Cooperative for Education

Breaking the Cycle of Poverty in Guatemala through Education

Thanks to the CoEd Computer Center at their school, these students at Almolonga are learning the skills they'll need to find professional jobs someday. Chimaltenango, Guatemala, 2015.

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Before the CoEd Computer Center came to his school, Rosalío and his classmates had to pay 40 quetzales—more than $5—every month just to learn to use a typewriter. Not only is the Computer Center fee more affordable, the quality of education has improved dramatically. Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, 2015.

Earlier this year, we introduced you to Mario Yac, one of our talented staff members in Guatemala who carries out our Textbook Program. This quarter, as we turn our focus to computers, we'd like you to meet Computer Centers Program Coordinator Miguel Quinteros.

Miguel first joined Cooperative for Education (CoEd) as a Finance Specialist for the Computer Centers Program in 2009. He's impressed us with his many talents through the years, but he's really begun to shine since taking the helm of the program last March.

Getting the Whole Story

Miguel is an accounting graduate by trade. Numbers may be his specialty, but people are his passion. "Numbers can be a little deceiving," he admits. "They just tell you part of a story."

That's why Miguel always goes the extra mile to understand the issues schools are facing, especially in the case of centers that struggle with collecting enough student fees into their revolving funds to stay on track to upgrade their equipment. Usually, it comes down to

a need to further engage and empower the principal and computer teacher to take ownership of the program.

To address this need, Miguel is taking a page out of our tried-and-true Culture of Reading Program methodology—and, more recently, our Textbook Teacher training—to help administrators feel involved. Principals are now encouraged to participate in teacher training, and although the first workshop specifically for principals—"Leadership in Education"—was optional, 75% attended!

Continually Improving

Miguel's philosophy is that it's never too late to make a positive change. We're continually impressed by our students in Guatemala that operate under the same belief in their own lives. Take Computer Center student Agustin Cutzal Sajbochol, for example. At 21 years old, Agustin is nearly a decade older than the rest of his peers at Hacienda Maria Cooperative School. He recently took a five-year hiatus from school to work odd jobs that would help pay the family's expenses, including putting his younger brother through school.

Agustin couldn't wait to go back to school so he could learn more about computers. *Chimaltenango, Guatemala, 2015.*

Catching up has been hard, but Agustin did his best to stay up-to-date while he was out of school. He even scraped together enough funds to buy an old computer for the family's home, so his younger brother could share what he was learning at his school's CoEd Computer Center. (Read Agustin's full story at www.cooperativeforeducation.org/agustin.)

Miguel certainly understands that the pursuit of knowledge doesn't end when you become an adult. With the help of his own brother, an English language instructor, Miguel taught himself English and is now fully fluent. Because of his interest in working with people, he also went on to earn an MBA. He applies the same attitude to the Computer Centers Program. "I think we have a lot of room to improve," he says.

To back up that statement, Miguel completed a Logical Framework Approach—a best practice for evaluating international development projects—for the Computer Centers Program. We were thrilled to see him take the initiative to really dig into the nuts and bolts of the program to come up with specific ideas for improvement.

Opening the Doors

One of the ways in which Miguel is already expanding the program's impact is through an open lab policy. In the past, the centers would often be locked when classes weren't in session. Miguel is now encouraging the labs to be available outside of class time for teachers, parents, and community members to use.

"If we have a computer lab in a school that has 200 students, in a town of 10,000 habitants, we can only cover 2% of the population," he says. "I think we can

do a whole lot more than that if we want to help them break the cycle of poverty." At the start of the next school year, he plans to offer a workshop to any interested teachers to give them a basic understanding of the technology. Special workshops on topics such as computer maintenance are also now open to anyone who wants to learn.

Another improvement to the program is the transition to a new curriculum, which both keeps us up to date with current international standards and is specifically geared toward middle-school students.

Looking Ahead

We're excited about what Miguel has in store for the future of our Computer Centers Program, starting with the two new centers that will join our existing 41 centers in 2016. We are grateful to supporters like you for making it all possible. "Thank you for believing in our people," Miguel says. "Thank you for believing in our vision and supporting it. My team and I will always work very hard to make the most out of your kind support. We are committed to leaving a better country to our children and the children of our Guatemalan brothers and sisters."

To echo Miguel, **thank you** for believing in our programs. Thank you for partnering with us to improve the quality of education in rural Guatemala. Thank you for helping to break the cycle of poverty there, once and for all.

Yours in service,

Joe & Jeff Berninger, Founders

Miguel looks forward to a bright future for CoEd's Computer Centers Program—and for Guatemala. *Ayampuc, Guatemala, 2012.*

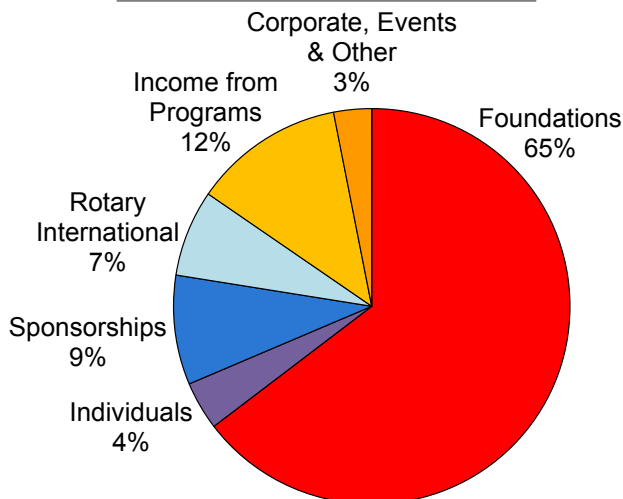*CoEd is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization established in 1996.*

YEAR TO DATE INCOME	January - Sept 2014	January - Sept 2015
Foundations	$887,843	$1,863,754
Individuals	$129,191	$113,957
Sponsorships	$171,497	$257,990
Rotary International	$182,912	$204,118
Income from Programs	$131,904	$354,833
Corporate, Events & Other	$99,265	$89,165
TOTAL INCOME	**$1,602,612**	**$2,883,817**
YEAR TO DATE EXPENSES		
Program Services		
Textbook Cooperatives	$229,140	$260,589
Computer Centers	$300,011	$339,454
CORP	$346,491	$302,438
Direct Education (Bridges Program)	$474,801	$536,643
Other Educational Programs	$132,274	$184,803
Total Program Services	**$1,482,717**	**$1,623,927**
Mgmt & General	$154,297	$182,484
Fundraising	$132,181	$161,699
Total Support Services	**$286,478**	**$344,183**
TOTAL EXPENSES	**$1,769,195**	**$1,968,110**
Contribution to Net Income	-$166,583	$915,707

Note: Year to date spending is not always representative of annual spending. For a more precise financial picture over the course of a year, please see our most recent Annual Report at www.cooperativeforeducation.org/annualreport.

Year to Date Income

- Corporate, Events & Other 3%
- Income from Programs 12%
- Rotary International 7%
- Sponsorships 9%
- Individuals 4%
- Foundations 65%

Year to Date Expenses

- Fundraising 8%
- Mgmt & General 9%
- Total Program Services 83%