



## ColombiaCare Progress Report - #3– December 12 2004

ColombiaCare supporters,

The following is the third report of ColombiaCare to its donors and other interested parties. Again, we want to thank you all for your support. With this report and future ones, we want to assure you that your help is already at work!

This was our first year as an official organization approved by the IRS. We are very pleased with the results we had in terms of fundraising and with what we accomplished in Colombia. We also learned a great deal and we hope to apply those lessons to make our organization more efficient

Before we go into the report, we want to mention that if you need a certificate for your tax returns, please let us know by responding to this e-mail with an address where you would like the certificate to be sent. The IRS requires a certificate only for donations of more than \$250. However, if you prefer to have one for your records, let us know. You can also use, as appropriate, our EIN: 20-0076096 for your documents.

**Projects:** As you recall from our previous reports, we finished the remodeling of the Altos de la Cruz School. It was very rewarding experience to see the smiles of the children in the pictures they sent us.

Since we finished that project, we have been working with several organizations in Colombia to define the next projects. We have very strict criteria in order to work with an organization. We want to make sure we have a very well-defined project, including a working plan and budget, that they can prove everything that is done with receipts and pictures, and that we have very reliable and frequent communications. Perhaps because of this, it is taking longer that we all wanted (one of the lessons learned is that the pace in non-profits is much slower than for-profit organizations) to start our next project, however, we prefer to wait a little but be sure of what we are doing.

We are making progress with two proposals we have on the table:

- 1- Second phase and follow up of the Altos de la Cruz School. We should be receiving a detailed proposal by the end of the year. We had a very good experience with the organization we worked for the first phase and feel confident that we can trust them. Very unfortunately, the person leading the organization and his wife died tragically this month in an airplane accident. However, others in the organization are continuing to work with us.
- 2- Refurnishing of four houses for abandoned girls (ages 6 to 16) who are hard to adopt because of age, race or physical or mental disability. Each house homes 10 girls and an adult-guide. Depending on the girl's situation they either go to school



or receive some training at a workshop also run by the organization. The houses are managed by nuns in the order Teresa Toda. The organization is approved by the Colombian government. In fact, most of the girls are brought to these homes by Bienestar Familiar – a government agency that is the equivalent of a Social Department in the US. The houses are located in Bucaramanga, in the North-East of Colombia. Bucaramanga is also one of the cities that have had an influx of families running away from the armed groups that are in the neighboring mountains. Girls are the most vulnerable among of those displaced families.

The refurbishing of the houses would include replacing pillows, mattresses, sheets, covers, etc. which are in very poor condition and also some repair to the houses. The estimated budget is between \$5,000 -\$10,000

We are evaluating these two projects. We recently turned one project down because it wasn't within our objectives and criteria. Two other organizations have contacted us, but have not sent their proposals yet. We hope that we will start at least one of these two projects in early 2005.

**Fundraising:** Active fundraising has continued. We now have close to 20 Colombian volunteers helping to collect donations. Several of those volunteers have coordinated events or done individual canvassing to collect funds. As of today our year-to-date revenues are \$10,530. We feel that this is very good, given that this is our first year operating and all the money comes from individuals.

We have also introduced the organization to the Colombian communities of New Jersey and New York with a very positive acceptance. ColombiaCare is now a member of the association of Colombian organizations in New Jersey – this organization provides mutual support to the various organizations and helps to coordinate events. We are also in the process of doing research on foundations that would support the type of projects we sponsor to write grants for those projects. This is also one of the areas in which we have a great deal to learn but we've started to make progress.

At the end of this year, we realized more than ever how important your support and trust has been. If it wasn't for you, we wouldn't have accomplished what we have. It is your generosity that re-energizes us and maintains our dream to improve the chances for a better future to some Colombian children.

We wish you and your families a very safe and joyous holiday season and the best for 2005.

If you don't want to continue to receive our reports, please respond to this e-mail.

ColombiaCare Board of Directors



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