



ARTS/CULTURE NEWS, FILM/VIDEO

Documentary explores Cincinnati's connection to Guatemala

by [Movers and Makers](#) • September 27, 2026

A new documentary explores 30 years of connections between Cincinnati and Guatemala, from a West Side effort to provide books to Guatemalan children to the growing influence of immigrants from that country across Greater Cincinnati.

“Connecting Cultures: Cincinnati to Guatemala,” produced by filmmaker Laure Quinlivan, follows the work of **Cooperative for Education**, a Cincinnati-based nonprofit founded by brothers **Jeff and Joe Berninger** to improve literacy and education in Guatemala.

The organization began by delivering books to schools and has expanded to programs that help students stay in school and graduate. About two-thirds of Guatemalans can now read, compared with roughly one-third when Cooperative for Education began its work 30 years ago, according to the documentary.



Guatemalan coffee plantation owner Olga Hazard visits **Eileen Schwab** at Cincinnati's Coffee Emporium, which imports beans directly from Olga's farm at premium prices.

Quinlivan traveled to Guatemala with Cincinnati Rotarians for the film, interviewing students, educators, nonprofit leaders and Cincinnatians involved in the organization's work. The documentary also looks at the growing Guatemalan community in the Cincinnati region and its role in local businesses, churches and neighborhoods.

Among those interviewed are former **U.S. Rep. Steve Driehaus**, a Price Hill native; **Alfonso Cornejo**, president of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; and **Greg Robinson**, executive director of Price Hill Will. Robinson tells Quinlivan that about half of active businesses in Price Hill are owned by Guatemalans.

The one-hour film also follows connections between Cincinnati and Guatemala through coffee and education. **Olga Hazard**, a Guatemalan coffee grower, sells beans directly to Cincinnati's Coffee Emporium. Northern Kentucky University film students have traveled to her farm as part of a study-abroad program.

Other segments feature families who sponsor Guatemalan students, Spanish-language ministries in Cincinnati and Guatemalan entrepreneurs in Price Hill.

"Connecting Cultures: Cincinnati to Guatemala" premieres at 8 p.m. Nov. 12 on WCPO 9, where Quinlivan spent 13 years as an investigative reporter. The film will be available for community screenings after its television premiere.

Quinlivan previously directed and produced "Living with Landslides" and "Blue Goes Green," which aired on WCPO and PBS stations nationwide. She received Peabody Awards in 1999 and 2002 for her television journalism.