping me reach my dream of finishing high school. I will forever be grateful for your support!

Fermina Diaz



The Benitez family lives in a remote village in Concepcion. They lost their mother due to cancer. She left six children behind. Her father was going to take them out of school. Teachers were sad to see their education come to an end, especially knowing that they all had very good grades. Shoulder to Shoulder through the scholarship program is giving them an opportunity to continue with their education. They receive a monthly stipend to pay for transportation and food. They also receive school supplies and uniforms.

Olivin, Nelly and Wilmer Benitez



YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

There are many ways to give:

- ✓ Automatic monthly giving through your checking account is the most sustainable and easy way to provide ongoing monthly gifts to support the students in Honduras. For \$38 a month, or \$450 annually, your donation provides a child with an entire year's worth of education, including books, supplies, transportation, uniforms, housing, and after-school support. Gifts of less than \$450 are combined to provide as many full scholarships as possible.
- ✓ Online at www.shoulder-to-shoulder.org Donate/Support Local Scholarships
- ✓ Workplace Match or Stocks
- ✓ Mail – a check can be sent to our accountants at:

Shoulder to Shoulder,
c/o: Pohlman & Talmage CPAs, Inc.
3445 South Dixie Dr., Suite 200
Dayton, OH 45439

*Write "Scholarship Program"
on the memo line*



San Antonio, 10 students



Concepción, 25 students



Camasca, 52 students



Magdalena & St. Lucia, 35 students

SHOULDER TO SHOULDER SCHOLARSHIP STUDENTS

We also have five students at the university level.

Please provide us with your current information and include with your donation. !Gracias!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Check enclosed. Please make checks Payable to Shoulder to Shoulder.

Please charge my American Express, Discover, Mastercard or Visa. (circle one)

Account # _____ Expiration Date _____