



"Giving a child a peso helps today ... investing in education helps forever."

Annual Newsletter

April 2022

Unprecedented challenges, increased generosity, an exciting new initiative, looking beyond Covid-19



A Year of Loss, Survival, and Hope

The pandemic hit Oaxaca hard, especially among the poorest families

Even before the pandemic began, most of our families lived day to day, working enough to eat today. They had no safety net – no savings or medical insurance or pension.

Many of them live in small rooms covered by tin roofs that become very hot or very cold depending on the temperature. There is no running water. Often no windows. One light. A floor of concrete or dirt.

Then came Covid. Parents lost their work, schools closed, and the entire family was confined to dark, small spaces. They were desperate and hungry.

Centro de Esperanza Infantil also closed, cutting off many families from a safe place. We had to adapt. We began offering families a monthly food package. Later, more financial help arrived and we were able to give them some money to pay for gas, water, or internet connection (which the children need in order to study).

With the pandemic still raging, we canceled the annual Three Kings party, but thanks to our donors we were



able to give each child holiday gifts -- a blanket, some candies, a toy and a small amount of cash.

We experienced more sadness in 2021 with the deaths of three members of our board of directors in Mexico: Luis Flores, Lael Johnson, and Cliff Hinderman. Additionally, Covid claimed the lives of several family members of our children and one of our benefactors.

Even with all this, life continues. The virus didn't stop us from taking care of our children and their families in the best ways we can. Angels surround us on all sides, sponsors and donors always taking care of us, some from this land (Mexico), others from elsewhere.

It is difficult work but one with much reward: the satisfaction of seeing the children and youth of Oaxaca in most of need achieving their goals, studying and graduating. Our hearts and souls are filled with gratitude.

Thank you, Centro de Esperanza Infantil, for allowing me to grow with you. Soon we will have a new branch in Oaxaca so that more children can come and gain their wings. I will continue to grow with them.

Dra. Martha Canseco Bennetts
President, CEI Board of Directors



OSCGR President's Letter

Amid challenges, a new initiative for a stronger future

Oxaca Streetchildren Grass-roots in the United States had an extraordinary year in 2021. Giving totaled more than \$533,000, a four-fold increase since 2010, when I became president.

Particularly exciting news for 2021 came in the form of a large grant from a generous benefactor. Using this grant funding, plans are underway to expand the operation of Centro de Esperanza Infantil (CEI) by opening a second center in Xoxocotlán that offers all the services of our original center and more, including a staff teacher, tutoring and other developmental activities, field trips, a staff nurse, food distribution and support, and parental involvement.

This positive growth is a major transformation from our early days, when we had only a few students in a rented office and our hope they would complete sixth grade. Today, we own the CEI building and nearly 700 students of all levels are in the program. Since 1997, we've helped educate hundreds of young people, including 138 who have graduated from college. The additional center in Xoxocotlán – scheduled to open in the summer of 2022 – will allow us to help even more deserving students as we seek to lift them from poverty and equip them for the future.

In Oaxaca, the year was both challenging and fulfilling. The pandemic ebbs and flows had a drastic effect on our students and their families. Jobs remain scarce and

2021 Highlights

- ▶ Record year of giving.
- ▶ Major expansion planned.
- ▶ Monthly food distributions to families (aided by Canadian Friends of Oaxaca, CANFRO), and grant from TASH, Inc.
- ▶ Two part-time psychologists to work with students undergoing severe pandemic-related stress.
- ▶ Medical fund (underwritten by another generous donation) to help students and families confronting serious illness.
- ▶ Special Christmas gift, including a blanket, toys and food for the household.

unemployment is widespread. In many of our families, someone has died from Covid.

Some students have returned to in-person classes, but the situation varies daily, and Covid surges have forced a return to remote learning. For students without internet access, or even electricity, the situation is far from ideal.

The staff at CEI have worked diligently in dangerous conditions. Four of the staff's six members became ill with Covid, but they have, fortunately, recovered fully.

As always, our educational mission continues, equipping and supporting our students in every way possible as they seek an education.

Our program could not have grown and succeeded without your generosity. The opening of a new center is a major undertaking that will require funding beyond the grant, even as we continue our services at the original center at a time when costs driven by inflation in Mexico are increasing rapidly. My dream is that our initiatives are just the start. I can envision our new center expanding our current capacity beyond 750 students.

We hope 2022 will bring improvements to the situation in Oaxaca and the pandemic will abate. We have come a long way, yet there remains so much to do. We ask for your support in 2022 to continue our growth and meet our year's goal of \$550,000 in donations.

If you would like to know more about our work in Oaxaca or have any questions about our program, feel free to contact me personally. Again, thank you for your desire to change lives for the better through education by supporting work that provides an extraordinary benefit for Oaxacan children in poverty who seek an education.

With sincerest thanks,

W. David Slaymaker
President OSCGR
dslaymaker@oaxacastreetchildren.org

Donate: oaxacastreetchildren.org

University Graduates, 2022

Alma Nayeli Velasco



I enrolled in CEI when I was 7 and in the second grade. My older sister enrolled me along with my brother. She learned about CEI from the Department of Child Services in Oaxaca.

I studied for a degree in Public Accounting because it is an area that has a wide field of work that allows you to know different lines of business and be involved in the business world. I will complete this degree with an average of 9.2.

My plans are to begin the qualification process and work simultaneously to acquire the necessary experience and thus be able to place myself in a job that allows me to obtain more income and to develop professionally.

I am grateful to CEI because with its support I was able to finish my degree.

Dina Sarahi Cruz Chávez



I was born in the city of Oaxaca in 1998 and I live with my parents in the city of Santa Cruz

Xoxocotlán.

I began with CEI when I was 9 and was in the fourth grade. In the university, I studied law because ever since I was little I saw myself being a lawyer in order to help those who are in difficult situations. I enjoy civil, criminal and commercial law, and I have had the most opportunity to work in the latter field.

I thank CEI for helping me study. Without its support, its economic resources, tutoring, English classes and counseling, it would not have been possible to graduate from college. One of my goals is to be able to help and sponsor other children and young people who have the hope of studying and changing their lives.

Alicia Guadalupe Bautista Ruíz



I was born in the city of Oaxaca in 2000. My family and I live the neighborhood of Lomas de San Javier in the city of Santa Cruz Xoxocotlán.

I joined CEI's education program in 2014 when I was in the third year of middle school. I've maintained a grade of 8.5 during my college years and I am about to graduate with a degree in the teaching of languages. I was interested in Japanese and French,

and recently I've fallen in love with English. While I studied, I worked as a helper in a small restaurant and later in a stationery store in order to help my mom cover household expenses.

Patricia Guadalupe García de Jesús



I was born in the city of Oaxaca in 1998. My family of seven, including my parents, live in a neighborhood called El Coquito.

I enrolled in CEI when I was 5 and in kindergarten. Later, my sister and two brothers joined the program. At the end of this

school year, I will graduate with an 8.5 GPA from the school of medicine. I chose to study medicine because I know health care is a privilege and not every family has easy access to it. I am fulfilling a dream I've had since I was 6 – to be a doctor and specialize in pediatrics.

I am grateful for the support I received from CEI. It has been the pillar that supports my studies. I hope CEI continues helping more children like myself, those who don't have the resources to study. We never know if a child we come across in the street could one day be an architect or a doctor.

Karina García Gallegos



I was born in 1999 in San Juan Yagila, a small town of 300 people near Ixtlán de Juárez in the Sierra Norte. In 2017, my family – my parents, my three sisters and myself – moved to Huayapam, near the city of Oaxaca.

CEI began helping me after high school when I began studying nursing. I consider quality and humane medical care to be a human right. I want to specialize in emergency and intensive care so I can work in a hospital, live with dignity and help my family.

CEI was fundamental in the fulfillment of my dream to be a nurse. Without its support, because I had to live and study outside the city of Oaxaca near the city of Miahuatlán, I would not have been able to finish my degree. I offer my profound thanks to my sponsors and CEI.

University Graduates, 2022

María Lizbeth González Sonano



I was born in the city of Oaxaca in 2000, and I live in the small town of Jardines of Zaachila, south of the city with my brother and my parents.

I enrolled in CEI when I was 7 and in first grade. In July, I will graduate from college with a degree in primary education and a grade point average of 8.7. Since I was young, I've been attracted to teaching, which I see as a humanitarian pursuit.

My family has few resources. Without the support CEI offered me, it would have been very difficult for me to finish my studies.

Charlie Emmanuel Juárez Rodríguez



I was born in the city of Oaxaca in 1998. I enrolled in CEI because two cousins, who were orphaned, were already in the program. I joined the program during first semester of high school.

My dream of being a dental surgeon began when I was 8 and lost a tooth in a fall. The greatest obstacle to study for this career is the high cost of the class materials. Thanks to the support of CEI, I will finish this degree with a grade point average average of 8.

I hope to start a dental clinic for people with limited economic resources.

Guillermo Julián López Barrios



I was born in Oaxaca city in 1999. I began at CEI when I was 6. My family is part of the Triqui community, and my older brothers were also part of CEI.

I live in a neighborhood near Monte Alban, with my parents and five brothers, two of whom are married. I will graduate with a degree in Cultural Management and Sustainable Development and a grade point average of 8. I opted for this field because of my roots in the Triqui nation. One of my professional

aspirations is to develop community self-management projects. Thank you, CEI, for the support given to my family and me over 25 years.

Jesica Monserrat Vásquez Velasco



I was born in Oaxaca city in 1999 and live with four cousins, three aunts, my mom, and my younger sister in the neighborhood of Aurora.

I enrolled in CEI when I was 9 years old and in the third grade. I will graduate with a degree in physical therapy from the School of Medicine and Surgery in the UABJO and a grade point average of 8.5.

I am thankful to CEI. Without its support, it would not have been possible to finish my degree. My plan is to complete a specialty in respiratory therapy and another in physical therapy in traumatology and orthopedics.

In Memoriam

In 2021, Centro de Esperanza Infantil lost three of its greatest supporters



Que descansen en paz

CLIFF HINDERMAN joined the CEI Board of Directors in 2006 after helping the center since its founding. He was known affectionately to all, in Oaxaca and at home in Iowa, as "Señor Cliff." He

was a kind man, and we thank him for his generosity and dedication.



LAEL JOHNSON was a sponsor since 2012 and joined the CEI Board in 2016. He came to CEI in 2001 looking for a family to help and he fell in love with them. His generosity knew no limits, neither did his love for our children. He will live in our hearts forever.



LUIS FLORES was a member of our Board since 1999. He worked at the Secretary of Health Office and always gave us good ideas for managing the center, organizing events, and providing nutrition for the children at the center. We will remember him as a smart man with a big heart.

CEI plans major expansion in Xoxocotlán

A new grant funds opening of a satellite center to serve up to 200 children

A generous gift from Dr. Herbert Steiner, a professor emeritus at the University of California at Berkeley, will enable Oaxaca Streetchildren Grassroots and Centro de Esperanza Infantil (CEI) to open a satellite center outside of central Oaxaca.

The new center will be located in Santa Cruz Xoxocotlán, a growing municipality near the airport where about a quarter of the nearly 700 children and young adults served by CEI live. The center, projected to open by summer 2022, will offer educational and medical services, as well enrichment activities for students and parents. It will be the first major expansion of CEI's services since the opening of its location on Calle Crespo in 2000.

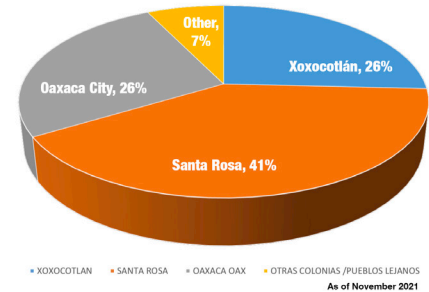
Dr. Steiner said he is making the gift to honor his wife, Emilie, who died in 2015. "Emilie wanted to help the children of Oaxaca," he said, "and to this end we included a provision in our Living Trust to achieve this goal. I am just carrying out her wishes."

Emilie Steiner's loving connection to Oaxaca reaches back decades. "Fifty



Emilie and Herb Steiner

The majority of CEI's students don't live in central Oaxaca



years ago, my wife first visited Oaxaca and fell in love with its people, their culture, and their way of life," Dr. Steiner wrote in a statement for the Fundación Alfredo Harp Helú of Oaxaca. "In the intervening years deep friendships developed, and she returned often to experience the beauty of the region and the warmth of the people. At the same time, she saw a lot of abject poverty ... and decided to try to help to expand the educational opportunities of the poor children in the region, and thereby to offer them a brighter future."

The East Bay Community Foundation, of Oakland, CA, will administer the grant, which is intended to be a multi-year grant.

CEI Staff ¡Gracias por todo!

During two difficult years of the pandemic, the hard work and commitment of CEI's staff kept the program running. They are, from left to right:

- **Ferdinando "Peppo" Marotta**, volunteer coordinator, 9 years.
- **Eréndira García Revilla**, coordinator, 11 years.
- **Leonor Pacheco Ramírez**, housekeeper, 21 years.
- **Juana Ramírez Flores**, cook, 21 years.
- **Diana Gómez Ávila**, social worker, 7 years.
- **María Elisa Velasco Santa Anna**, accountant, 8 years.



CEI Honor Roll 2021-22



Luz Elena Cruz Díaz
Age: 17
High school
Years in CEI: 6

In one of the most difficult years ever for students of all grades – forced by pandemic-related school closures to study from home, using a cellphone, 13 students in CEI's programs scored perfect grades, 10 out of 10. Five are in primary school, two are in secondary, two are in high school, and four are in the university or completing internships.



Alexander Mateo Valenzuela López
Age: 7
Primary
Years in CEI: 5



Sara Vanessa Cruz Valencia
Age: 7
Primary
Years in CEI: 1



Getzemaní Rafael Almaráz
Age: 21
University
Years in CEI: 14



Dafne Naomi Jiménez Salinas
Age: 13
High school
Years in CEI: 6



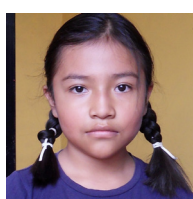
James Santes López
Age: 7
Primary
Years in CEI: 1



Cesia Vásquez Hernández
Age: 24
University
Years in CEI: 16



Arely Ayleth Marín Martínez
Age: 7
Primary
Years in CEI: 3



Sandra Zurita Ruíz
Age: 8
Primary
Years in CEI: 1



Fredy Uriel López Santos
Age: 21
University
Years in CEI: 10



Iris Pérez Sánchez
Age: 13
Secondary
Years in CEI: 5



Erika Gudelia Hernández Martínez
Age: 21
University
Years in CEI: 7



Karla Citlali Moreno García
Age: 17
High School
Years in CEI: 6

STUDENT POPULATION		
Level / Years	2020	2021
Kinder	5	3
Elementary	190	160
Secondary (middle)	163	186
High School	174	154
University / Technical	108	129
Pending professional exam	12	13
Temporarily quit school	19	35
Totals	671	681

BY THE NUMBERS		
	2019-20	2020-21
Applications	102	56
Family assessment	96	38
New students	54	71
Waiting list	52	10
Dropouts	34	42
Sponsor reassignments	15	8
Remedial classes	92	124
H.S. seniors, college-bound	67	58

Centro de Esperanza Infantil

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Donate

Web: oaxacastreetchildren.org
Check: Oaxaca Streetchildren Grassroots Inc.
P.O. Box 2219 Benton AR 72018
Email: dslaymaker@oaxacastreetchildren.org
Phone: 501-574-9040

Canadian Friends of Oaxaca

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