



Roots of Change Foundation
Source de développement
18 Years of bringing hope to people in need

Summer 2023
Newsletter

Doctor Massiel Ivett Aguilar Murillo - Satellite Clinics Program

The Satellite Clinics Program was started in 2002 by Father Denis in association with the St. Joseph's Hospital in Comox BC. The program, now in its 21st year, offers medical assistance to some of the poorest barrios in Managua at little to no cost to its patients. We would like to share with our readers this biography written by the doctor who currently serves the clinics.

My name is Massiel Ivett Aguilar Murillo. I was born on May 30, 1981 and grew up in the Los Brasiles barrio, a very poor area within the City of Managua. Thanks to my parents, I graduated as a doctor in 2007 from the National Autonomous University of Nicaragua in Managua.

In my early years and while attending university, I was formed with the idea that my profession was to help those who needed it most. In 2009, two years after graduating, I met Dr. María Julia Canales who was a member of FUNDACCO at the time. She opened my eyes to a beautiful place where I have now been for the past 14 years, learning the most exquisite life lessons one could ask for. I consider FUNDACCO the best school, where I have been able to fulfill the dream of helping people without expecting anything in return.

Having met Father Denis Hébert, who invited me to be part of FUNDACCO, has allowed me to contribute to the organization in different ways over the years. I've held different positions on the Board of Directors while attending as the primary doctor at the clinic. Currently, I'm the doctor responsible for the Primary Health Satellite Clinics.

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Nicaragua, a Sponsor's Perspective

In March of 2023, my husband and I were thrilled to be able to return to Nicaragua for the third time. This trip was different in many ways. Instead of it being a mission trip, it was a vacation. Instead of travelling with a group, we were travelling alone. Knowing that all our stops included meeting and staying with people we trusted, gave us peace of mind.

In 2017, we were billeted with the Carrazco family in La Carreta and upon learning that they had two young people heading to university in 2018, we encouraged them to apply for a Scholarship through FUNDACCO. Fortunately, we were able to support both Yeirin and Erwin through this scholarship program as they pursued post-secondary degrees in English.

Through technology, we stayed in touch throughout the duration of their degree program. Texts at first were short and simple as Yeirin practiced her written English and her reading via my written responses. Over time, her language became more comprehensive. We learned about each other and prayed for each other's families when the needs arose, especially during COVID times. Slowly and surely, we became closer.

The Carrazco family very graciously hosted us in their home once again. However, this time, we were friends, not strangers.

And, we had our very own interpreters! We felt at home as we laughed and shared many stories and photos with each other.

Noticing many changes in La Carreta was exciting. There were fresh coats of paint, new houses were being built, the Catholic church was finished, and a new business had been established to make clay bricks. It looked like they were employing approximately a dozen people.

While we were happy to see the new developments, we were also saddened to hear that many young people are leaving Nicaragua to pursue employment in other countries. There just aren't many opportunities for good jobs at home. **Continued on page 2**



Brick Kiln in La Carreta, Nicaragua

~Project Update!~ June 2023

La Carreta School Electrical Upgrade



This project is underway and fully funded by a group of donors in the Olds/Trochu area of Alberta. The supply of electricity to this school of 6 teaching classrooms and 1 room for academic management is necessary to assist teachers and in learning for the students

Message from the President

The following are excerpts from my June fundraiser presentation.

Our theme tonight is a quote from Saint John Paul II

“The poor should be seen, not as a problem, but as a people who can become the principal builders of a new and more human future for everyone.”

How do the poor bless us?

Just this week, a young man told me that he had found deep everlasting joy in sharing his time and resources with the less fortunate in our midst. When we take care of the poor, we know we are doing God’s will and He in turn blesses us with contentment, joyfulness, peace, and a sense of wellbeing that allows us to enjoy life and be truthfully thankful for all that we have. Giving time and money to the poor nourishes our soul and gives it rest from the constant longing for contentment.

In stark contrast, another young man I know was complaining just this past week that he was working so hard to acquire the “Good Life” and was falling further and further into debt due to all the “stuff” he had purchased for his family. The stress of having to work even more every day to pay for the credit card purchases and for desiring all the new “good life” stuff being advertised was really getting him down. He was not joyful like the other young man I spoke with. How sad to waste one’s life chasing happiness where it doesn’t exist, buying so called “good life stuff” that leaves us empty and more restless than ever.

Friends, family, and the poor and their real needs are a gift to us. They allow us to share our great wealth, so that we can find peace and contentment doing our Father’s will.

By opening our hearts to the plight of the poor and destitute, our attention and purpose in life shifts to that of loving your neighbour as yourselves. I venture to say that by actively loving the poor, we stir up something deep inside that enables us to love ourselves by elevating our lives to that of a Spirit filled, joyfully, satisfying life of love and dedication to do God’s will, which is that we would live life to the fullest by becoming one with our poor brothers and sisters and consequently with God as He abides with the poor.

Yes, what a great gift we receive when we open our hearts to help our brothers and sisters in Nicaragua find and sustain hope for a better tomorrow. This better tomorrow is more visible when your donations enable FUNDACCO to complete projects that relieve the burden of poverty. We, the donors, get to rejoice when we hear stories of families and communities able to have proper latrines, running water, cooking facilities etc.

Brothers and sisters, the path to true happiness and everlasting joy is in sharing what we can, whether it be our time and talents on various charity boards or our financial resources to these organizations, and our daily prayers for release from oppression for our brethren the poor.

Thank You to everyone for making our Annual Fundraiser such a success. May God bless you with the joy that surpasses all understanding
David Fréchette

Nicaragua, a Sponsor’s Perspective cont’d from page 1



Meeting with community leaders was also a reminder of the great need that still exists in La Carreta and throughout Nicaragua. Basic needs that we take for granted.

Even with the successful water project completed in 2017, there are new needs for upgrades to keep the water flowing. Also, approximately 75 outdoor latrines are either in need of repair or replacement. Finally, the women in La Carreta have heard about the eco-stoves that have been installed in other communities. They desire to have them installed in their homes so they don’t have to breathe in the toxic fumes from their wood burning ovens. How many of us here in Canada have to worry about water, toilets and safe stoves?

Reconnecting with our family in La Carreta was a great blessing! Most importantly, it renews our desire and hope, that with the help of others like you, we can make some of these projects a reality in La Carreta and in other Nicaraguan communities.

Marian Cloutier



From left - Rick Cloutier, Osmar Carrasco, Victorina Ordoñez, Yeyrin, Marian Cloutier and Erwin.



Observing the love that Father Denis had for the people of Nicaragua and his dedication to helping the poor taught me that my work had to be done with quality, dedication, affection, and a lot of love.

It is thanks to Father Denis that I am in a place where I have enjoyed the smiles of thousands of children who initially were fearful of a doctor but now, after being treated, have the confidence to say the next day, "here comes my doctor".

The satellite clinics are a place where families have the confidence that they will receive the help needed to solve their children's health problems. These defenseless children in the poorest neighborhoods of the City of Managua, in many cases, have been abandoned by their fathers and mothers who have had to emigrate in search of a better quality of life. Children are often left in the care of grandmothers or aunts who come to the clinic knowing they will receive the medical help needed for the child at little to no cost.

My time with Fundación Acción Comunitaria (FUNDACCO) over the years has allowed me to grow as a human being, sensitive to the needs of the most vulnerable. This is why I sincerely thank and invite donors to continue supporting this beautiful project
Dr.Massiel Ivett Aguilar Murillo

~Project Update!~

Father Denis Pre-School - Los Lomitas



During a delegation visit to Nicaragua late in 2022, an individual recognized the advantage an iPad or other make of tablet would be for the teachers and students at this small school and provided funding for the purchase

As part of their mandate as a Charitable Society in Nicaragua, the 5 member volunteer Board of Directors are made up of 3 people from the community and 2 from within the FUNDACCO organization.



From left - **Pedro Pablo Pavón** - President, **María Julissa Canales** - Vice President, **Harol Osmany Andrades** - Secretary, **Massiel Ivett Aguilar** - Treasurer, **Kenia del Carmen Tijerino** - Fiscal.

Living the Legacy - A Five Part Series

This year marks our 18th year of bringing hope to the people of Nicaragua. While most of our readers know that the Roots of Change and FUNDACCO were formed to continue the missionary work of our founder Father Denis Hébert, few know about the seeds that were planted many years prior to make it happen.

In the next issues of the newsletter, we will be highlighting our beginnings through the biographies of five individuals who will share with readers a bit of history about themselves and their association with Fr. Denis before our organizations were formed.

Living the Legacy Part 1- Luis Enrique Cruz Mora

I was born on April 6, 1980, on the Isla de Ometepe Department of Rivas, the youngest of 12 siblings and the only one who managed to study at university thanks to having received a university scholarship at the beginning of 1999. From the age of 12, I worked helping my mother in the cultivation of basic grains to feed our family. During the 5 years of high school studies, I worked in the fields from 6:00 am to 10:30 am and studied from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.



In 1996, I met Father Denis Hébert for the first time on the Island of Ometepe. He had organized training sessions through the Union of Agricultural Cooperatives, to promote human development among young people. Then, in the year 2000, when I had finished two years of studying Accounting at the university in Managua, I was walking through one of the streets of the Managua and met Father Denis Hébert. He was very happy to see me, and he invited me to eat a pizza. We talked about my studies, about my family, his work and then he invited me to visit him sometime.

Upon my visit, he asked if I would like to participate in his work so I agreed to help him at night and on weekends in the accounting of the projects he carried out with children, youth, women, community organizations and small farmers in the Somotillo area.

In 2005, together with other young people from the Edgard Lang neighborhood where I lived, he invited me to organize "Fundación Acción Comunitaria"- FUNDACCO. We met twice a month with the objective of formulating the objectives we wanted, writing goals and regulations that the organization should have.

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Living the Legacy Part 1- Luis Enrique Cruz Mora cont'd from page 3

In 2009, for the second time, I received a new scholarship and studied "Social Work and Management" sponsored by Father Denis Hébert. The focus was to have a better vision of the nature of social work, getting a better understanding of people's needs and do a better job, not only with numbers, but understanding people from their history, their environment and their vision of life, not to change it, but to help them be better every day.

How could I inspire others to be an important element of their own change for the better? Little by little, Father Denis began to have more confidence in my work, but especially in my own person. For me, that meant more responsibility in the decision-making process of FUNDACCO. I no longer only supported the preparation of the reports but I actively participated in the meetings, many of them. Father Denis sometimes did not agree with my decisions. However, he always taught me to act fairly and correctly with people, that being one of his main principles as a Priest.

Currently, 8 years after Father Denis passed away, with the support of a work team and a Board of Directors, I direct FUNDACCO. I do the accounting, I visit the beneficiaries of the projects in the communities, I review the projects and their budgets. I coordinate with the Roots of Change Foundation delegations to our country with the aim of having social exchanges and developing projects that help families in the communities so that they can have better living conditions. The best school I attended was 16 years that I shared with Father Denis! I consider him a father who was not present in my childhood, a friend, a brother and especially a spiritual guide. He is still present in every moment of my life, in every project and activity of the Foundation.

Many thanks to each of you for listening to these words that I have written.

Luis Enrique Cruz Mora

2023 June Fundraiser

The Board of Directors would like to sincerely thank all those who attend this year's Fundraiser and made it a tremendous success.

With donations in excess of \$34,000 we exceeded our goal this year.

THANK YOU!



~SSVP Project Update!~

San Benito Agricultural Colony



As part of St. Vincent De Paul's Twinning Program, Ontario Conferences are sponsoring yet another project that will see the installation of 13 latrines and 22 water purifiers in this community.

~Project Update!~

NICA Community Preschool



The NICA Community Preschool receives monthly funding from FUNDACCO to help offset their operating costs.

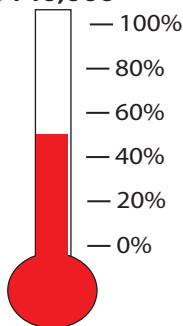
This year marks the **10th anniversary** of the program.

The Board of Directors wishes to thank all of our donors for making this 'Ongoing' program a success.

Fundraising Goal

2023

\$140,000



Donations to June 30

\$72,450

51.7% of Goal

A sincere thank you to all who continue to support our **Mission of Hope**

For more information www.rootsofchange.ca

Please help by supporting this ministry of hope

2022-23 Board of Directors

Officers:

President - David Fréchette

Vice President - Rod Valdes

Secretary - Lucille Damer

Treasurer - Mel Kammerer

Project Administrator - Ken Handford

Donations - Jocelyne Durocher

Directors:

John Schile - Scholarships

Angy Spiller - Delegations

Lloyd Arcand

Charla LeBlanc

Would you like to get involved or have a talent to share?

We are always looking for people who would like to help us in our **Mission of Hope** for the Nicaraguan people.

If interested, contact us at info@rootsofchange.ca to learn more on how to get involved.

The goal for our 2023 campaign is \$140,000.

The estimated cost of printing and mailing 3 publications per year is \$2400.

For information contact Jocelyne Durocher at 780.405.8084

PayPal Giving Fund

PayPal Giving Fund Canada provides a method to make a credit card donation that eliminates the fees the Foundation would normally be charged which is between 2- 3% of the donation - and every penny counts! Search for "PayPal Giving Fund" in your browser, click on 'Donate Here' then search for Roots of Change Foundation.

PayPal Giving Fund Canada will provide a Charitable Donation Receipt for your donation and we will be notified once it is processed.

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