



United by Friendship

News

Learn more on line at: www.unitedbyfriendship.org

"I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve."

Albert Schweitzer



My spirit is relit with each journey to Guatemala where I am inspired by individuals in action.

Baltazar Santiago is one such individual. He works full time as the County

Manager for Uspantan. He studies at the university on weekends and volunteers his time as the On-Site Coordinator for UBF. Baltazar is of Mayan ancestry and is fluent in several native languages. UBF volunteers have been astounded by his diplomatic skills as he adeptly mediates conflicts that erupt among and within communities. He is articulate, well organized and tireless in his mission of assisting communities in achieving their goals. The success of the UBF projects is largely due to the efforts of Baltazar.

It is with deep gratitude that the UBF Board and volunteers salute Baltazar for keeping our inner flames lit by his example and uniting with us in friendship to meet our common goals.

- Deborah Simon, UBF President.

Computer Lab for Junior High School

Morning dawned crisp and clear on April 26, 2007 in the quiet little mountain town of Uspantan, Guatemala. The team of eight dedicated UBF and Rotary volunteers that had arrived the evening before, eagerly began their day at the town's community center. The spacious room filled as Mayor Victor Hugo Figueroa, several county commissioners, village leaders, school teachers and students gathered. The room was alive with the affectionate chatter of old friends reuniting and enthusiastic introductions of the newcomers.

Following a welcoming ceremony, each UBF volunteer presented a box of school supplies, brought with them from the States, to ten area school representatives.

The Mayor then requested that the volunteers follow him, single file, from the community center to the nearby Junior High where as they entered the grounds, festive music filled the air and 450 uniformed students, lined both sides of the pathway. They applauded as the UBF team walked the red carpet to their seats, a prelude to the inauguration of the new computer lab. The computer lab classroom was built by members of the Uspantan community with UBF funds and computers donated by Rotary clubs. The faculty and students sang the Guatemala National Anthem followed by speeches of thanks and entertainment, provided by the students.

A delicious lunch of pepian chicken was served while UBF volunteers were also honored with gifts of appreciation. After lunch the volunteers, local dignitaries, teachers and students gathered around the new computer lab to watch as the Mayor and Deborah Simon, President of UBF, cut the ceremonial ribbon. It was

an exciting and joyful day as everyone imagined the educational opportunities that the new computer lab will provide the students of Uspantan, Guatemala. "I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve.



"At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within."

—Albert Schweitzer



YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

United by Friendship depends on the generous gifts of people and organizations who have an interest in community development in Latin America and promoting goodwill with our neighboring countries. We invite you to help make a lasting difference in the lives of hard working people.

For those who donate \$500 or more, a special recognition marble tile with your name, or the name of whoever you would like to designate, will be placed in the wall of the Xejuyub School.

Please know that all donations are welcomed and deeply appreciated.

Please complete and mail back the enclosed donation card and "relight the flame" for a very worthy community!



United by Friendship

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XEJUYUB NEEDS A NEW SCHOOL

The families of Xejuyub (pronounced She-hoo-ee-oob), located in central Guatemala, understand that education is key to reducing poverty and increasing opportunity.

Although family income averages only \$13.00/Mo, several years ago Xejuyub built a one room elementary school for their children out of corrugated

tin roofing materials. With dirt floors, no windows and no ventilation, in the heat of the day one feels as if he/she is in a sweltering tin can.

In 2007 UBF was asked to partner with Xejuyub to build a two room, cement block, schoolhouse, with kitchen, windows and a cement floor at a total cost of \$14,333.00. Xejuyub is responsible for \$1,666.00; the local county government will provide \$2,000.00, and UBF will assist with the remaining \$10,666.00. Please consider donating to this project in a community where education is so highly valued.

Donors who contribute \$500 or more will have a commemorative marble tile, with the name of the donor, installed in the wall of the school. This is our way of saying "thank you" for making an investment in the future of the local children.



CROSSING BORDERS

United by Friendship is a small nonprofit 501C(3) organization composed of volunteers whose mission is to strengthen communities in Central America by partnering with them on projects related to water, education, health and economic development. UBF visits the communities and with them determines which projects to support. Friendships, understanding, trust and goodwill are built as we work together.

