



ColombiaCare Progress Report - #9– December, 2006

ColombiaCare supporters,

The following is the ninth 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/>

We continue with our efforts and with our successes. Our relationship with Cali's JERA Foundation continues to be very productive and stronger each time. It really give us a great deal of relieve to know that we have people in Colombia that are managing the projects with the same sense of responsibility and desire to have positive impact as us.

Two new grants

We have again excellent news this time. We received grants for two additional projects.

- 1) One grant is for the continuation of the Vocational training project we finished in June of this year. This time the training will be in various areas of *carpentry*. As in the previous Vocational project, the objective of this project is to provide vocational education to young people to give them an opportunity to improve their lives. The targeted young people are between 15 to 19 years of age, who are neither going to school nor working. They are wandering the streets, very likely getting in some sort of trouble. At this point we are finalizing agreements with local organizations to use their facilities and ensure their participation. The training program structure will be very similar to the welding training we finished in June. That is, in addition to the technical training, the students receive training in work ethics, team work, job interviews, etc. We expect to finish all of the preparation at the end of this year and begin the program January 15, 2007. For this project we obtained a grant of \$81,000.
- 2) The second grant is for a program targeting adolescent mothers. A very vulnerable population in the area we have several of the projects, is teenager girls. They are used and abused by many. It is not unusual to find exploitation of these girls by their own families. The age of many girls who are either pregnant or have babies is alarmingly young. Unfortunately, ignorance and lack of opportunities make them easy target. Teenage pregnancy is very high, increasing the vicious circle of poverty, family violence, crime and high young and infant mortality. The project's objective is to facilitate pre- and post-natal care to teenager mothers, provide education on how to care for the babies and how to assume the responsibilities that come with having a child. In addition, the project will provide training and assistance to ensure they can generate some income. Specifically, we are setting up a facility with knitting machines. We will provide a program to train these young women to use the machines. In addition, we are establishing agreements with some local enterprises so they buy the products made by these young women. We are finishing the adaptation of a facility and at the moment there are 25 young pregnant women or mothers registered to start early in 2007. For this project we obtained a grant of \$36,000.



Ongoing projects

Below there is a brief summary of each on-going project. We really encourage you to go to the appropriate links to see the pictures in our site. We want to share with you the pleasure of seeing those beautiful smiles.

Improving Communications Skills Project

This is one of our favorite projects because the results have been so encouraging. It really confirms that our efforts are worthy. As mentioned in our previous report, given the great success we had last year with this program, we decided to continue it during the academic year 2006-2007. ColombiaCare's contribution is \$8,000.

The objective of this project is to improve the reading, writing and communications skills of the children in the Communes we are working with. These communes are in the outskirts of Cali. We are working now with a school in which most of its population is black children whose families have been displaced by the ongoing Colombian conflict. Their culture and background presents different challenges than the school we worked with last year. For this project we are also working with final-year students of Education and Phonology of a local University. The enthusiasm and dedication of these young University students has been one of the keys for the success of this program. You can see the children and the University students in "action" at the following link: <http://www.colombiacare.org/projects.html#communications>

Homework Clinics:

As we mentioned in our previous report, we started during the summer this project. This is also a grant-sponsored project. This project has been a hit with the children. The objective of the program is to provide a safe and stimulating environment after school. The program helps and guides the children in doing their homework and stimulates the use of talents in areas such as music, art, dance, reading, and writing in the children. The program is being implemented in two different community centers. This has the additional benefit of involving the community in the program and therefore, ensures its continuity. For example, the homework support is being done by young people from a local high school. The various activity groups such as music, dance, story reading/telling, and painting are also being conducted by people of the community. We provide the program design, the materials and supervision of the programs. We also fixed the facilities where the programs are taking place. You can see some of the pictures and activities in the following link: <http://www.colombiacare.org/projects.html#Homework>

Fundraising:

The group of volunteers that supports us continues to be very active. We had another "Viejoteca" in NYC –(Sunday-afternoon dances in some restaurant in NY) in October. We also had December 9 a Bingo-Dancing party in NYC that was very successful. Those events have generated close to \$10,000.

Your donations are welcome any time. You can make a donation directly from our page. Don't forget that you can also give donations as a gift for others. See our home page for more information <http://www.colombiacare.org/>



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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