



### ■ A letter from our Founder-Steve Dudenhoefer

## Dear Friends

The last six months have been challenging for Ak' Tenamit. In April, the Guatemalan Ministry of Education decreed that due to the Covid-19 pandemic we send our 800 boarding students back to their 200 rural communities to continue their studies via distance learning. Most of our students come from remote jungle communities that don't have electricity and many are a several hour hike from the nearest road. Our teachers have done a great job in keeping our students engaged and up to date on their studies. Multidisciplinary teams composed of groups of our teachers, social workers, and agronomists have been visiting students in their villages on a rotating basis to support them in their ongoing education. The teams have been trained to follow strict protocol regarding the use of protective

equipment and social distancing, and they have become an essential lifeline between our students and their continued education.



Our students have played a vital role in helping community members avoid contamination from Covid-19 and they have helped in the dissemination of factual information regarding its prevention. They have helped community members build hands-free handwashing stations and produce homemade face-masks from old t-shirts. In order to increase access to healthy vegetables and to increase food security they have also planted vegetable gardens with heirloom seeds. We're so proud of the difference that our students have made in their communities, helping to keep their

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families and community at large safe and healthy. Guatemala's healthcare system was very weak even before the pandemic so it's especially important to avoid the families we serve from becoming ill as Guatemala's hospitals are over-saturated.



In Guatemala, the school year runs from January to October but we plan on continuing to support our students distance learning until December in order to maximize their focus on education and to increase their level of skills and knowledge. For the new school year, starting in January, Guatemala's Ministry of Education has determined guidelines that require hybrid learning, with students rotating in two groups between distance learning in communities and on-site learning at our boarding facilities. This mandates that at any given time only half of our 800 students will be on-site. The ministry has also required that we modify our classroom and dormitory infrastructure in order to allow for proper social distancing.

The region we serve has the highest rate of pregnant girls between 10 – 14 years-old in Latin America and a high rate of boys involved in illegal migration and the drug trade. Without access to our innovative vocational education and comprehensive support, we

know that most of our students would face very bleak futures. We urgently need help in order to adapt our classroom and dormitory infrastructure to comply with social distancing regulations and to purchase low-cost tablets and solar charging stations so that students can keep up to speed with their studies when back in their communities.

Due to their tremendous work ethic and the hard and soft skills they learned at Ak' Tenamit, our graduates that were furloughed from their jobs due to Covid-19 were the first ones hired back. As most had used part of the salaries to start small businesses in their communities, while furloughed they were busy strengthening their little shops, chicken farms, fruit tree orchards and Tilapia ponds. Due to the pandemic the 120 students that will graduate from our vocational high school on October 31st will enter a very slow job market, but due to the fact that they will graduate with 3,000 hours of hands-on experience, we project that we will be able to place at least 65% with good jobs within the 1st three months of graduation.

Your faithful support over the years has made a tremendous difference in the lives of the rural indigenous children and families that we serve and during this unprecedented pandemic your support is more important than ever.

Thank you for the difference you make in Guatemala.

In Service,



  
**Steve Dudenhofer**  
Founder and  
Chief Technical  
Advisor

## ■ Gunnar & Gerda Lofstrand-A Donor's Journey



After retiring, we wanted to see more of the world. In 2002, we decided to visit Latin America. We contacted a Swedish travel agency KonTiki-resor (KonTiki Travels). They helped us to set up a four week tour especially for us. The first week was spent in Antigua brushing up our Spanish with private teachers. During

the second week our guide Olga Slowing drove us around to indigenous areas such as Quetzaltenango, Chichicastenango and Panajachel. Olga was an outstanding guide who shared her deep knowledge of the history and life of the Guatemalan people. We were deeply moved by the insights we got into the life of the people. When we said goodbye to Olga, we asked her to find an organization supporting children in Guatemala, an organization we could trust. After parting from Olga, we went to Flores and Belmopan on our own. The last week was spent in Belize. When we were back in Sweden from this fantastic journey, we got a message from Olga recommending Ak'Tenamit. We are very happy that we took her advice. By the way, we googled "Olga Slowing" and found that she has studied history and archeology and still works as a guide.

## ■ Solar Powered Tablets Campaign-150 for 150!



Our students are in need of solar powered tablets to aid in completing their school assignments. Can you help with our campaign? Our goal is to purchase 150 tablets at a cost of \$150 each. If you are interested in contributing, please add a note to your check or online donation that says Tablets 150/150.

These tablets are a lifeline to many students and indigenous families, who are currently

struggling. Many of their community's struggle with abject poverty.

The majority of Guatemalan families lack even the most basic of services, including toilets, food, health care, and job opportunities. Our school helps keep many children from dropping out to support their families. Even so, sadly, fewer than 20% make it to high school. Across the country, stable employment is hard to find for most adults — even more so for youth. As a result, more than 50% of Guatemalans live below the poverty line with 43% of children under the age of 5 suffering chronic malnutrition.

Ak' Tenamit is working to break the cycle of poverty and create lasting change for the youth of these communities.

That's why these solar powered tablets can mean the difference between a life of progress, or one of poverty.

## ■ Honoring the Life of a Special Donor-Bob Teitler



Bob Teitler was a faithful supporter of Ak' Tenamit's "We Must Educate the Girls" program for over 20 years. From his home in rural Colorado, Bob ran Manuela Imports, a small company dedicated to importing Hacky Sacks (small crocheted footbags) used in a game popular with college students. Bob sold these items at Sports Authority stores across the US

by placing them in jars by the store's cashiers. Bob paid the mostly single mothers that crocheted the Hacky Sacks in Guatemala well above average wages, and he shared the lion's share of his profits with Ak' Tenamit to support the education of rural at-risk indigenous girls. Living as sparsely as possible in a cabin in the Colorado mountains, with no electricity or phone, Bob focused his energy on providing a living wage for the Guatemalan women that made his products, and providing a bright future for the girls studying at Ak' Tenamit's jungle campus. Bob's deep voice and grizzly bear stature were offset by his gentleness and compassion. Bob recently passed away from Covid-19 a month short of his 80th birthday. We always looked forward to his visits to our jungle school with his daughter Sophie, and he will be truly missed by all.

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## ■ Donor Advised Funds

Please include The Guatemalan Tomorrow Fund (EIN# 65-305897) in your estate plan by naming our organization as a beneficiary of your donor advised fund, retirement plan, IRA, or life insurance policy. You can also have your annual IRA distribution, or a portion thereof, donated to GTF without tax implication. Choosing any of these options is as simple as filling out a beneficiary designation form from your plan provider or administrator. Talk with your financial advisor today about the best option for you. With a planned gift you ensure that we are here to support our students and that your legacy lives on!

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## ■ Sponsor A Student **Transform** A Life!

Ak' Tenamit's practical, vocational education, 3,000 hours of job experience, and personal motivation prepare graduates to succeed in their rural environment, and inspire them to help their families and their communities. For just one dollar per day (\$365 per year), you can transform the life of a young person who would otherwise be trapped in poverty.

**The Guatemalan Tomorrow Fund, P.O. Box 3636, Tequesta, FL 33469**  
Phone: 561-747-9790 | [info@thegtfund.org](mailto:info@thegtfund.org)

**WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!** Donations are tax-deductible as permitted by law and processed through a PCI Compliant Data Security Company. The Guatemalan Tomorrow Fund is the US based, non-profit, non-denominational fund raising arm of Ak' Tenamit.

