



# Friends of FORMA

## April 2016 Newsletter

### Friends of FORMA Progress Report

By President Wayne Brown

We are one year old and doing great! This time last year, we were in the midst of deciphering IRS regulations and paperwork needed to qualify and register as a 501c3 organization for tax purposes. We accomplished this and then our donors were generous in supporting our efforts in Guatemala. We are now able to support 23 young people's desire to continue their education through scholarships. We are providing two rural libraries with sufficient funding for librarian salaries and materials for working with young students. In addition we are funding two nutrition programs at two elementary schools for a total of 225 kindergarten through grade 6 students receiving a nutritious snack daily. Thanks for your support! We will continue these efforts for all involved. Look for us on Amazon Smiles!

All travel, fundraising and administrative costs are funded by board members.



President,  
Wayne Brown



Tutoring session at Montes Mercedes Library on Saturday

### Libraries Breathe Life Into Communities

By Craig Orr

During my recent one-month stay in Guatemala, I visited the two community libraries, Monte Mercedes and Buena Vista, supported by Friends of FORMA. Both libraries are being fully utilized by children after school and on Saturdays. The libraries provide a safe place for children to read, to receive tutoring and to use technology. The libraries breathe life into their respective communities through the children.

### Future Leaders Are Being Developed

By Craig Orr

During my visit I had the opportunity to interact with the FORMA Guatemala scholarship students. I can see the growth of the students that have been in the program for more than one year. In addition to serving as tutors in the Saturday school tutoring programs, the experienced scholarship students also play an important role as mentors to the first-year scholarship students. Future leaders are being developed!



Our 2016 Scholarship Students---Future Leaders

## Introducing Two New Junior High Scholarship Students:



### **OLIVER**

This is Oliver, a 12-year-old boy from the town of Buena Vista, Sololá. He has six brothers and sisters. His father is a day laborer who unfortunately suffers from alcoholism and this affects the family wellbeing. Oliver's mother works without stopping in the farm fields where she earns 25 Q (\$3.35) per day to buy food for her six children. Her dream is to continue working to allow her children to advance. Oliver has a great desire to improve his situation. His big dream is to become a doctor and help his mother improve her situation.



### **MARIA ANGELICA**

Maria is 12 years old and lives in Buena Vista, Sololá with her parents and younger siblings. Her parents do not read or write or speak Spanish, they communicate in a local dialect. Maria's father is elderly and infirmed and is not able to contribute to the support of the family. Her mother works in the surrounding fields with the neighbors to feed the family. Maria faces cultural as well as family challenges to continue her studies. She has the daily responsibility of preparing the family meals (from scratch on a wood stove) while her mom is working in the fields. Despite these obligations at home, she has great intellectual capacity and potential coupled with a good spirit to continue the struggle to become a doctor and help not only her family but also her community.

## Reflections of Three Donors and One Board Member on Their Trip to Guatemala in March 2-10, 2016

- What I continually tell folks when I talk about the trip, is how impressed I was with the teaching skills of the young tutors. Under their tutelage, the younger students were attentive and very eager to learn.
- Written words are not adequate to describe the powerful force of good happening in Panajachel, Guatemala. Candelaria and Gregorio (partners of Friends of FORMA) provide holistic care and support for middle and high school scholarship students. These students and their grateful parents eagerly communicate the successes of this program. After you hear their stories, you are hooked.
- I am impressed by the delightful young students who work so hard to, not only attain their goals in life, but also to bring hope and the possibility of bright futures for their communities. They put their whole hearts and souls into all they do.
- I continue to be amazed and inspired by the spirit of the students. Their desire to be the lights for their families and communities is stronger than I could have ever imagined. It had to be experienced. I am humbled every time I think about how hard these young people work to make a better tomorrow under such difficult conditions. Their poise and maturity are well beyond their years.



*From left: Lucy, Jacki, Renee and Barbara*

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