

## *Chromebooks Impact Learning for Guatemalan Children*

Story by Ed Kolybaba on May 22, 2018

Jocotenanga, situated in Guatemala, one of the poorest countries in Latin America, is a town plagued by street gangs, violence, drug use and prostitution, affecting 70% of its population.

In 2005, Juan Pablo Romero Fuentes, a teacher extremely frustrated with what was happening in his town and with the standard and delivery of education, established an after school program in his parent's house in an attempt to overcome some of the basic educational needs of children in the community. By 2015, he had established Los Patojos School in Jocotenanga to provide support and quality education to children.

Pablo and his team strongly believe that meaningful education is the only route out of a cycle of poverty and the prevalence of social disruption. Further, they recognize that the team must serve as agents of change, using dialogue to resolve problems, rather than violence.

In 2016, Patrica Ainslie from the Rotary Club of Kelowna, following a visit of a number of available projects in Guatemala, identified that the acquisition of computers would support the school's educational goals by increasing their access to educational resources. The club then partnered with 'Give Kids a Chance,' a Toronto based organization which was helping to raise funds to operate Los Patojos School.



It was then that the Rotary Club of Kelowna Sunrise was asked to join the Rotary Club of Kelowna to finance a project which would then seek out District 5060 matching funds. Subsequently, the Sunrise club donated a total of US\$1,500 toward a project that with a matching grant from the district, provided US\$9,831 to purchase 40 Chromebooks and a mobile storage cart for the school. On January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the computers arrived at the school; thus benefiting 170 students and fourteen teachers.