

When Laura and I visited the US during Christmas 2015 we took a small detour to Princeton, NJ. A local television station wanted to do an interview of us. On our first day there, Jenny, the woman who would interview us, took us out to lunch at a local deli. Laura and I were overwhelmed upon entering the deli. Shelves of food products were stacked from floor to ceiling. Lines of deli, cold cases displayed various types of meats and fish, pastas and salads, pastries, and who knows what else. This much food in one place was too much for our minds to process. When we walk into an eating place (restaurants really only exist in the cities) in Concepción or any of the other small municipalities of the Frontera, we don't see a menu or any food. The first question is what they have. They list two or three things and you decide. At this deli in Princeton, NJ, Jenny nudged us to ask what we wanted for lunch. We stood stiff, literally hypnotized by the volume of food and abundance of choice. She nudged us again. Both of us answered anxiously, "Ham. Is there any ham?" Well, of course there was ham. There was about fifty varieties of ham, and another thirty different breads, plus the cheeses, and the myriad of condiment choices. Thankfully, Jenny recognized how lost we were. She gently led us through the process and we had a delicious, nutritious meal.



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Food Security

The incident is anecdotally comical, but it is tragically sad considering the global inequities that underline it. Food security here on the Frontera, smack in the middle of the Dry Corridor, has been exasperated by climate change resulting in severe, regular droughts. It is fairly simple to understand. Crops die before harvest. People who generally have little food and little income now have less food and less income. They're hungry and vulnerable. The scarcity of food leads to a plethora of disease. Children are the most victimized. Nutrition deficiencies yield reductions in body weight and height ("stunting"), cause anemia and chronic diarrhea, and increase rates in morbidity and mortality. These are the easily documented consequences of a lack of food security. What happens to children's minds and hearts when they are gripped in chains of hunger is a terrifying question.

Shoulder to Shoulder has recognized that unless we address this primary problem, other health interventions and other developmental interventions, are as useless a response to hunger as Marie Antoinette's proclamation, "Let them eat cake." Thankfully, we have a response.



Since 2008, the Mathile Institute for the Advancement of Human Nutrition has partnered with Shoulder to Shoulder to provide nutritional supplements to children living in poverty and under the threat of limited food security. In those eight years, the MANI (Mejorando La Alimentación de los Niños de Intibucá) has progressed through four phases. This past year we laid the groundwork for MANI IV with a

census project to gather base-line information on children and families to best discern an effective intervention. By March of this year we had completed the census and we have just signed our contract with Mathile to begin MANI IV, a nutritional supplement program aimed at over 2800 children in over 100 communities. This comes about because of the ongoing commitment of Shoulder to Shoulder to overcome the disparities that impoverish and oppress, the passion of the Mathile Institute to reduce child morbidity and mortality as a result of nutrition deficiency and inequality, and the integrity of one young woman.



Kate Clitheroe

Kate Clitheroe grew up in Oregon. She graduated from the University of Notre Dame in 2011 and Washington University in St. Louis in 2015 with a Masters in Public Health. She has worked in and out of Honduras for the past five years, including a nutrition program in NW Honduras with World Vision, nutrition research in Haiti, and coordinating the Holy Family Surgery Center near Tegucigalpa. She came to Shoulder to Shoulder in May 2014. As Director of Programs and Research she has done it all, having her hand in almost every aspect and program of our mission. But her heart has been in the sustained development of bringing about food security on the Frontera. Because of her efforts of last year and her continuing work, we have all moved much closer to making food security a reality.



MANI Training

For the census, in the challenging, mountainous terrain of Colomoncagua, Kate gathered, employed, and trained 45 persons from the government sponsored program Vida Mejor (Better Life). She and the team conducted interviews and marked homes with a GPS tracking system, collecting data from 2,500 homes (12,000 people) or about 75% of the population. The project, funded for one year, was completed in six months. The success of the census project has given the Mathile Institute confidence to approve the implementation of MANI IV. Kate has already begun the initial implementation of MANI IV.

Chispuditos is the name of the nutritional supplement that will be delivered to children between six months and six years of age. This particular phase, MANI IV, will terminate in August of 2017. The data collection will be analyzed alongside of data collected among control groups, children receiving other

products of nutrition supplements or none at all. With the completion of this product and the results of the study, the groundwork will be laid for the establishment of a prolonged and sustained initiative.



MANI training

Thank You Kate for the constancy of your talent and your heart. Hunger, particularly hunger among children, is not something that our world should tolerate.