

SNAP-SHOTS

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Miguel Angel (right), with young helper Freddy, preparing Nopales for sale in their neighborhood.

Often hard times force us to find creative solutions. During these uncertain times, that has been the case for us at V&O and certainly for many people in our barrios struggling now more than ever to put food on the table. For those who used to earn income selling homemade food and wares at local markets, the options have become increasingly limited as the poorer fringe vendors are shooed off by authorities who are clamping down on “non-essential” sellers. As we go about our ministry, we are seeing an increase in people on the streets working to collect salvageable items and recyclables, while others are trying to trade their goods in smaller circles among neighbors. Some are going into the city to perform on the streets, wash windscreens, collect garbage from cars and just recently we were approached by a family who had spent the day traversing their area in an effort to sell one of their much-

loved pets! (Fortunately for pregnant Bunny, we were able to offer an amicable solution for all).

With face masks now mandatory across the city, demand has created quite an industry for those who have the means to produce them. For this reason we decided to open up our sewing classes again, albeit on a much smaller and controlled scale, (adhering to social distancing etc.), to teach and equip some of the moms in our neighborhoods so that they can take advantage of this opportunity to generate income. Earlier class graduates have also been working



Elly & daughter Jasmin cash in recyclables.

About \$7 worth



Mari learning to cut.

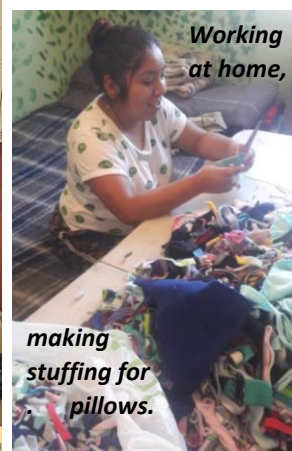


Paty helps daughter Lesli,

while Lety sews.



Masks ready for sale.



Working at home,

making stuffing for pillows.



Finished items for Winter.

from home sewing masks, as well as blankets, pillows, hats, gloves, hoodies, pajamas etc. to be distributed to kids in the winter months of our ministry. **THANK YOU!** to all who donate materials, machines, and funds to make this ministry successful. As much as possible, everything is put to good use and not only do the classes offer opportunities to learn skills, but they also provide a place for women to share their struggles and/or faith with us and each other.

You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; you shall be blessed, and it shall be well with you. Ps 128



Damaris

GIVING BACK...

DAMARIS

As a teenager Damaris Ruezda was a regular attendee in the girl's tent at Pastor Von's Community ministry days. She and her Mom became known to Hortencia and kept in touch over the years. Often when Hortencia would connect with Damaris' Mom she would tell her that Damaris was busy studying and very involved in her church youth group. Late last year Hortencia caught up with Damaris who had just graduated and become a qualified Psychologist. She was now receiving client referrals from the Police Dept., social workers and hospitals.

"If you ever need help with anyone, just let me know" Damaris had offered.

Right now we have 2 young girls who Damaris has been working with each week for the past month. Both girls have experienced real trauma in their lives and since COVID began, services to help them have been closed. Damaris' offer has been an answer to prayer. Also affected by the closure of her own

offices, Damaris just needed a quiet place to work with the girls, so we offered her our location as an option. After looking around the rooms we were a little surprised when she chose our storage room outside. "It's cool, quiet and there are no distractions here," she said. All she needed was a table and some chairs!

As a strong woman of faith, a qualified professional, and someone who has experienced hardship growing up in a tough neighborhood herself, we're extremely grateful to have Damaris' help available to us at very minimal cost. We thank God for her and pray that He continues to bless her work and all those who He brings to her for help. (Damaris plans to further her studies to become a Neuropsychologist).



A quiet place.

GEOVANNY & JOSE



Geovanny

Some of you may recall mentions of Geovanny (30) and José (18) in previous Snap-Shots. Since they were small boys, Pastor Von played an important and significant role in their lives. Although both grew up disadvantaged, Geovanny also had the added responsibility of caring for his severely disabled brother and missed years of school due to his Mom's mental state and tendency to move from place to place.

José has worked with V&O regularly for the past 5 years. He is still in school, (online now), and has a part-time job at Walmart. On Wednesdays he works with us at V&O.

Geovanny has helped us out occasionally in the past, between work and attending adult school. When COVID hit, work became scarce for Geovanny, so last month, when Cesar, (our temporary Driver), was needed back at his Dental Technician job, we asked Geovanny if he would like a job as one of our Drivers. He gladly accepted.

Since then he and José have become good friends realizing they have a lot in common, not only in their pasts, but also in the present.

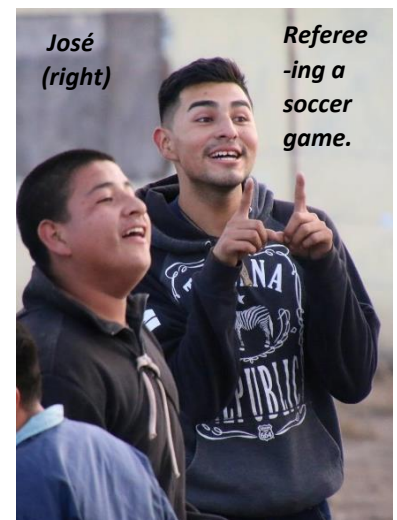
Both are studying to become accountants. Although each of them is at a different stage in life and in their walk with God, both use their experiences to help other kids in our neighborhoods who are disadvantaged just like they were.

We older ones at V&O feel blessed and encouraged to see the fruits of seeds planted years ago in the lives of these young people who are now "giving back" to others in faith and thankfulness to God.

Again, **THANK YOU!** for partnering with us to continue this important work that's making a difference in the lives of the people we serve. Gods blessings to you All!



2015, Pastor Von talks with Geovanny and his younger brother Diego near their home.



José (right)

Referee-ing a soccer game.