



## Cooperative for Education First Quarter Report, 2018



As of this quarter, you have helped change the lives of 188,000 students like the girls pictured above!  
*Sacatepéquez, February 2018.*

The first quarter of 2018 has flown by here at Cooperative for Education (CoEd), just as it probably has for you as well. This February, over 60 volunteers traveled to Guatemala with us to help inaugurate 10 new Textbook Program schools, 2 Computer Centers, and 13 Culture of Reading Program schools. The Scholarship and Youth Development Program also expanded from 8 to 13 communities! In all, nearly 5,000 more students will benefit from your support of CoEd programs this year—bringing the total number of lives impacted since 1996 up to an astounding 188,000.

That's an incredible number, and it has inspired us to reflect this past quarter on where we (the CoEd community that includes *you*) have been, where we are headed, and exactly *why* we are all so

passionate about breaking the cycle of poverty through education. Quite a bit of self-reflection has been conducted and quite a lot of emotion has been stirred. Inspiration is floating around the U.S. and Guatemala offices like pixie dust. And today we want to hear from you—why are *you* passionate about breaking the cycle of poverty through education? Your beliefs and stories are important to this conversation.

### Making Magic Happen

Along with gaining clarity surrounding the “why” of our work in Guatemala, we’ve recently added a new strategic role to increase efficiency and innovation in our Guatemala operations and appointed Augusto Bal, long-time Coordinator of the Textbook Program, to fill it. As CoEd’s new Subdirector of

Programs, Augusto will play a key role in putting your generosity to the best possible use in Guatemala. He will focus on fostering innovation within each program team and cultivating a healthy cross-pollination of ideas, resources, and best practices between program teams. In addition, he will work closely with representatives of Guatemala's Ministry of Education so that CoEd programs can be delivered with maximum speed and efficiency, in even better concert with official government initiatives.

### Helping Others Fly

As we continue to work directly alongside students and teachers in Guatemala, they continue to tell us astounding stories of how your support is changing their lives. This month, we heard from Jennifer, a ninth-grade student at Santo Domingo Xenacoj middle school. Last year, Jennifer explained, she made a very difficult decision. In 2018, she would drop out of school and go to work so that she could help her father and mother support her, her five siblings, and her precious nieces and nephews. She already felt incredibly lucky to have studied through eighth grade, because none of her siblings had completed middle school and three of them had been unable to complete even primary school. She informed her teachers that she wouldn't be returning to school in January, and prepared to finish her eighth-grade year.

Luckily, neither her teachers nor her principal was ready to let Jennifer go. They told her about how Cooperative for Education donors (*you*) would be bringing the Textbook Program to her school this

year, and reminded her of how drastically different her future would be if she completed her education, especially with high-quality textbooks. Between her stellar qualifications and her principal's encouragement, she managed to find a scholarship to continue her education.

Now, Jennifer is studying every day with those textbooks that motivated her to stay in school. She no longer spends hours copying as her teacher dictates or writes information on the chalkboard—instead, she is actively moving around the classroom, raising her hand, voicing her opinions, asking questions, and pulling her desk into a circle with her classmates to discuss what they are learning and put it into practice.

Best of all, Jennifer is now dreaming of studying in high school and eventually college, where she hopes to become a licensed nurse and then a doctor. Though she still has a long way to go, and her path forward is anything but guaranteed, she now has a fighting chance to one day help others as

a medical professional, and to watch her nieces and nephews skip happily to school, with textbooks under their arms—the cycle of poverty broken beneath their feet.

Stories like Jennifer's demonstrate all you have accomplished this quarter, and every day that you have supported students through CoEd. Thank you again.

Yours in service,



Joe Berninger  
Executive Director



Jennifer, who dreams of becoming a nurse and then a doctor, was motivated to stay in school by the Textbook Program. *Sacatepéquez, April 2018.*