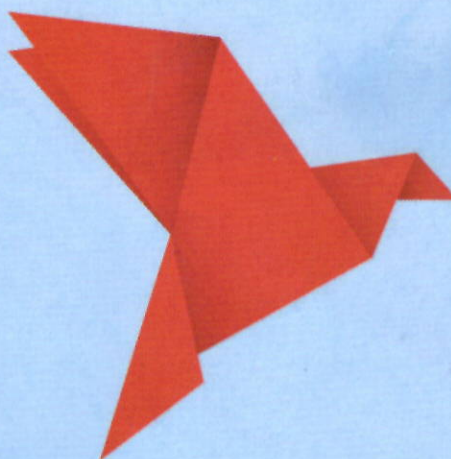


Kiwanis

MAGAZINE

TELLING THE KIWANIS STORY JAN/FEB 2022



Let go of holding on

PRACTICAL STEPS:
HOW TO RELEASE WHAT
NO LONGER SERVES YOU



THE SHOW GOES ON
COVID-19 NO MATCH
FOR MUSIC FESTIVAL

TEAM EFFORT
KIWANIS REVAMPS
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CHECKING IN WITH
MALAYSIA CENTER

Serving the children of the world,



**IN NICARAGUA, KIWANIS TEAM UP WITH THE GLOBAL UPLIFT PROJECT TO GIVE STUDENTS
A BETTER LEARNING ENVIRONMENT.** Story by Sarah Waychoff

one schoolhouse at a time.



When members of Kiwanis Division 44 in the California-Nevada-Hawaii District heard that a small village in La Quebradita, Nicaragua, had only a metal shipping container to use as a classroom, they recognized an opportunity to help.

La Quebradita is an impoverished community of 45 families and 250 inhabitants. People there don't have access to basic public services such as water, electricity or sanitation. All the houses are built out of plastic, zinc, tarps and wood.

Classes for approximately 44 students were taught inside the hot and narrow cargo container. The lack of space made it difficult for students to access classroom materials. In fact, many kids quit attending due to the poor conditions of the infrastructure.

"To see elderly women carrying rocks, children helping, men and women working together is heartwarming and inspiring. This is truly offering a hand up rather than a handout."

"It hit me hard that there's no running water in La Quebradita, no faucets to turn on for fresh water, no toilets," says Lt. Gov. Angela Nowlin. "We had wanted to do an international project, and our motto is 'Serving the children of the world.'"

Robert Freeman, a 13-year member of the Palo Alto Kiwanis Club in California, approached Nowlin and Division 44 with an idea.

"Robert spoke to our clubs and shared his vision," Nowlin says. "Members clearly understood the meaningfulness presented and wanted our Division 44 to do this."

As Freeman puts it: "This project was the true embodiment of 'Serving the Children of the World.'"

In fact, the division teamed up with The Global Uplift Project (TGUP), an organization that promotes effective altruism by building small-scale, high-impact projects in the developing world.

The school in La Quebradita cost US\$13,000. TGUP functions by requiring the village to contribute 20% of the total costs and participate in the physical labor of building the school. Doing such

allows local people to rally for their children and build a stronger community together.

Through the 14 clubs in Division 44, TGUP and men and women of all ages, everyone worked together to make the village a better place for the village's children to receive an education. The group easily met their monetary goal in four months and raised enough for a latrine facility and a playground to be built on the school's premises.

"To see elderly women carrying rocks, children helping, men and women working together is heartwarming and inspiring," Nowlin says. "This is truly offering a hand up rather than a handout."

Because of this collaboration, many Nicaraguan children will now have a proper place to go to school. In fact, students are more likely to thrive with new and improved facilities, which can result in better school retention, improved attendance and better overall student performance.

The benefits of the new school won't be limited to the children of La Quebradita. For adults, additional community services





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such as health care, vocational training and adult education are being planned.

How they did it

It all began with fundraising. Thanks to support from the 14 clubs of Division 44, the group raised well over the initial goal of US\$13,000.

The Community School Construction Committee of La Quebra-

dita was in charge of organizing the logistics and community support for the project's implementation. That included the organization of volunteers for construction, the provision of space for storage and safeguarding of tools and materials, and material support from local rice farmers.

The collaboration of La Quebradita, TGUP and Division 44 was the ultimate reason for the

school's success. To commemorate that success, a plaque is now affixed near the entrance to the classroom.

"I have never felt so proud to be a Kiwanian," Angela Nowlin says. "This is truly a life-changing experience for the kids of La Quebradita, as well as for our members. Hands down, this has been the most gratifying experience of my lifetime so far." [K]



