

EARLY BIRD WEEKLY



NewbergRotaryEarlybirds.org

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Last Week was Emily Paver on the [Guatemala Literacy Project](#) (GLP).

The GLP is a group of Rotarians, Clubs and Districts and a non-Rotary fundraising partner, Cooperative for Education for whom Emily works out of their Cincinnati office.

Their mission is “ending the cycle of poverty in Guatemala through education.”

CoEd brings teachers, trainers and experts to assure sustainability to this project. Rotary brings name recognition, a global network of professionals, and the resources to get things done.

“Why Guatemala?”

40% are direct Mayan descendants and is the poorest, least educated in the Western hemisphere. 80% of indigenous Guatemalans live in poverty. 60% of kids will drop out by 6th grade, a key driver of poverty in the country. Poverty and illiteracy



breeds abuse, violence and alcoholism.

Wendy Lopez Taquira is 12. Her dream is to become a doctor because, “I want to help my family.”

Wendy’s father wanted to continue school but his parents couldn’t afford it. Her family values her happiness, well being and education but, like most indigenous Guatemalans, the family simply can’t afford

to send one ... much less all, their kids to school. “Public” education is only free until middle school. And, the older the children get, the more valuable they are at home.

Making these dreams possible are the GLP family of 600+ Rotary clubs in 80 Districts in 8 countries. over the last twenty years making GLP the largest grassroots, multi-club/district project in Rotary history benefiting over 50,000 students each

day.

Past RI President Ian Risely cited GLP as the “Gold Standard of Rotary Projects.” For those of you that heard Ken Austin Jr. speak of Rota-Dent, you know what this means.

Sending working, but used, dental equipment to areas of need was well and good ... until it needed repair. Rota-Dent was engineered for simplicity and repair with locally sourceable components.

Textbooks are printed in Guatemala, contributing to the local economy.

Spark, K-6 reading, sparks the love of learning and setting the stage for future learning.

30% of indigenous are completely illiterate and cannot even sign their name (*blurred*).



These thumbprints are parents endorsing bringing a computer lab to their children.

90% of rural Guatemalan classrooms don’t have access to books. It was worse when GLT’s founder, Joe Berninger when he went there to teach English.

Teachers had been spending 25% of their time transcribing from a single textbook to a chalkboard for the class.

Computers become more important in later grades preparing for a mid-level workforce of which 60% requires computer skills.

The most exciting thing about these programs is that they are sustainable.

Before the project launched, we knew that everyone involved wanted to be sure we would have a lasting impact. “If we just showed up in the community and dropped off a pickup full of books and computers, this program wouldn’t last.

From an initial Global Grant, say a book costs \$5, we raise the money, and purchase the books. Each year after we partner with the school to set aside one dollar so that after 5 years, there’s enough to refresh books (and computers).

These programs are 100% self sustaining. In 23 years GLT has had more than a hundred schools go through this model and renew their programs.

Rise Youth Development is a scholarship to keep kids in high school. Wendy is one of those students.

Rise prepares students for obtaining careers and exposes them to professions in the normal working world outside their farms and villages. They can’t all become teachers, just because Teacher is the only other job they’ve been exposed to.

Anelma Ortiz entered CLP as a shy 6th Grader. Anelma would become the first woman in her family to graduate high school. She taught herself English and is now tri-lingual making four times her parents’ wages as sustenance farmers. She now has a daughter, Abigail, that will not need CLP because Anelma can afford her tuition. Last year she sat with Michelle Obama at the Obama Foundation’s Girls Opportunity Alliance.

How can YOU help? 1) Join CLP’s [Global Grant](#), 2) [Sponsor a Student](#) (\$80/mo sponsors a Rise student), 3) [Travel to Guatemala](#).



Okay, who wants to tell Bill that we’re in June now. It’s okay to change his calendar ... unless he just really likes April’s barn! :D