



Centro De Esperanza Infantil A.C. Oaxaca Street Children Grassroots Inc. April, 2021

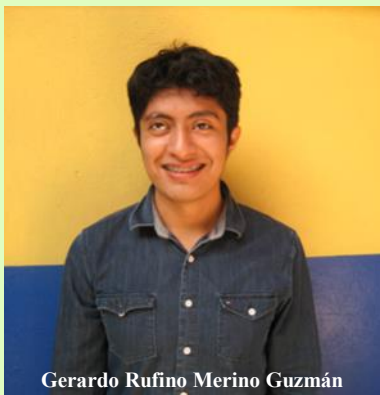


In spite of the Covid CEI continues to operate...



On March 22, 2020, due to the pandemic, all schools were closed in Oaxaca, including CEI. In mid-May, operating on limited time, the staff was allowed back into the center to plan and organize for the balance of the school year. There were many changes: we operated under limited circumstances with closed doors as our beneficiaries came to the center mainly for administrative reasons; no food could be served in our dining room; cubicles had to be built in the offices and the computer room to separate and protect staff and students; registration began in late July and continued into August as all reports from schools were delayed; some laptops and tablets were loaned to students and some phones were given out as students opened the school year studying online. The computer room is available, Monday through Saturday for students living nearby who

are having difficulties remotely assisting their classes due to the absence of internet or data reception in their homes. Except for these students, no one else has been allowed in the building except for specific reasons. Because of the virus and serious health issues, loss of work and cut salaries, families were given a bag of groceries (12 items) and some financial support to assist needs. Up through November, each family has received eight bags. We thank all the sponsors and donors for the generous donations to help these families this year. We are doing our best to care for our 676 children and their families during this difficult time with the pandemic.



Gerardo Rufino Merino Guzmán

One family, eight success stories...

"I would like to thank CEI on behalf of myself and my seven brothers and sisters. Because of you, all eight of us have been educated from first grade through preparatory school and four of us have university degrees. CEI has been so helpful to us since arriving in Oaxaca and we have had wonderful sponsors. You were there for us and always willing to help. My family was living in Ojo de Agua, a small village in the Mixteca, a fairly remote region in the northeast of the state of Oaxaca. To help with family expenses, my father went to Sonora to work in the fields. After six months there, in 1984, he received word of political confrontations leading to violence in our village and he returned immediately and for safety reasons moved the family to Oaxaca for a better life. My family worked selling typical clothing in the market after arriving in Oaxaca. Being the youngest child, I always worked in the market with my family to help with family expenses. Operating a business has always interested me and in July, age 22, GPA of 85% I will graduate from the Instituto Tecnológico de Oaxaca with a degree in Business Administration. I have also studied English and French. My social service requirement of 530 hours will be in January in SEP (Secretary of Public Education). My six-month residency will be in August in Monterrey or Guadalajara. In the future I hope to work in tourism and sales in Oaxaca. Thank you, CEI, for everything. From 1986 to 2021, you have changed the lives of all eight of us in my family!"



to the center for a program, were interviewed and they wrote letters to the Morris students. These creative and ambitious students have brought smiles and tears of joy to people who are struggling with all forms of hardships. The balance of the money that these generous students sent was given for groceries to a family where three members were recovering with covid.

Young kids with big hearts...

For the past ten years, the 8th grade students from Morris Area Public Schools, Morris, Minnesota, work on their school's Learning Service Project. They have "block" classes that allow students to explore subjects other than their core subjects. One of these blocks is Spanish. During the year, the Spanish classes research and report to the geography classes on aspects in Oaxaca. Again, this year they held a fundraiser to assist the ten neediest families in CEI with bags of groceries and a blanket for Christmas. The first Saturday of December, called LOTTERY SATURDAY, the families were invited



PROUD UNIVERSITY GRADUATES 2021



"I want to thank CEI and my sponsors...you have all been my second family and helped me with everything since I was six years old. My mother had health issues and I was living with my grandmother and I needed help so I could go to school. I worked as a babysitter, made bread and sold it and worked in a law office to help with expenses. In July, age 22, GPA of 94%, I will graduate from the Universidad de Benito Juárez with a degree in Law. After graduation, I will complete my professional service requirement with the Secretary of Security in Oaxaca and work on my thesis. I hope to stay in Oaxaca and continue work in public safety. You have changed my life!" **Keyla Sarai Santos Padilla**



"When I was in preparatory school, my father abandoned the family. The same year my brother passed away and his wife and three kids came to live with us. We were then a family of eight and my mother was struggling to support us as she worked cleaning houses earning \$6.00 dollars daily. I thank CEI and my wonderful sponsors who came to my rescue so I could continue my studies! To help with expenses, I worked selling clothes, in a shoe store and in a spa doing massages. I always liked helping others and decided a career in nursing. In July, age 25, GPA of 70%, I will graduate from the Universidad de la Sierra Sur with a degree in Nursing. This is a five-year program in the classroom, each semester covering a different area of health care and now one-year professional practice. In the future, I hope to work with children in a village where there is so much need. Nursing is a miracle work; the patient enters with a health issue and afraid and you can help them leave with a smile on their face!" **Valeria García Aquino**



"I was born in San Agustín Loxicha and after a bad hurricane, my family moved to Oaxaca in search of a better life. I have always worked selling tomatoes, blankets in the market, even returned to sell at a local fair in my former village. When I was 19 and wanted to enter the university but coming from a family of eight and my father working as a brick layer, I needed help. Thanks to CEI, I will graduate in July, 23 years old, GPA of 92%, from the Instituto Tecnológico de Oaxaca with a degree in Civil Engineering, specializing in bridge and highway construction. My six-month social service requirement was completed in the university and my four-month professional requirement was completed in construction and electrical work at the university. CEI and my sponsors have given me the financial help and motivation to get me to this level...thanks to you! I am ready to go to work!" **Julio César Matías José**



"CEI has been my second family since primary. When my father passed away and my mother working doing domestic work, needed help to support the family of four, you helped us so we could go to school. As a child I was always interested in law and helping others. In July, age 23, GPA of 95%, I will graduate from the Universidad de Benito Juárez with a degree in Law. I have been practicing and working in a law firm and have done practices with students interested in studying law. My semester of professional services are pending with the virus. Law is a complicated and challenging career as laws are constantly changing in so many areas. I hope to practice in Oaxaca so I can help my family. CEI has not only helped me, but many others who want to study but have no resources. Thanks to you and my wonderful sponsor." **Cesia Vásquez Hernández**



"As a child I wanted to learn and explore: I loved to read, cook and help my mother, I came to CEI for English classes. I wanted a career that was interesting and challenging, I wanted to help others in need. I chose a career in dentistry! For five years I attended classes six days each week from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., attending classes and practicing at the same time. In July, age 23, GPA of 80%, I will graduate as a Dentist from the Universidad de Benito Juárez. After graduation, I will complete my professional service requirement for one year outside of Oaxaca and work on my thesis. I hope to work in a clinic in Oaxaca so I can help my family. I think I have chosen an interesting career where I can fix teeth and put smiles on faces! Thanks to CEI, you have changed my life!" **Ariadna Ivonne López Cruz**



"I always had to babysit by nephews and nieces and care for them. I think this was what motivated me to be a teacher and work with younger children. In fourth grade, my father died and left my mother to care for six of us. She sold tortillas and was earning \$10.00 daily and needed help. Thanks to CEI. I also worked in the Abastos Market selling candles, grinding chocolate, cleaned houses to help with expenses. In July, 23 years old, GPA of 80%, I will graduate from INPECO with a degree in Teaching Elementary. My four years of studies were filled with practices with young children in various levels. My six-month social service requirement will be completed in a guardería (pre-school) in Oaxaca. I hope to stay in Oaxaca so I can help my family. Thanks to CEI and my sponsors, you have been great help and definitely part of our family." **Marce Paola Hernández Cruz**

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“My abandoned mother worked so hard making jewelry and selling it on the streets and she needed help to support us to go to school. In 2004, I was accepted into CEI in the daily pre-school kindergarten class at the center. My pre-school teacher was my big influence on my life. She taught that one can learn by playing and interacting with others. As a result, in July, 22 years old, GPA of 91%, I will graduate from the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional with a degree in Educational Intervention (Teaching pre-school/primary education). My practices have been virtual experiences. My social service requirement and beginning my thesis are pending with the virus. My thesis theme is “Development Of The Child In Infancy.” I have always been interested in children, watching them develop and learn and hope that I can fulfill my dream by teaching in a village. Thanks to CEI and my sponsors, you are the greatest!” ***Lizbeth Paola Bernardo Pérez***



“I came to CEI when I was twelve years old. My father abandoned the family with five in the home and mother needed help for our education. I was always very interested in technology and anything that made noise or used a battery. I worked at a swimming pool and worked as a waiter to help with expenses. With the help of CEI, I will graduate in August, age 22, GPA of 84%, from the Instituto Tecnológico del Valle de Oaxaca, with a degree in Information Technology. My social service requirement will be in January and my residence requirement will be in the fall semester in Oaxaca or outside the city. I hope to work outside of Oaxaca in a large business and work on my masters degree in telecommunications. CEI is the best help I received in my life; a family group helping another family. Thanks to my sponsor whom I have never met but trusted me to help me to this level in my life.” ***Otoniel Mecinas Cruz***



“CEI has been my second home since I was seven years old. In July, 22 years old, 90% GPA, I will graduate from the Universidad de Benito Juárez with a degree in Law. I have always wanted to help others, make a difference in lives, especially with women’s rights and in stopping violence. I have worked in a pizzeria and worked as a maid to help with family expenses. I just finished my six- month professional practices with the Secretary of Women’s Rights in Oaxaca and continue to work with them. My six- month professional services are pending with the pandemic. I plan to work where work is available. I thank CEI and my sponsors for helping me. My family struggled with severe health issues and have sacrificed so much to help me and my brother graduate with degrees. We lived far out and I had to pay 60 pesos daily just for transportation to and from school. It was tough but dreams do come true!” ***Salma Daniela Ramirez García***



“CEI and my sponsors have not only helped me but my entire family. There were five in my family, my sister was unable to walk or talk and so many medical expenses and my father working as a carrier in the market earning only \$25.00 dollars per week. We needed help and you helped me continue my education. I liked medicine and helping people and was interested in dentistry. In June, 23 years old, GPA of 89%, I will graduate from the Universidad de Benito Juárez with the title of Dental Surgeon. This was a five-year study, beginning at 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. daily. We attended classes and immediately applied what we learned in practices. I will begin my one-year professional services in August somewhere outside of Oaxaca. I hope to work in a village because there is so much need and the people can’t come to the city for help. Thank you CEI and my sponsors for all your help; now I can help my family!” ***Diana Andrea Martinez Ramirez***



“Because of need, I have always had to work to help with expenses. I worked in construction, a delivery service, painted signs and at the age of fourteen I packaged groceries in the Chedraui Supermarket, working nine hours daily and only working for tips. I like to eat, work with food, prepare and create new dishes and the supermarket gave me the opportunity to work in the bakery. This motivated me to study food preparation. In January, 19 years old, GPA of 85%, I graduated from Grupo Seduva (vocational school) with a degree in International Gastronomy, speciality areas in cocktails and bakery. In January I will complete my professional service working in a bakery in Oaxaca. I thank my sponsors whom I never met but put their trust in me and to CEI, since first grade primary, who opened the doors for me for a great future. I know I will always have a job as people will always be eating!” ***Kevin Joel Bautista Blas***



“I was always interested in other cultures and languages but living in a village advanced education was not available. I was 18 years old and my aunt in Oaxaca offered me a room in her home and I entered the university to study. I also worked in a pharmacy to help with expenses. My dream will come true in July, age 21, GPA of 90%, I will graduate from the Universidad de Benito Juárez with a degree in Teaching English and French. My practices in third year were back in my village for two months teaching elementary students. I will complete my professional practice (student teaching) next semester to be announced. I hope to continue living in the city and teach six to seven year old children as they are so enthusiastic and full of energy. CEI and my sponsor have been the greatest gift; you have helped me reach my goal. Thanks, I am a teacher!” ***Magdiel Garrido Santos***

PROUD UNIVERSITY GRADUATES 2021



"I came to CEI in 1997 asking for help. My father died, leaving my mother and me alone to operate our market stall where we sold typical clothing. At the age of eight I was already working in the market. I was always interested in working with children and thought that learning another language would be so special. My dream is coming true in July, age 27, GPA of 90%, I will graduate from the Language Department at the Universidad de Benito Juarez with a degree in Teaching Italian and English. My first practice was in a primary school in Oaxaca. I am currently finishing my professional practice on Zoom with elementary children in Oaxaca. Due to good grades, I will take my exam without having to write a thesis. My future plans are to teach in a primary school in Oaxaca and possibly work on a masters degree. Thanks to my sponsors for the confidence you had in me and to CEI for helping me accomplish my goal!" **Eulalia Gonzalez Cruz**

Academic Achievement Awards 2020



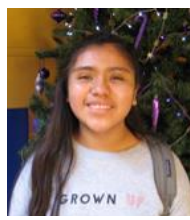
Karla 100%



Edwin 100%



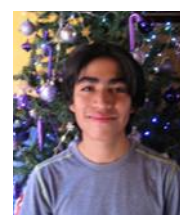
Ilse 100%



Karla Paola 99%



Flor 99%



Zeus 99%



Ali 99%



Henry 99%



Getzemani 98%



Mario 98%



Betania 99%



Evelyn 98%



Danna 98%



Jazmin 98%



Elian 98%

CEI congratulates and is very proud of our sixteen honor students for their high achievements of GPA's of 98% to 100% for the school year 2019-20. Each student was given a special gift bag when they came to the office to pick up their Christmas gifts. This indicates that all children want to learn and can learn if given a chance. All of our 676 students, coming from humble settings and without the financial means, are receiving this opportunity for an education to better their lives.



Keyla 98%

Making a difference with an education...

With the help of 539 sponsors and other donors from 12 countries of the world, CEI currently is educating 676 students from various ethnic backgrounds in Oaxaca.

Level	Grades	# Students
Kinder		5
Primary	1 – 6	190
Secondary	7 – 9	163
Preparatory	10 – 12	174
University		107
Vocational		1
Graduates		20

- * 54 new students entered the program school term 20-21.
- * 34 students left the program at the end of school term as they graduated, entered the work world or relocated.
- * 289 of our students are male and 387 are female. This is a change, when the program started only boys studied!

Mexican school year: September 21 - July 9 (a little shorter this year due to the pandemic). All schools are closed and all learning is done online.

Saturday classes are provided online for students needing extra help with math, Spanish and English.



February is inscription month in Mexico. This past February 110 families came to the office requesting assistance for educating their child. Home studies were completed and if the child qualified for help the name is put on the waiting list awaiting sponsor availability.

Christmas in Oaxaca...

The annual Three Kings Party on January 6 had to be cancelled this year to avoid group gatherings. This is the typical day the children receive their gifts from the Three Wisemen when they brought gifts to Jesus. However, a simplified version was held at front door of our center. Since we are not serving food at our center, the dining room was converted into the workshop of Santa Cliff to prepare gift bags and the balance of the center was a food prep area. A number of children were contacted each day and throughout the month of December, 628 children received their gift bags, letters and gifts from their sponsors. The elementary received a new backpack, toys, dolls, coloring books, crayolas, games, towels, basketballs, footballs, socks, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, purses, pillows, clothing, etc., while the high school through university received hygiene bags, notebooks and pens and pencils. Each family was also contacted and one hundred families came to the center each of the six days before Christmas and all 585 families were given a tub filled with twenty-five food items. In January each family will be given a monetary gift to defray expenses with the internet and phones expenses for distance learning. The party went on but in a different form. Everyone was so appreciative and there were many happy smiles for remembering them and helping them during this troubled time in Oaxaca. Thanks to everyone who contributed to this project to bring a brighter Christmas for these happy people!



Culture corner... La Rosca de Reyes

The celebration of Epiphany is a Christian holiday first celebrated in France in the 14th century before spreading to Spain and then to Latin America. Each country has their own traditions for the ritual of cutting the Rosca de Reyes (Three Kings Cake) in search of something special. This is the traditional day children receive their gifts today in Mexico. The Rosca is a circular cake decorated with caramelized or candied fruits with a baby Jesus hidden inside the cake. The symbolism in the cake: the baby is hidden to symbolize the need to protect him from King Herod who wanted to kill all newborn, the circular cake represents eternal love and the decorative fruits symbolize distractions to protect the baby from being discovered. In Mexico, families and friends come together on the 12 days after Christmas to remember when the Wise Men or Three Kings visited the newborn baby Jesus in Bethlehem to deliver the gifts. Traditionally the Rosca is shared amongst the family and everyone takes a turn to cut a slice. Somewhere in the cake is the small plastic figure of the baby. The person who finds the baby in their slice of cake must host another get together on February 2nd, Día de Candelaria, representing the day Mary took Jesus to the temple for the first time. The host must provide tamales and hot chocolate or atole for the guests. Mexicans love traditions and the reason for another fiesta!



Chiles in Mexico...

Mexico is the country of 64 varieties of chiles! Chiles are natural domesticated fruits of the American continent. Throughout history, chiles played an essential role in cosmology, rituals and offerings in the indigenous communities. Chiles are spicy because of the seeds inside that produce the capsaicinoids, giving chiles their pungency or burning sensation. They are full of vitamins A and C, very nutritious and used by pharmaceutical, war and beauty industries. Next to corn, the chile is the most valued ingredient in Mexican gastronomy and forms a part of national identity since it is present in all dishes. Contrary to beliefs, the shape or color does not decide the spicy heat, it is the seeds inside. Many people think that chiles have one simple purpose to add heat but there are a thousand

ways to prepare them and add heaps of flavors to their many dishes. For example, a tortilla with re-fried beans and salsa provides a complete nutritional meal. The most popular chiles are the serrano (most popular in flavoring salsas), jalapeño (most versatile), guajillo, ancho, pasilla, habanero (most spicy and hot), de arbol and manzano. As the Mexicans say, "si no pica no sabe", "if it is not hot, there is no flavor." Without chiles, Mexicans do not believe they are eating!



Remember... "Giving a child a peso on the streets, only helps today but investing in their education helps forever."



“They had a dream...”

Harold and Jodi Bauman visited Oaxaca for the first time in July, 1985. The first evening, eating dinner in a downtown café, they met Ruben, a nine-year old boy asking for food. Due to political violence in his village, six hours away, the father was killed and the family had to flee and came to Oaxaca. With no place to live and no money, the



street was the only way to make a living by begging and selling something to survive. Many families were arriving daily due to the violence and no place to go. The Bauman's decided that they would offer their assistance trying to get the children into schools so that with an education they would have a better future. A small office was set up near the center of town to assist families and children which we outgrew very quickly. By 1994, there were 70 children being helped and more financial help was needed. So an individual student sponsorship program was implemented and each year the sponsor contributed to assist their child. We moved to another building where the first kindergarten was started, a daily meal was served, shower facilities available and families could be attended. We added Food Harvest for all students as teachers were complaining as our students were fainting and falling asleep in classes due to the lack of nutrition. Our enrollment continued to grow and with the help of many donations, we purchased our own building and in 2000 we officially received all documentation to operate as the Centro de Esperanza Infantil in Mexico as a partner with Oaxaca Street Children Grassroots in the USA.



Over the past thirty-six years, over 850 needy children have been educated, learned to read and write, be respectful productive citizens and be mainstreamed into society, escape poverty and have a brighter future. 144 young adults have graduated from universities and vocational schools on a professional level.



With the help of a sponsor who contributes \$250 USD per year, the child is given a pair of shoes, a pair of tennis shoes, a uniform, a P.E. uniform, a backpack, school supplies and the inscription fees. In addition to other donations, a daily meal, use of the computer room, the library and extra classes and tutoring are available. The goal of CEI is to help educate children from low socio-economic backgrounds who often live in a one-room tin house, dirt floors, some without electricity, running water or modern conveniences, living in crowded conditions, living meal to meal with parents trying to survive on a daily wage of \$6.00-\$8.00 USD. “... Harold and Jodi Bauman, your dream is coming true; CEI's education program has changed and continues to change the lives of many children!”



First teacher



First doctor



First CPA



National wrestling-champion



First lawyer



First PhD in math

Oaxaca Address:

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Phone: 011-52-951-501-1069
coordinator@oaxacastreetchildren.org
cei_assistant@oaxacastreetchildren.org
Office Hours:
Mon-Fri 9-5pm - Sat 9-3pm

Donations: send a check to:

Oaxaca Street Children Grassroots Inc.
P.O. Box 2219 Benton AR 72018
website: www.oaxacastreetchildren.org
email is the preferred means of communication:
dslaymaker@oaxacastreetchildren.org
Phone: 501-574-9040
fb: Centro de Esperanza Infantil A.C. - Oaxaca Street Children Grassroots.



Canadian Friends of Oaxaca

Canadians can get a tax receipt for donations made in Canada or at CEI in Mexico. Send an Interac e-Transfer or cheque. Use PayPal or CanadaHelps. Find information at www.canfro.ca or contact pennyhopkins@xplornet.com