

ColombiaCare Progress Report - #16– February 2010

ColombiaCare supporters,

The following is the sixteenth ColombiaCare report 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 generosity is making a difference!

If you missed a report and/or would like to see the previous reports, you can find them on our home page <http://www.colombiacare.org/>

Carlos and Victoria Perez are spending part of the year in Colombia; last year they were there for over four months. This longer stay has allowed them to see first hand the progress and impact of ColombiaCare projects.

Projects

Girls-Soccer Project

As you may recall from our previous report, this project responds to our concern that girls are the weakest link in the cycle of poverty that exists in the area we work with. This project seeks to give girls self-esteem, discipline, drive, rewards and a sense of setting objectives for themselves, through sports. The project started in January 2009.



Currently, there are 35 girls from 10 to 16 participating in the soccer project. The girls love to go to the training sessions and games. Some of them have to walk one hour each way to go to the training and it is very rare that they miss one. In fact, there have been occasions when they cannot come due to some family situation, and they would call asking for help to solve their problem so they can go. For example, one day that Carlos and Victoria went to see them training, a 10 year old had called crying that she couldn't go to the training because she had to stay home and take care of her two younger siblings. Fortunately, at least for that day,

the coordinator was able to arrange for a neighbor to help out so the girl could come to the training.

As part of the project we took the girls to an outing. The place we took them is a recreation center located two hours from the city. For many of these girls this was the first time they had gone on this kind of trip. The place has several swimming pools and a restaurant. It was clear that again for most of them this was a first. The joy expressed and the behavior of these girls that day is something that we will



never forget. These girls that have so little are mature beyond their age, very well behaved, enjoying every little thing. "... the best day of my life.." "this is like the ocean.." (there was also a lake, but most of them have never seen the ocean),..."I never had so much fun.." "thank you so much for given us this day.." those and many similar comments came from them all day long. It was a humbling experience to share this day with them.

We couldn't be more impressed - not only with their soccer



skills, they are playing very well - but with the dedication and maturity of these girls. They know that this is an opportunity for them and they are taking full advantage of it. It is very obvious that they are developing a sense of pride, team work, and drive that wasn't there when they started. The attrition rate is very low; only three girls have dropped out because their families moved to another place. This project is one for which we can say without any doubt that we are meeting our objective and that it is having a very real positive impact in this group of girls. We hope to continue with this project and expand it to more girls. The budget for this project in 2009 was \$8,500.

Gato de Monte Project

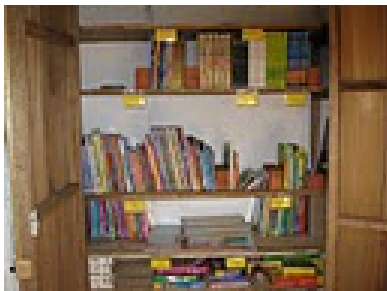
Near where Carlos and Victoria live while in Colombia, there is a small village with about 70 children between the ages of 5 and 12. These are mainly indigenous people who have left their mountain villages as result of the Colombian conflict. There is a small school for the younger children with only two classrooms. The older children go to a neighboring village school. We started a library and an after-school program. We took advantage of a small unused building next to their small school for this purpose. With some of the monies we received in honor of our friend Marsha (see previous report) we bought the books for the library and created another "Rincon de Marsha" (Marsha's Corner). We also paid for paint and for tables and chairs. The community leaders are very supportive of this project. In fact, they did the painting and repairs.

One of the first activities of this project was to make a mural with the children. Outside the school there is big wall that was very neglected. With the help and guidance of Hernan Tobon, a good friend of ColombiaCare who happened to be in Colombia at that time, the children painted the



mural. It was a wonderful day, the children had a blast and the result was a beautiful mural that anybody that goes by admires. The children love to point out the drawings they did.

We also had an inauguration of the library with the community and started the After-School



program. The expectation is that the community will continue to manage the library and several mothers will work with the children after school. When returning this year, Carlos and Victoria will assess how the community is doing and continue with their participation in the After-School program.

The budget for this project in 2009 was \$2000.

Moving forward

As mentioned in our last report, at this point we depend on individual donations and small events to support the projects we have. Therefore, we appreciate more than ever your contributions and continuing support.

We want to remind you that if you need a proof of donations for your tax returns, please let us know by responding to this e-mail with an address indicating where you would like the certificate to be sent. The IRS only requires a certificate 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 Employer Identification Number (EIN): 20-0076096 for your tax documents. As we said in the previous report, it is your generosity that re-energizes us and maintains our dream to improve the chances for a better future for some Colombian children. We have seen concrete results and we all should share the pride of our positive impact.

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

ColombiaCare Board of Directors