



■ July 2023-Highlights of Ak 'Tenamit's Strategies for Female Students Employment



Dear Friends,

Over the last few years, an increase in crop loss due to a rapidly changing climate in Guatemala has provoked a sharp increase in malnutrition and the death of children from malnutrition, the irregular migration of youth from Guatemala to the United States, adolescent pregnancies, and the forced marriage of young girls. We recently completed an in-depth analysis of the factors that were putting young rural indigenous girls at risk, and we were very alarmed to find that the Q'eqchi' Mayan region that we serve has the highest rate in the Americas of pregnant girls between 10 and 14 years of age. Our graduates tend to wait until an average age of 26 to marry and have children. We have seen firsthand that the best way to ensure that rural indigenous girls will be able to reach their full potential is to make sure that they are able to continue their education and to graduate from high school with a good job. Parallel to an increase in the need for our services in Guatemala, we have seen a reduction in donations, making it difficult to find ways to help those that need our support. Our students continue to try to produce as much food as possible at our school farms,

and restaurant schools, and our jungle lodge provide much needed income, but we urgently need your support to respond to the growing need in Guatemala.

Because of your faithful support thousands of at-risk youths have graduated with good jobs in Guatemala. Our female graduates are independent and able to assume leadership roles in their communities instead of being the victims of forced marriage and gender-based violence, and our male graduates are able to support their families without attempting dangerous migration to the United States. Our graduates help protect Guatemala's pristine rainforests, providing biodiversity benefits that reach far beyond the country's borders. Many of the song birds and birds that eat bugs on food crops in the US migrate through Central America, relying on these forests for safe haven and food.

Thank you for the tremendous difference that you have made in the lives of the students and families we serve in Guatemala, and for your ongoing support.

In Service,

Steve Dudenhoefer
Founder and
Chief Technical Advisor

■ Ongoing Contributions of the Catholic Church



Over the past 30 years parishioners from Catholic churches in South Florida have made a tremendous difference in the lives of the students and families that we serve in Guatemala. Generous parishioners at St. Patrick Church, St. Vincent Ferrer Church, St. Christopher Church and Holy Cross Church have helped us feed our students with the proper nutrition. This in turn, assists them with proper study habits. Monsignor Tom Skindeleski has led countless pilgrimages with Florida Knights of Columbus to our school in the jungle

where they have worked side-by-side with our students building school furniture and teaching English. We are truly grateful for this faithful support.

■ Donor Spotlight-Guy & Kimberly Demoret



Rotarians Guy & Kimberly Demoret made their first trip to the Ak' Tenamit Rio Dulce campus in February of 2022. Both are native Floridians, retired Air Force engineers, and have traveled extensively throughout Europe and the Middle East. So, what to expect on a Rotary trip to Guatemala? According to Kimberly, “we were both deeply moved by the great work being done at the school and wanted to do more.” Impressed by the students, staff, curriculum and campus, Guy and Kimberly asked what

they could do to help. Steve explained the great need for an upgraded and expanded boy's dormitory with the Demorets on an eight-hour road trip from Rio Dulce to Antigua. Guatemalan Tomorrow Fund board member, Riccardo Boehm, was also on this trip and a few months later, a plan was put in place for a \$50,000 match campaign. After the campaign was confirmed, Chicago area Rotarians were contacted and agreed to form a 27-person team to build the new dorm. The workgroup arrived in May and completed the buildout of the new 200 bed boy's dorm with the help of Ak' Tenamit students and staff.

The Demorets have options as to where to focus their giving strategy. They have chosen Ak' Tenamit for several reasons. Leverage and return on investment lead the list. Guy shared, “donating to the school not only keeps boys from migrating, it is reducing forced marriages for girls, creating gainful employment, and contributing to the economic needs of the student's families.” “It is a win-win situation and we proud of our involvement.” In closing, Kimberly mentioned that the Rotary theme for 2023-24 is “Create Hope in the World”, and as a couple they feel they are contributing to that goal.

Construction of the New Boy's Dormitory

Our students are elated to see the completion of a new dormitory that will house 200 boys. Last year, visiting Rotarians completed a new girl's dormitory, and our boys have been hoping for get a new dormitory in the future. The dormitory was financed through a matching fund, sponsored by Guy and Kimberly Demoret and was constructed by a group of Rotarians from the Chicago area led by the Buffalo Grove Rotary Club. The Rotarians worked alongside our students to build the dormitory and bunkbeds. This was a wonderful opportunity for Rotarians to build lasting relationships with our staff and students, and for our female and male students to learn basic carpentry skills. Our students providing sweat equity to build their own dormitories, classrooms and furniture helps increase their self-esteem and a sense of ownership of the school. The Rotary work teams plan to return next year to build a new dining hall for our female students and we already have a long list of students that have signed up for this project.



■ Student Spotlight-Girl's Computer Skills-Lab & Certification



Basic computer skills are vital for young people entering the workforce, and in Guatemala rural indigenous girls suffer the most from the digital divide, as very few have ever been able to use a computer. In order to ensure that our female students graduate with the certified computer skills needed to get good jobs, we have implemented a solar-powered dedicated computer lab for our female students. This computer lab is located at the girl's boarding facility at our Father Moran Vocational High School campus along the banks of the

Rio Dulce River in the jungles of eastern Guatemala. The computer training center is open in the afternoon and evenings during the week and all day Saturday and Sunday in order to provide access to girls when they are not in school. In addition, girls also receive regular computer classes at our high school campus together with boys, but this dedicated computer lab for girls will help level the playing field and make sure that they are fully competitive when they enter the job market.

■ 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

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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.



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