



Centro de Esperanza Infantil Oaxaca Street Children Grassroots

April 2016

Oaxaca



Mexico



Hi! My name is Fredy. I am 6 years old and in first grade. This is a photo of the one-room house where my mother and I live. It is made of tin, a dirt floor, no bathroom or modern conveniences, no electricity. In fact, we don't even have a door on the house. There is only room for a bed in our house.



My father left us when I was three months old. My mother sells churros on the street to support us, but only earning \$6.00 U.S. each day, there was no money for me to go to school. We went to CEI and asked for help. Now I get to go to school! With the help of my nice sponsor, CEI gave me my shoes, tennis shoes, school uniform, P.E. clothes, school supplies, my inscription fees and a new backpack. This is how CEI helps needy kids like me. I go to school in the mornings and then I go to the CEI center and they offer other help: I have a good meal each day, I can use the computers, the library, play games and there are even tutors who help me with homework. CEI helps all of us in so many ways!

CEI is Fredy's second home and also to 600 other children from

various ethnic backgrounds, ranging in ages 4-25 who are enrolled in kindergarten through university level in over 40 schools in Oaxaca. Thanks to all the generous sponsors, volunteers and donors from 20 countries of the world who have the same belief in helping make a difference in the lives of needy children who want to learn, be respectful and productive citizens, be mainstreamed into society, escape poverty and have a brighter future. The sponsorship contribution of \$250 U.S. per year gives the child this opportunity to have a better life with an education.

Remember... every child wants to learn, and can learn if given the opportunity.



ONE FAMILY... SIX SUCCESS STORIES



I would like to thank CEI on behalf of myself and my five brothers and sisters. Because of you, **all six of us have earned university degrees**. CEI has been so helpful to us and we have had such great sponsors. You were all there for us and always willing to help. My father died when I was only a few days old, leaving my mother to raise six children and care for my ill grandmother. She supported us by selling tortillas but needed help. I am the youngest of the family. When I was seven years old in second grade primary, I too entered CEI. Since high school, like my older brothers and sisters, I also worked to help with family expenses. I worked in a cafeteria washing dishes, babysat, worked in a tortilla stand and in a grocery store. We all worked to help the family survive.

I always enjoyed working with people and helping others. I think helping care for my grandmother helped me become interested in nursing. So, I entered the University of Benito Juarez and studied nursing. Each semester we did practices applying what we had already learned. My work now consists of caring for patients in homes and hospitals. I really enjoy working with older people as they can tell me where it hurts.

In July, with a GPA of 83%, I will graduate from the University of Benito Juarez with a degree in Nursing. Then I will spend one year of social service working in a hospital in the city or in a rural area as I gather information for my thesis at the same time. My future plans are to stay in Oaxaca and work in a local hospital.

Thank you, CEI, for everything. You have changed my life and the lives of each of the other children in my family because we all now have university degrees!!

Our Graduates

Coming from a single-parent family of three children and the mother supporting the family by washing clothes and cleaning houses, Patricia, age 15, came to CEI asking for assistance with her studies. Patricia said, *Since the age of 13 I have always worked to help my family. During vacations, I worked in a bakery, shoe stores, in clothing stores, and now I work in an ice cream stand. Now, at age 21 with a GPA of 85%, my life will change as I will graduate in March with a degree in Business Administration from Benito Juarez University.* Patricia is currently completing her social service requirement of 144 hours in Urban Affairs, a government office that distributes funding to areas of the city. She plans to continue working in administration in factory management. *CEI helps so many families with needs. With all their guidance, encouragement and my helpful sponsor, I now will have an education so I can help my family and others.*

**Patricia
Berenice
Mesinas
López**



When I was very young, my father went to the USA to work to help us have a better life, but he was killed there in an accident while working. So my mother brought me to CEI for help. I liked school and continued to study. In high school, I was introduced to the computer, electricity and automotive care. Because of a good teacher, I became more interested in cars and motors. After preparatory school, I enrolled in Grupo Dedwa (a vocational school run by the Secretary of Education). I studied a two-year course, three semesters each year, in auto mechanics. With each course, we had constant practices to apply immediately what we had studied. With 90 computers in the school, we had information and experiences working with every kind of cars. I am currently completing my six months of professional practices in Oaxaca. In July, age 21, GPA of 85%, I will graduate with the title of Professional Technician. I want to thank CEI and my wonderful sponsors. You were such great help - always willing to help and encourage me. You have prepared me for the future to do what I enjoy!



**Hugo
Heredia
Hernández**

You were such great help - always willing to help and encourage me. You have prepared me for the future to do what I enjoy!

Araceli has been with CEI for 17 years! She was accepted at five years old as she entered kinder. She had serious problems with her teeth and needed ongoing dental work. All this attention and dental visits created interest in her becoming a dentist. While studying, she worked in several jobs to help with family expenses: sales, a dental clinic, sold candy on the streets and even drove a mototaxi in the suburb where she lives. Dentistry is a six-year program: five in the classroom (with clinics) and one year of social service. She has completed several mini clinics and has presented several lectures on dental care in schools throughout Oaxaca. She will finish all her mini clinics in February - May. In August, Araceli will be sent to a rural area for her one-year social service requirement. In June, 23 years old, GPA of 80%, Araceli will graduate from the University of Benito Juarez School of Dentistry as a certified Dentist. *It was a long struggle but well worth the effort. Thanks to CEI and my wonderful sponsors for all your help. I am a dentist!*

**Araceli
Edith
Pérez
Juárez**



**Remember... giving a child a peso on the street only helps today,
but investing in the child's education helps for a lifetime**



The Suitcase Brigade

Every other year, a group of Spanish students and their teacher, Shane Lee (and his wife Karla), travel from Wheaton High School in Wheaton, Minnesota to Mexico. Their visit always includes CEI and a home visit while here. This year as usual, they met Cliff at the Minneapolis Airport and so kindly transported thirteen of his suitcases to Oaxaca - filled with school supplies, toys, clothes and other gifts for the annual Three Kings Party and the up-coming school year. Thanks, Wheaton High School, for making a difference in the lives of needy children. You made many kids happy at the party!



The Craftimation Factory

Janey and Mike Laloë, TV producers with BBC in England visited CEI for two weeks and sponsored a workshop on creativity using scrap materials and small pieces of fabrics, etc. "The purpose of the workshop was to bring creative pursuits to children who would have difficulty accessing them," said Janey. "This helps underprivileged and handicapped children and shows them that creativity is in everyone. This creative process is developed by thinking and working with the hands." The project was a big success!

Our Graduates



Aurora Sará González Vargas

Aurora was born in Mexico City and moved to Oaxaca while in high school. Coming from a single parent family with five children, she needed help with her studies. At the age of 20 and in second year university she was accepted into CEI. Along with her studies, she worked in several jobs to help the family with expenses: a hotel, a cook and at Sam's Club and currently is working with a social organization helping poor people in rural area of Oaxaca. She has completed her social service requirement (two hours daily for six months) in the Judicial System of Oaxaca working in the offices of auto theft. In June, age 20, GPA of 91%, Aurora will graduate with a Law Degree from the University of Benito Juárez Law School. *I hope to work in a government office in Mexico City in the future. Thanks to my sponsors for all their help and guidance and to CEI for all their encouragement and assistance. You have all been great mentors.*

Coming from a family of ten children, there was need for assistance. *When I was five years old, my sister and I were sent to live in a youth shelter because my parents could not care for all of us. While in the shelter, we had tutors who were so helpful and so good in helping us with our homework and therefore I think this is what motivated me in becoming an educator.*

When she was fifteen years old and beginning preparatory school, she came to CEI for help. She then entered the university and continued her studies in education. She has completed continuous practices at youth shelters helping children with homework and other classes. She has completed her 240 hours of practices, enjoying her work with kindergarten students due to their enthusiasm to learn. She is currently working on her social service requirement (6 months) at the university with programs for tutors and helping with projects to enhance learning.

In July, 22 years old, GPA of 95%, I will graduate with a degree in Educational Sciences from the University of Benito Juárez. CEI and my sponsors have all been great help in directing me toward my degree. Without your help it would not have happened. You taught me that even poor children can learn and be professionals. Thanks from the bottom of my heart!



Aida Verónica Camarillo Olivares



Hiram Osorio Mendoza

At the age of 15, first year of high school, Hiram and his brother came to CEI asking for help with their education. The father, with a tire repairman's salary, was struggling to earn enough to feed his family. Hiram was accepted and has been with us for seven years. His hard work and desire to learn will come true in July, age 22, with a GPA of 90%, as he will graduate from the University of Benito Juárez in Oaxaca with a degree in Teaching English. He is also certified in Italian. Hiram has completed student teaching for three months in Prepa 2, a local high school and two weeks teaching younger children at CEI. He is currently completing his social service requirement of teaching English (six months for four hours daily) at the Centro de Idiomas and at the same time has begun his thesis in English.

I have always wanted to teach languages and culture to others and hope that I can travel and use the language I teach and get acquainted with others. My plans are to stay in Oaxaca and teach in a high school or a preparatory school. But more important, I would like to thank CEI for all your support and also my wonderful sponsor for helping me to this level in my life. You are all great!

Our Gradu-

Bertina was born in San Juan Copala, six hours from Oaxaca. When she was 13, the family of six moved to Oaxaca in search of a better life. In her second year of high school she was accepted into CEI for help. Throughout her studies she has worked as a babysitter, sold typical clothing in the market and has helped at home with siblings.

She has always been interested in languages and other cultures. She enrolled in the university and continued her studies with much success. Last year, she was granted a scholarship for one month of language studies at the University of Maine, USA. Her practices (three months, two hours daily) have been completed in an elementary school. She is now completing her social service requirement (student teaching) for six months, four hours daily in a primary school in Oaxaca and writing her thesis "Teaching English to Bilingual Students: Triqui -Spanish."

In June, 25 years old, GPA of 85%, I will graduate from the University of Benito Juarez with a degree in Teaching Languages (English, Spanish, French). In the future I hope to teach English and French wherever there is a position open. CEI and my sponsors have given me so many opportunities, opened my world and helped me for the future. Thanks to everyone!



**Bertina
Fernández
Merino**



**Rodolfo
Aranda
López**

I have always like to cook, create new recipes and come up with new ideas in the kitchen. I dreamed of being a chef in a fine restaurant. My dream will come true in June, age 22, GPA of 88%, when I graduate from the Universidad Tecnológico de los Valles Centrales de Oaxaca with a degree in Culinary Arts.

When Rodolfo was 11 years old, in fifth grade primary, he entered CEI. After preparatory school, he was accepted into the university to study his desired career - cooking. After three years of continuous classes, practices and work projects, he is ready for his eight months of final practices (four months to obtain his title of "Technician" and four months for his title and degree.) He has been accepted to do these practices in a famous hotel in Cancun, Mexico, from January through April. Upon returning to Oaxaca, he will take three exams and present his final project on a special food preparation.

CEI and my sponsors have been my life line; without all your help I would not have been able to finish my degree. I have learned so much from CEI and I hope to come back here and help other kids like me who are in need. Thanks to everyone!

When I was 12 years old, in sixth grade primary, my family of four was struggling financially due to serious health issues. I was accepted into CEI so I could continue my education. I also worked in various jobs to help the family: babysitting, pharmacy, clothing sales, a bakery and a waitress. I enrolled in the university and continued my education.

In June, age 23, GPA of 89%, I will graduate with a degree in Occupational Therapy. It is a study program of four years in the classroom and one year service projects. Each month of classroom studies required a practice in a different place, including two months in Mexico City with special training at different hospitals. In the future I hope to stay in Oaxaca and work privately or in a hospital. CEI and my sponsor have been my second family, a comfortable and helpful group of good people helping others in need. Thanks so much!



Adriana Isabel Pérez Porras



**Gabriel Antonio
López**

Twelve years ago, Gabriel, 10 years old, entering 6th grade primary, came to CEI asking for help. Coming from a family of six, there were economic needs. With interest in the science and math areas, he entered the university to continue his studies.

I will graduate in March, age 22, GPA of 90%, from the Instituto Tecnológico in Oaxaca with a degree in Electronic Engineering. I have completed my studies in four and one half years. My social service was completed (480 hours) with the university internet and communications services. My professional practice (600 hours) was with the Federal Electric Commission as we installed a communication receiver in a village in the Sierra for the telephone company. There never was a phone system there before. I received a 95% on the project.

CEI's help with kids is excellent. I also want to thank my sponsor, who didn't know me, still helped me to this level of my life. Thanks so much for all your help. I am now prepared to work with a company to install communication systems.

When I was six years old my family came to Oaxaca looking for a better life. Coming from a family of nine children and me being the second oldest, I have always worked in the market and cared for my younger siblings. I think this is why I wanted to be a pre-school teacher. I have completed my practices (4 hours daily for 6 months) in a Day Care Center and am now ready to do my social service requirement (student teaching) for six months in a public elementary school. In July, 25 years old, GPA of 77%, I will graduate with a degree in Early Child Education. Thanks to my sponsors and CEI for 25 years of help and encouragement. My future plans are to continue working at the Day Care Center in Oaxaca.



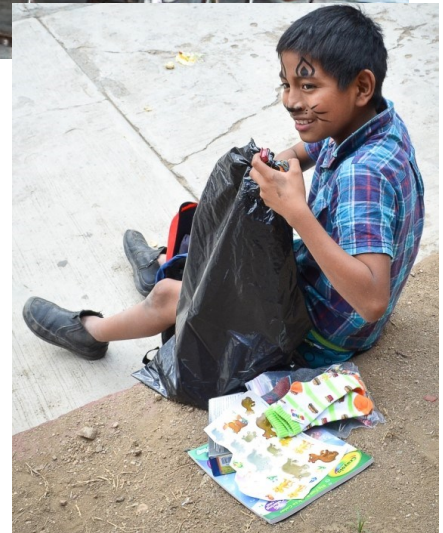
Claudia Garcia Merino



Kids Love PARTY TIME!!

On January 5, one hundred ninety kindergarten through sixth grade students celebrated the annual **Three Kings Party**.

Chicoso and Pecocito, two popular clowns, entertained the children with a show, games, face painting and music. This was followed by



Everyone enjoyed pizza, tartaletas, cookies and soft drinks. When leaving the party, everyone was given a new backpack, several pieces of new clothing, a gift bag and a candy bag. The smiles, laughter, noise and hugs indicated that the party was a huge success. Throughout the month of December, the high school students through university students were all given gift bags of shampoo, tooth paste and brush, hair gel, two pair of socks, soap, a notebook, a pen and pencil, several pieces of clothing, a candy bag and many other miscellaneous items. Thanks to everyone who helped with this annual event!

The piñata is commonly associated with Mexico. However, history tells us that piñatas may have originated in China. Piñatas are often made of papier-maché, pottery or cloth. It is decorated and filled with candy, fruits and small toys and then broken as part of a ceremony or celebration.

When the first missionaries arrived in Mexico, they were faced with a very different way of life. They imposed a new language, new customs and habits and among others, a new religion. It was not easy to teach the mysteries of one God as opposed to their belief of many gods. One of the most complicated dogmas was sin and how Satan tempts us. We must be strong to beat the devil. So the church interpretation of the piñata rested on the struggle of man against temptation. The seven points



The Piñata

represent the seven deadly sins. The pot represents evil, and the fruit and candy inside, the temptation of evil. The person with the stick is blindfolded to represent faith. The turning, singing and shouting represent the disorientation that temptation creates. As the participant beats the piñata, it is supposed to represent the struggle against temptation and evil. When the piñata breaks, the treats inside represent the rewards of keeping the faith. However, the piñata now has all but lost its religious significance and become popular with all types of celebrations, especially Christmas and birthdays. The traditional seven-star piñata (Star of Bethlehem) is only used at Christmas. Piñatas today, due to commercialization, come in all sizes and shapes with most representing cartoon or other Disney characters known to children.

Our Wish List... if you are coming to Oaxaca, we can always use: vitamins, toothbrushes, erasers, pencil sharpeners, rulers, markers, notebooks, colored pencils (box of 12), colored paper, Spanish-English dictionaries... With 600 children we distribute many supplies



Betziada



Dulce



Isabel



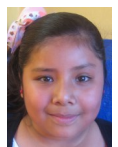
Xochitl García Merino
Top achievement
winner for perfect GPA
100% in 2nd year
university law school



Jesus



Getzamani



Briana



Marcionila

Academic Excellence

We would like to commend these 7 students who received special achievement awards for earning GPAs of 97% and above.

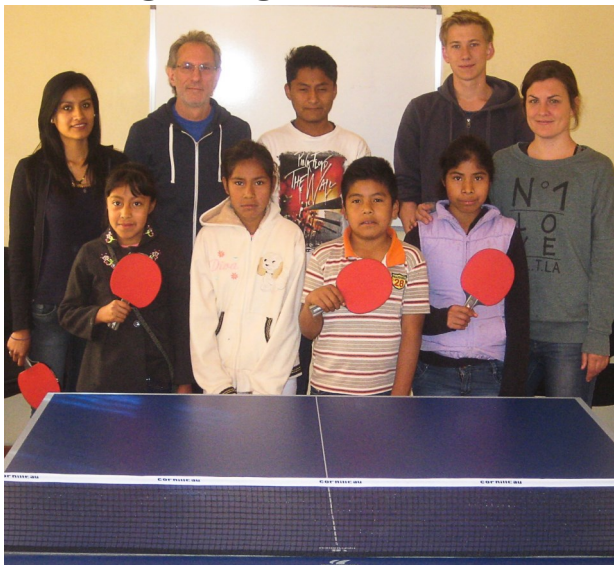
83 out of 602 students sponsored through CEI earned GPAs of 90% and above. Saturday classes continue in math, English & Spanish to assist students needing extra help. Daily tutoring with homework continues at CEI.

Deep in Thought

Cristobal, in deep thought, was one of the top winners in the Intergenerational Winter Games Bridge Tournament in Oaxaca. Twenty-eight people, seven tables participated this year. This is the second year of bridge classes at CEI. Every Tuesday and Thursday for one and one-half hours, 8 to 10 students play and continue to improve and learn the game. Congratulations.



Ping Pong Comes to CEI



While visiting Oaxaca, Paul Carlino and Rebecca Eichler came to CEI asking how they could help involve children of all ages. Peppo, with his background in ping pong, suggested a ping pong table. Within one month enough donations were received to purchase a table, balls and paddles. Now two mornings and two afternoons each week, under "Coach

Peppo", students are learning how to play correctly. Interest and enthusiasm are growing. With the involvement and competition, there are plans for a tournament in the future. Thanks to all donors who helped with this project.

Volunteers and Visitors

Thanks to Nils Kunze and Marie Brueckmann from Germany who are with CEI for one year on a voluntary social service project. Also thanks to volunteers and visitors from Switzerland, Canada, Japan, France, Australia, Spain, The Netherlands, The United Kingdom, Austria, China, Italy, Estonia, Hong Kong, South Korea, Morocco, Poland, Germany, Mexico and the USA who have helped in so many ways: teaching classes, computer assistance, tutoring, homework, art classes, running errands, music, translating, reading projects, games, donations, sponsorships, etc.

You are the backbone of our organization.

We could not operate without your help.
Gracias!



CEI Staff

Meet the six employees at CEI in Oaxaca: Juana (Cook), Peppo (Assistant), Eréndira (Coordinator), Leonor (Janitorial Services), Elisa (Accountant), Diana (Social Worker). The experienced staff works six days weekly assisting 600 children and their families in Oaxaca and answering questions from visitors and sponsors from around the world.

Our staff is truly the heart of the organization.



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Benton, AR 72018

Phone: 501.574.9040

Website:

www.oaxacastreetchildrengrassroots.org

Facebook: Centro de Esperanza Infantil A.C. -
Oaxaca Street Children Grassroots



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Canadians can get a tax receipt for their donations in \$CDN.

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or contact

pennyhopkins@xplornet.com