

# Centro de Esperanza Infantil

## Oaxaca Street Children Grassroots

### April 2017

Oaxaca



Mexico



#### ANOTHER FAMILY... ANOTHER MIRACLE

Hi! My name is Shunashi. I am 7 years old and in second grade. This is my sister, Emily. She is 5 years old and in kindergarten. When our father abandoned us, my mother, my two sisters and I went to live with my grandparents and great-grandmother. They share their four-room home with us. We have one room and all four of us share one bed. My aunt and her two children share another room. We have one room we use as a kitchen for all ten of us living there. Mother sells handicrafts, my aunt is a waitress and grandma does laundry for others. We all share and contribute so we can survive. Grandpa has a bad heart and cannot work. We needed help and CEI helped us. Now we get to go to school! With the help of our kind sponsors, CEI gave us our uniform, shoes, tennis shoes, P.E. clothes, a backpack, inscription fees and school supplies. In addition, after classes we can go to the CEI center for a good meal; there are tutors who help us with homework; we can use the computers, use the library and play games. We are so happy; CEI is our second home.

Looking at this photo, one wonders how a father could walk away from these children and tell them that he never wanted to see them again...

CEI is currently helping educate 629 children from various ethnic backgrounds, ranging in ages from 4 - 27, and enrolled in kindergarten through university level in 40 schools in Oaxaca. We thank the sponsors and donors from 15 countries of the world who believe that education can make a difference in the lives of needy children who want to learn, escape poverty, become productive and respected citizens in society and have a brighter future. A sponsorship of \$250 U.S. or equivalent per year gives a child this opportunity to have a better life through education. **Remember... every child wants to learn, and can learn if given the opportunity.**



#### SHORT... SHOELESS, BUT CAN THIS BOY SHOOT!



Just three years ago, Triqui basketball players from Oaxaca gained fame around the world. With their skills, they were beating opponents on the world stage who were better fed and better dressed. Their opponents wore shoes - the Mexicans were barefoot! Sergio Zúñiga, coach and organizer of the indigenous Basketball Academy of Mexico, is a former professional basketball player and an undocumented immigrant himself. He now has over 1,000 children training under 25 trainers in three different camps in the mountains of Oaxaca.

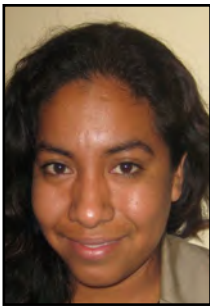
At age 17, CEI's Vicente Celestino Bautista is now living and studying in San Juan Copala, and has been training since he was 13 years old.

After school, we practice for two hours from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. It is heavy training and conditioning. We play a fast-paced game of basketball. There are no charges to play; they give us our uniforms, shoes and socks, but we prefer to play barefooted. To be eligible to play, you must have an 80% GPA in school. We have a home team and a traveling team which makes long trips to play other schools. Sometimes, we have three-day tournaments. My team won our division championship! The highlight of the game was that playing forward, I was high point man, scoring 22 points, both 2 and 3 pointers....and I was barefoot! It was so exciting. I am only 5'1" tall, but we are all short! My goal is to get better and have a position on the traveling team so I can go to the USA to play, and maybe even study there with the other players in Houston, Texas.





Andrés



Aurora

## CELEBRATING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Aurora Saraí Gonzalez Vargas and Andrés Vicente Velaaquez are our top achievement winners with perfect GPAs of 100% in University Law School.



Fernanda 99%



Perla 98%



Iris 98%



Emmanuel 97%



Erik 97%



Fatima 97%



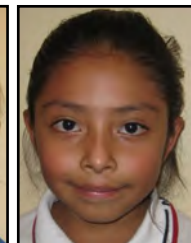
Marisol 97%



Erika 97%



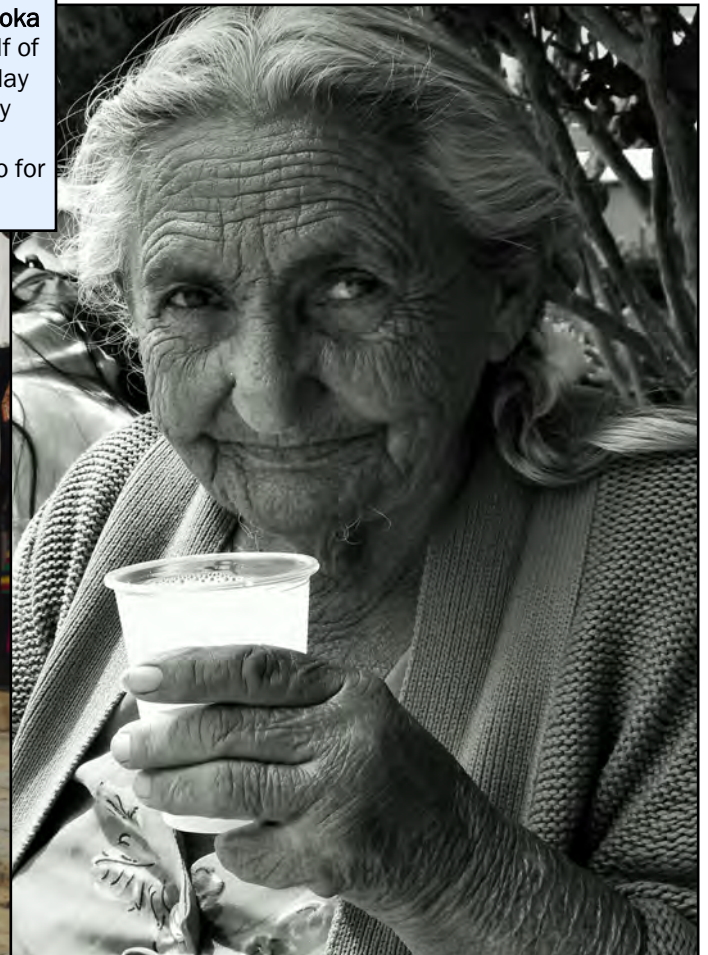
Luz 97%



Danya 97%

## CAPTURING EVERYDAY LIFE IN OAXACA

Stefano Mangini, a biker traveling from California to the South Pole, stopped in Oaxaca to do a one-week photography workshop for a group of young enthusiasts from CEI. The workshop was sponsored by the **Muskoka Foundation.org** who so generously donated six new cameras to CEI. Half of the workshop was working with color capturing street scenes of everyday life of the people of Oaxaca. The second part was a day in the Sunday market in Tlacolula working with black and white portrait images. The photos here are results of this successful project. Thanks to Stefano for his expertise and to the Muskoka Foundation for the donation!



We would like to commend these twelve students who received special achievement awards for earning GPAs of 97% and above. Thirty students sponsored through CEI earned GPAs of 95% and above.

- CEI currently sponsors 350 girls and 279 boys (total 629)

Level	Grades	# Students
Kindergarten		8
Primary	1 - 6	192
Secondary	7 - 9	194
Preparatory	10 - 12	136
University		73
Technical School		1

- 8 graduates are currently finishing their theses.
- 17 students are on standby waiting for admission to post secondary schools with limited enrollment.
- Mexican school year: Aug. 23 - July 18 (200 days)
- Volunteers continue to provide daily tutoring with homework and projects.
- Saturday classes continue for students needing extra help with math, Spanish and English.

**REMEMBER... GIVING A CHILD A PESO ON THE STREET ONLY HELPS TODAY, BUT INVESTING IN THE CHILD'S EDUCATION HELPS FOR A LIFETIME**



## 3 KINGS PARTY



On January 7, over 300 elementary and high school students celebrated the annual Three Kings party. Tiger, Winnie the Pooh, Dora, Zorro, Pepa Pig and George, famous cartoon characters, entertained the children with a show. There was face painting and a raffle for over 30 gifts. Then everyone enjoyed tacos, desserts, vegetable and fruit cups, popcorn and chicharines and drinks. When eating was done, the atmosphere changed to a carnival setting of games of chance and rides. Before they left the party, the elementary children received a new backpack, a gift bag, several pieces of clothing and a candy bag. The many happy faces and all the noise told the success of the party. Throughout the month of December, the high school, preparatory and university students were given their gift bags containing shampoo, tooth paste and toothbrush, hair gel, two pair of socks, soap, a notebook, pen and pencils, a bath towel, candy bag and other miscellaneous items. **Thanks to everyone who helped with this annual event!**

### CULTURE CORNER... ELOTE OR ESQUITES?

In the late afternoon and early evenings in Oaxaca, it is common to see many Mexicans walking down the street enjoying an ear of corn or a cup of corn, popular street snack foods.

ELOTE is cooked or grilled corn on the cob, stuck on a stick, spread with mayonnaise and topped with crumbly cheese, chile powder, lime juice and salt. ESQUITES are cooked corn kernels, prepared with chiles, scooped out of a big steaming pot into a small cup and topped with mayonnaise, crumbly cheese, salt, chile powder and lime juice and eaten with a spoon. These are perfect and healthy snacks!

There are many elote and esquite vendors



on various street corners with their wagons that are built on a three-wheeled bicycle that serves as a heated mini-kitchen. Each vendor has his clientele who prefer his way of preparing the corn. Ismael, Jesús, Felix and Rodrigo, former students with CEI, along with their father, have a family corn business. Starting at 3:00 p.m. each day, they prepare 500 ears of corn: 300 remain intact to be eaten on the cob and 200 are prepared for esquites. By 4:00 p.m. their wagons are ready for the evening demand. They can then leave and be on their street corners in time for hungry clients to enjoy their choice of a hot snack treat. For 15 pesos (75 cents U.S. currency) you can enjoy a stroll down the street and munch on your ear of corn!

Hmm... Hmm... Buenol



## PROUD GRADUATES



**José Antonio  
de los Reyes Flores**

When José was four years old, he attended kindergarten at CEI and has been with us for his entire education. Coming from a family of nine children, he needed assistance. During his education, he has worked to help with family expenses: selling chile peppers, singing on public buses and working in the family market stall selling typical clothing.

With his interest in the outdoors, he decided to study a career in forestry. He entered the Instituto Tecnológico del Valle de Oaxaca where he has studied for the past five years. His social service requirement (460 hours) was completed on the campus working with different seed projects. He is currently finishing his professional service requirement (6 months) on campus working with various agricultural projects and gathering information for his thesis.

In July, age 22, GPA of 82%, José will graduate with a degree in Forestry Engineering. His future plans are to continue working for a masters degree and work in villages on correct seeding, planting and reforestation. *Thanks to a great organization and my wonderful sponsors for assistance. CEI has been my second home for 18 years!*

*When I was 15, entering preparatory school, coming from a single-parent family, I needed help. CEI was there to help me. I always enjoyed working with children so I entered the Escuela Normal de la Educación Prescolar de Oaxaca. I have studied four years: in second year, I practised two weeks; in third year, two to three months of practice; and in fourth year, I am now completing my entire year of practice teaching with 18 children (4-5 years old) in San Bartolo. I am also working with a special government project "School Violence, anti-bullying which begins at home and carried to school". I have to report my results every two months to the government. I am also currently working on my thesis. I have always wanted to be a teacher. A beginning teacher helps form the child's future. With classes and games, one learns how to help a child. I hope to work in Oaxaca as there is much need in rural areas. In July, age 23, GPA of 90%, my dream will come true when I graduate with a degree in Pre-School Child Education! CEI is an excellent place to prepare us for the future. I want to send an emotional thank you to my sponsors, not knowing me, helped me to this level in my life.*

**Amanda Jazmín Luis Vásquez**



**Dalila López Cruz**

*When I was 13, my family of five children, came to Oaxaca from the village. None of us could speak Spanish, only Zapotec, our native indigenous language. It took me two years to learn enough Spanish so I could pass the exam to enter high school. Ready to enter the preparatory school at age 15, I came to CEI asking for assistance. With my interest in nature, I later enrolled in the Instituto Tecnológico del Valle de Oaxaca and studied forestry. I have completed my social service requirement (480 hours) with private consulting companies working with projects for rural communities. My professional service requirement (6 months) was completed working with the same organizations. I am also finishing my thesis on Global Carbonization in a village three hours from Oaxaca studying the dangers of pollution to plants and forests. Now 25 years old, I will graduate in February, 85% GPA, with a degree in Forestry Engineering. CEI and my sponsors gave me this opportunity and opened my world to my love of nature...thanks so much!*

When Miriam was 21 and in fifth semester in the university, she came to CEI for help to finish her education. She has always been interested in all areas of medicine (herbal, blood work, cosmetic, etc.) due to the influence of an aunt who also works in this area. She is now completing her social service requirement at the Hospital Civil in Oaxaca (480 hours) working in the hospital laboratory. During vacations all her time was spent in clinics, practicing and studying.



**Miriam Iveth Hernández Carrasco**

In July, Miriam, now 23 years old, GPA of 90%, will graduate with a degree and title of Chemical Biologist-Pharmacist from the University of Benito Juárez in Oaxaca. She hopes to stay in Oaxaca to be near her family to help them. She will be the first of six children to reach this level of education.

*CEI is so dedicated to youth who want an education and have a better life. Thanks so much for everything.*



**Beatriz García Aragón**

In July, Beatriz, 23 years old, 77% GPA, will graduate from the Universidad de la Sierra Sur with a degree in Nutrition. She has completed her five-year study in the university and will be assigned to a one-year social service requirement working in health, diet and nutrition in a hospital or clinic in Oaxaca.

*Nutrition is important in industry, in clinics, sports, hospitals and especially now with the diabetes so rampant in Mexico. I have my black belt in taekwondo and I hope to specialize in sports nutrition. I have been invited to give special conferences on diets for athletes.*

*CEI is a wonderful organization. When I was nine years old, coming from a single-parent family and a very ill mother, everyone was so willing to help me with my education. You have supported my interests and have been my second family for 14 years!*

## PROUD GRADUATES



*With the death of my mother and my father, age 24, working and trying to study at the same time, I needed help. CEI accepted me so I could finish my university studies. I have worked in all sorts of jobs to help: dessert shops, sold articles in the zócalo and have worked in various offices.*

Marta has completed her social service requirements (480 hours) working with accounting in the Cobao Preparatory School systems. She has also finished her professional practices (6 months) working at the Despacho Contable (City Audit Center).

*In February, 27 years old, GPA of 81%, I will graduate from the University of Benito Juárez in Oaxaca with a degree in Public Accounting. I plan to continue working with the Audit Center, save some money and hopefully open my own audit center. Thanks to CEI for all your great help; I was able to finish my career!*

**Marta Santiago Cruz**

At the age of 8 and in second grade primary, coming from a family of seven that was financially stressed with

medical expenses, Diana came to CEI for help. Her younger sister was in an accident, and by helping care for her and listening to doctors, she became interested in medicine. She entered medical school which is a seven-year program: five years in classes with observations after three



**Diana Angélica  
Vásquez Ortiz**

years: one year of practices in the Civil Hospital in Oaxaca; one year of social service somewhere assigned in the state of Oaxaca. In her first five years, she was in a hospital rotation program observing in the emergency room, prenatal, recently born and caesarean section births. In addition to studying, she worked in various jobs to help with finances: washing cars, a hardware store and making repairs on small equipment.

In May, 25 years old, GPA of 85%, Diana will graduate with a degree as a Surgical Doctor from the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Benito Juárez in Oaxaca. Her future plans are to stay in Oaxaca so she can help her mother and sister. She likes to cook and also hopes to open a restaurant some day.

*CEI is a good team helping those in need. I hope to help a child in need in the future. I hope to meet my sponsors so I can personally thank them for all their help; you have helped make me a doctor.*



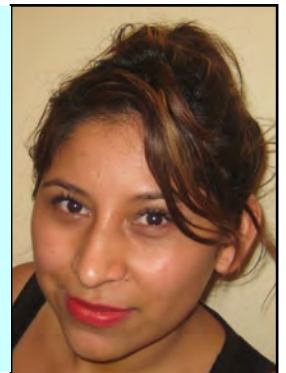
**Brisa María Rodríguez Soto**

*As a child, I was always bringing home a sick animal! I really enjoy working with small animals and decided to study veterinary medicine. My dream will come true in December, 26 years old, 76% GPA, when I will graduate with a degree in Veterinary Medicine from the University of Benito Juárez in Oaxaca. I have been working in a small animal clinic for practice and extra money on weekends. Because of administering medicines, I have to graduate first and then do my one-year of social service in an assigned clinic. When I was 18 and coming from a single-parent family, CEI was so kind to help me. I want to thank everyone for this help for a better future for me and my two-year old daughter. My goal is to have a small animal clinic in Oaxaca.*

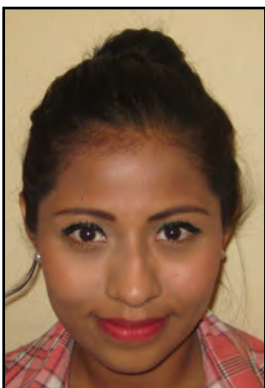
*In sixth grade primary, coming from a single-parent family of four children and my mother battling cancer, I needed help. I was selling candy on the street, working in a seafood stall in the market and later with a construction company, all to help us survive. The manager of the construction company asked me to help with the bookkeeping and this created an interest in my future study of accounting.*

Elvia has completed her social service requirement (480 hours) with the city of Xoxo working in the city offices. Her professional service requirement (450 hours) was with SAT (the Judicial Offices of Oaxaca), where she continues to work as she continues her studies.

*CEI has been a blessing to me and with the help of my loving sponsors and everyone else, my dream will come true in December, age 23, GPA of 81%, when I will graduate with a degree in Public Accounting from the University of Benito Juárez in Oaxaca. I plan to stay in Oaxaca and some day have my own accounting business. I am so thankful and I know I will help sponsor a child in need in the future!*



**Elvia Zavaleta Aragón**



**Isabel Reyna Santiago García**

*With my desire to study, I left my village and came to Oaxaca where I could pursue my career. My brother and I, living in a one-room house, worked every free moment we had to survive: clothing stores, stationary store and a bookstore. However, when I was ready for my fourth semester in the university, I needed help and CEI helped me.*

*I am currently completing my six-month social service requirement (4 hours daily) working in the Ciudad Judicial (City Government) and gathering material for my thesis with the hope that I can become a criminology specialist.*

*In June, age 22, GPA of 93%, with perfect attendance and a mother of a nine-month child, I will graduate with a degree in Law from the University of Benito Juárez in Oaxaca! CEI is a great program and with the help of my sponsors, I now will have a career.*





## THANK YOU, ALFREDO HARP

Thanks to the **Alfredo Harp Helú Foundation** in Oaxaca for the six-month food grant to provide better nutrition for needy children in Oaxaca. In addition to our daily meal served between 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in our center, children can now enjoy a breakfast between 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. After washing their hands and signing in the dining registry, children enjoy a different menu each day and are treated to fruit drinks made from natural fruits to avoid excess sugar that is in sodas. We believe that with a proper and balanced diet, a child can learn and concentrate

## JOAN OF ALL TRADES

Joan Bonsignore from Northampton, Massachusetts, returned to CEI to do a three-week workshop. Several students worked with English, art projects, games to better learn math, making bookmarks, hot pads, potholders and sewing projects. They used sewing machines to make dresses, bags and quilts. Each child who participated was able to take home their finished projects. Thanks to Joan who organized, taught and furnished all the materials for the learning project...another great success!



## VOLUNTEERS... WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU



Thanks to Lisa Dénoyer (France), Imke Daseking and Christin Kolbeck (Germany) who are with CEI on an extended voluntary social service project. Also thanks to volunteers from Hong Kong, China, Canada, Australia, Poland, Spain, The United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Trinidad & Tobago, Colombia, France, Mexico and the USA who have helped with teaching classes, computer assistance, tutoring, homework, art classes, running errands, music, translating, reading projects, games, donations and sponsorships. The staff and the children at CEI thank you for your talents, patience and friendship.



## WORKING WONDERS WITH WOOD

George Blackman and Margie Gregory from Bend, Oregon, sponsored a two-week workshop on wood carving. Several students learned how to follow proper safety precautions as they designed and carved using different kinds of wood. They also learned how to care for their tools. All the various tools used in the project were handmade by George, a former blacksmith. Each participant has selected a carving project they plan to pursue. Thanks to George and Margie for preparing, teaching and donating all materials for this educational workshop.

## OUR WISH LIST...

IF YOU ARE COMING TO OAXACA, WE CAN ALWAYS USE  
VITAMINS, ERASERS, PENCIL SHARPENERS, RULERS,  
MARKERS, COLORED PENCILS (BOX OF 12),  
SPANISH/ENGLISH DICTIONARIES. THANK YOU

### OAXACA ADDRESS:

Centro de Esperanza Infantil  
Crespo No. 308 Col. Centro  
C.P. 68000 Oaxaca, Oaxaca, Mexico

**Phone:** 011-52-951-501-1069

### Office Hours

M - F 9am - 4 pm Sat. 9 am - 2 pm

### E-mail:

[coordinator@oaxacastreetchildrengrassroots.org](mailto:coordinator@oaxacastreetchildrengrassroots.org)

### SEND DONATIONS TO:

Oaxaca Street Children Grassroots  
P.O. Box 2219

Benton, AR 72018

**Phone:** 501.574.9040

### Website:

[www.oaxacastreetchildrengrassroots.org](http://www.oaxacastreetchildrengrassroots.org)

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

Send a  
cheque or  
use PayPal



**Canadian Friends  
of Oaxaca**

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

Donate at [www.canfro.ca](http://www.canfro.ca) - send a cheque, Interac e-Transfer, or use PayPal, or contact [pennyhopkins@explornet.com](mailto:pennyhopkins@explornet.com)