



## SHOULDER TO SHOULDER, INC.

Association Hombro a Hombro  
Camasca, Intibucá, Honduras  
[www.shouldertoshoulder.org](http://www.shouldertoshoulder.org)

### YEAR END REPORT: 2019

We are coming to the close of a very successful year that featured continued success in Education, Nutrition and Brigades plus a number of smaller legacy programs.

#### Finances

The total cash on hand as of 12/30/19 is \$280,199. The program budgets for 2019 and 2020 are \$281,645 and \$271,633 respectively. Our overall cash balance continues to be stable and consistent with our objective of having cash on hand to fund next year's programs. However, we have some program specific shortfalls that we expect to address through grant awards expected and fund raising activities. We created a new category to capture the robotics programs and STEM Center since this is an area of future focus and investment and merits separation from CREE.

#### Education

Education is a large and growing program consisting of Scholarships, Bilingual School, Sponsorships, STEM initiatives in Robotics and Math Olympics, and a program to improve local public schools (CREE).

**Scholarships – (High School and Designated University Students)** Fide has brought this program to a great place. The annual budget is about \$45,000 and it looks on track to be fully funded prior to the beginning of the year.

**Bilingual School (BLS)** - The bilingual school now provides K-6<sup>th</sup> grade completing the build out of the primary school. We face continued headwinds against the vision of an advanced school with stable operations. Additional work is urgently needed to fulfill the objectives. See separate Issue Sheet on BLS, attached.

We successfully resolved the future of the BLS graduates by working with Profe Emelia Lemus to create a special Advanced Track at the colegio. This was accepted by the parents, but not without considerable discussion about building more at the BLS. Our 6<sup>th</sup> grade graduates will have a dedicated classroom at the colegio with an extended school day. They will have English language instruction in Math, Science and English. The parents agreed to continue paying their monthly contribution. This will fund the extra teachers and StS agreed to furnish educational technology and continue to roughly match the parent contributions.

**Sponsorships** – We created the BLS to provide a higher quality bilingual education to students in the area regardless of the income of their parents. The Ministry of Education provides teachers and parents contribute to cover the balance of expenses. Parents who cannot afford to pay contribute funds provide services like cooking and cleaning, but there is still funding needed. Shoulder to Shoulder operated a

sponsorship program to support students whose parents cannot afford to contribute cash. Sponsor picks a child from photos on our website ([http://shouldertoshoulder.org/?page\\_id=3300](http://shouldertoshoulder.org/?page_id=3300)). Sponsors get letters from the children several times per year. We need sponsors for about 10 more students or about \$10,000 per year in order to get the school on a sustainable basis. If you know of people who might be interested and capable of sponsoring a student, please reach out to them.

**Improve Local Schools (CREE)** - The overall program (CREE) to provide technology based curriculum support. Our in country staff have accomplished outstanding results now reaching almost 4000 students in 30 Jr/Sr High Schools, elementary schools, and kindergartens. They developed an impressive review of this year's work and plan for 2020 distributed previously. They obtained the signoff by the Minister of Education of digital rights for all text books used in Honduran schools. This means that our educational technology program will be delivering exactly what is required in all Honduran schools. The staff is currently enriching these digital textbooks by supporting the text lessons by videos sourced from the Khan Academy and other public domain sources. The team hosted a visit from key members of Learning Equality (LE) supplier of first KA lite and now Kolibri. This resulted in closer technical support by LE. We are working on digital support for literacy and have assigned a new staff person to focus on this. Finally, we have an agreement being developed with World Vision and the Minister of Education for delivery of English language Instruction.

**Grants to Expand CREE** – We received a \$15,000 grant from the US Embassy in Honduras, an additional \$7500 tranche of hardware grant from LE and a private donation of \$10,000 for equipment. We have additional proposals filed and in development. Additionally and perhaps most impressive, we are seeing communities stepping up to partially fund Kolibri for their area.

**Support for Math and Physics Olympics** – This is a program run by the Honduran government that seeks to stimulate study of mathematics. Students from the frontera generally do not have textbooks and have to travel long distances to get special training to compete. In addition to our work directly in the schools, we are supporting the Math Olympics with tablets loaded with Khan Math lessons. While students from the frontera did not medal this year, we were again over represented at the national level. An enterprising teacher in San Marcos used our educational technology to entry the Physics Olympics as well as to qualify himself for a higher level teaching position. We will be looking to better organize the frontera participation in these STEM events and install a Honduran leadership structure for the frontera.

**Robotics** – This year saw the continued success of our First Global Team plus the maturing of our local Lego based competition. Our First Global Team traveled to Dubai and placed 15<sup>th</sup> out of 190 competitors. The LEGO competition was held in Santa Lucia with eight teams competing and many teachers, parents and even a few mayors in attendance. Next year's competition will be held in San Antonio. Minsis is managing the LEGO robotics program and her strategy is to create a local teacher led organization that will manage all aspects of the competition with Shoulder to Shoulder's role reduced eventually to sponsor. We would like to double this program in 2020 and institute a municipality based competition prior to the AMFI level finals. We are in need of Honduran contribution to support the

national team. Absent a new source of funding, we plan to concentrate the robotics program toward Lego's and VEX at the new STEM Center. This will enroll many more children for the expense.

**Work Study** – Each year, we work with teachers to recruit students from local schools who show aptitude and willingness to put in additional time to advance their studies. We hire these students to assist our full time staff in completing repetitive configuration tasks for tablets and other work to support CREE. This helps our staff and gives the students additional skills that will enhance their employability. Below are photos of recent student workers:



**STEM Center** – We have a commitment from Camasca to construct a STEM Center and advanced robotics Center. Interestingly, under Julio's leadership, they found a government agency with the mission and apparently budget to do build such a building. Construction planning is proceeding and we hope to have the building on line by late spring in time to attract engineering volunteers. Final costs estimates are being prepared for Board approval. See separate Status Report of this project.

**New Web Site** – due to the large number of activities within education, we have created a new website in addition to our main one, called <http://robot.hn/>. It contains information about robotics of course, including photos and bios of this year's team. It also information about the broader CREE program as well including information about the schools we are in and pictures of the kids using the technology.

## Brigades

<b>Year:</b>	<b><u>2017</u></b>	<b><u>2018</u></b>	<b><u>2019</u></b>	<b><u>2020</u></b> <i>(Projected)</i>
<b>Travelers</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>140</b>

Reduction in brigade volume is due to the loss of three brigades: Wyoming (2x year) and Surgery brigade. Wyoming will not return (due to the retirement of Brigade Leader). It is doubtful that Surgery Brigade will return due to the inability of the medical operation to recruit and prepare patients. At an estimated profit of \$400/traveler, that is a profit of approximately \$50,000 from the brigade program.

We obviously hope to get more brigades, but that is difficult, due to the State Department warning. We had one new brigade in 2019 – St. Mark’s Residency, Utah. We also have made new relationships with Lehigh Valley Hospital Residency (taking 1 of their residents); University of Southern Florida (taking 1 of their Medical students); Atlantic Health Residency (taking 1 of their residents); and University of Massachusetts (taking 1 of their DNP students).

## Nutrition (Mani)

We are providing micronutrient supplements to 2800 children in three municipalities. Mathile Foundation awarded us a grant of \$55,000 worth of Chispuditos. This will allow us to continue the program until August, 2020. We have developed regression analytics which systematically remove noisy measurements and a linear regression that shows statistically ( $p < .001$ ) improvement in Z-scores versus control as a function of time receiving the supplement.

However, the strategic direction of Mathile has changed. The Mathile family hired a new CEO, Oscar Dussan. His three year mission is to get the program to a paying basis. We have a strategic choice to either terminate the program or transform it into a business wherein we import and resell the product. We have developed a separate Issue sheet dealing with the future of Mani, attached.

## Dental

The Tepe’s have completed the transition to private practices. Both dentists are seeing more patients than ever, making more money than their previous salaries. Idalia Ramos has private dental practice, drawing patients from La Esperanza over paved road. Dr. Floricia (Flor) Amaya has completed her education as an orthodontist, and has moved back to Santa Lucia to resume a full time general dentistry practice. She also works in an orthodontic practice in Las Esperanza on Saturdays.

Tepe’s have continued to raise funds. Currently, there is \$53,000 in the bank. The Bilingual School dental prevention program continues. They have also expanded their prevention program to Las Delicias.

## Medical

The medical program again teetered in and out of crisis with the government underpayment payment that resulted in staff missing salary for over 4 months. Drug debt continues to be a burden, but accommodations are being worked and there are promises of improved payment next year.

The principal focus of our fundraising is towards education and nutrition. These are largely free of government constraints and are attracting community participation and funding. Nevertheless, we continue to provide what assistance we can to the Convenio.

### Assistance provided to Medical during 2019

1	<b>Well in Santa Lucia:</b> The Convenio stated that they had obtained funds from the mayor of Santa Lucia, for a well. They needed \$3000 more to complete the project. In July, two donors provided these funds. As of November, the well still was not working, because it lacked a pump.	\$3,000
2	<b>Pap Tests:</b> A donor provided funds so that the Convenio could pay down some of their \$5000 debt to the lab.	\$1,000
3	<b>Brigades &amp; Medications:</b> StS hosted 12 brigades in 2019. On average, each brigade provided \$1000 worth of medications to the communities.	\$12,000
4	<b>"Families in Need"</b> -- In January, a donor provided \$10,000 for special needs identified by the Convenio. \$3000 was initially provided, with a request for an accounting of how the funds were spent. In July, an accounting was received, showing that \$1000 had been spent. The Convenio was advised that once they spend the remaining \$2000, they would get another \$3000. To date, they have not provided any further accounting.	\$10,000
5	<b>Vision Care:</b> Provided transportation and lunch to bring 25 Health Promotors and Supervisors to the Lions' Club in La Esperanza -- so they could learn about eye care services and bring this info to their communities.	\$356
6	<b>Medications</b> -- Donation of \$5000 was received in July 2019. Funds not used yet, because donor categorized the funds as a "loan" and the Convenio has not accepted them, because they do not know when that they can be paid back.	\$5,000
7	<b>Overlook Hospital Foundation:</b> In December, this program provided \$5000 to StS to purchase medications for the Convenio.	\$5,000
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$36,356</b>

## **New Logo for Niños**

Shoulder to Shoulder has created “Hombro a Hombro Para Los Niños,” a new Honduran legal entity to operate nutrition and education. This will shield future assets like brigade trucks from any possible judgements arising from the government contract. This is the last step in the separation of our government business from our charitable business. We have a new logo for use in “Los Niños” which have family resemblance to the existing Hombro a Hombro, but is distinctive enough to create clear separation. This would be used on our “donations” trucks and in local correspondence. The attached Issue Sheet outlines additional background information and choices for the logo.

## **Staff**

With the scope of the program and the travel limitations of most of the Board members, it sometimes is easy to get behind in knowing all the people who deliver the day-to-day results. Paul and Sandy have returned to the US but they continue to help the robotics program. Kate Clitheroe has moved on to work full time for One World Surgery, <https://oneworldsurgery.org/> and is now based in Oregon. She continues to offer support and collaboration to potential surgery brigades. Grace Twohig now works for Common Hope, <https://www.commonhope.org/>. They do similar work to Hombro a Hombro in Guatemala. Grace continues to help by taking equipment into country for us and explore collaboration opportunities. Nely Vasquez completed an assignment with the bilingual school and has now joined CREE. Below is a gallery of photos that will introduce or reintroduce our staff to you.

Thanks for everything you do for the organization!



President



*Laura and Dick enjoying a laugh with the teachers from the Urbana school.*

**Laura Manship:** Executive Director. Responsible for all administrative functions in the US (Finance, Programming, Staffing, Brigades, BLS Sponsors, Fund Raising and PR). Travels to Honduras 3 times/year.



**Mariela Rodriguez** (on right): Assistant Director. Started July 1, 2018; lives in Honduras full-time. Works closely with Laura, to ensure that all programs run smoothly.



**Edel Andino:** Information Technology Director. Hired June 2018. Edel graduated in Spring 2018 with a degree in Elementary and Middle School Education. He is self-taught in reading, writing, and speaking English. (Edel Jr was born in Dec 2018.)



**Iris Giron** (left): Community Development Coordinator, Pinares (San Marcos de la Sierra) and Guachipilincito (Concepcion). Hired in September 2017. This position is fully funded by VCU and Brown University (StS receives supervision/admin funds). Iris is fully bilingual in English.





**Damaris Quintero** (left): Coordinator Scholarships Program, hired June 2015. This program is fully funded by donations, raised by Fidelina Gehner.



**Gustavo Meza** (right): Brigade Coordinator (hired August 2017). Gustavo is self-taught in reading, writing, and speaking English. [Gustavo's son, Alan Garcia, is on the left. Alan often serves as a translator and/or driver brigades.]



**Gisela Ramos** (left) and **Sandra Diaz** (right): Coordinators of the MANI (Nutrition) program. Employed on “year to year” contract; started May 2016.



**Nely Vasquez:** Teacher’s Aide, Bilingual School Jan-Nov 2019. In December 2019, hired into the position of Educational Advancement Assistant. Nely completed a 2.5 year program at the Leadership Center, where she learned to read, write, and speak English.



**Minsis Ramos:** Coordinator of Educational Advancement and Finance. Graduated from John Brown University, Arkansas, May 2019. Previously worked with StS on Yo Puedo and then worked with StS during each summer break (education, finance, and brigades). Started full-time June 2019.