



## 'Incaparina,' you say?

### A CREEK DE CUATRO CAYOS' NUTRITION PACKAGE INCLUDES PORRIDGE

By Fred Walker

During the 2017 **TEACH** delegation visit to our sponsored sites and institutions in Guatemala, we were introduced to a rural village that had an adequate school building, but, prior to our visit, had been without a teacher for several years.

We were pleased to see that a new teacher, for whom **TEACH** is now providing funding, was now present. There were 13 families — approximately 80 Q'eqchi' and Ladino people — including 15

children of school age. The villagers are subsistence farmers who also fish for commercial purposes and for their own consumption.

The community lacks basic services such as electricity, running water, and health care.

We observed that the children appeared malnourished with listless expressions on their faces. When we mentioned this to some of the parents, they told us that, in fact, most of the children were malnourished and had stomach parasites. Nutrition, clean water,

and good health are key to a child's education. As the Bishop of Izabal told us, "You can't preach religion or educate people unless they have clean water and food in their bellies."

Before leaving the villagers, **TEACH** agreed to fund a teacher's salary, a water filter for the school, anti-parasite medicine, vitamins (prescribed by a pediatrician), and a nutrition package.

The nutrition package for each student's noon meal consisting of "incaparina" and a high-protein cookie. Incaparina is a porridge-like dish made of water, corn flour, soya flour, cinnamon and sugar. Served hot, this is a very nutritional and tasty dish.

When our **TEACH** contingent again visited Creek de Cuatro Cayos in February of 2018, we were pleased to see that the children appeared livelier and more spirited — evidence that the nutrition package and medicine had improved their diet and health.

After that visit, the villagers forwarded to **TEACH** a proposal for an expanded Nutrition Project, with the explicit goal of further improving the nutrition and academic performance of the community's children. The project



Creek de Cuatro Cayos students have been eating nutritious lunches at school, thanks to generous donations from **TEACH** contributors.

Nutrition story continued on page 2



*A Creek de Cuatro mother, baby, and younger students pause at school.*

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involves the organization and training of parents, with emphasis on the value and importance of their children's food and nutrition, deworming and distribution of vitamins, and preparation of a dietary chart with different menus adapted to the area. **TEACH** presented this plan to St. Mary of Sorrows Catholic Church, in Fairfax, Va., for fiscal year 2019

funding. It was approved, and the first installment was sent to the village.

It was heartwarming to see the children's faces and lively expressions during our 2018 visit, and it is our expectation that we will see even more progress when we next visit in 2019.

*Fred Walker is the Treasurer for **TEACH**.*

## DID YOU KNOW?

- The 2019 **TEACH** trip to Guatemala is from Jan. 31 to Feb. 13. Come with us!
- Alternative gift cards are available for Christmas and birthdays. Just ask.  
Contact at [shari.zamarra@gmail.com](mailto:shari.zamarra@gmail.com) or 703-323-9367.
- We are grateful for your generosity in responding to our Computer Fund Request. We have purchased 10 refurbished laptops and will carry down at least five to Guatemala in February.
- Save the date of Saturday, March 23, 2019 for the next **TEACH** Bingo and silent auction fundraiser. Please contact Karen Abraham at 703-978-1147, or at [board@teach.org](mailto:board@teach.org) for additional information.

## CHAIR'S MESSAGE:

### WHY TEACH WORKS

*By Shari Zamarra*

**Talent**

**Energy**

**Aspirations**

**Creative fun: Bunco, Bingo**

**Honoring Fr. Tom Moran**

**Mission**

**Alternative to violence**

**Trips**

**Truth**

**Education**

**Respect**

**Supporters**

Above are just a few of the reasons why **TEACH** matters and why it continues to succeed. During this season of giving and anticipation, you may want to reflect on why you invest in our mission. Your comments and questions are always welcome.

## MARKETING VOLUNTEER NEEDED FOR PROJECT

**TEACH**, a non-profit group that supports education for students in eastern Guatemala, seeks a volunteer with marketing expertise to design a campaign to recruit sponsors for our program. This one-time effort would utilize various resources that we know of but would require some creative energy and techniques to get out our message.

We are happy to work closely with the volunteer and wish to begin as soon as possible.

Please call Shari Zamarra at 703-323-9367, or send an email to [shari.zamarra@gmail.com](mailto:shari.zamarra@gmail.com).



# ESSAY: HEEDING ONE'S OWN ADVICE CAN PAY OFF GENEROUSLY

By Christian Zamarra

Some of us may develop mantras or encouraging phrases when we attempt a difficult task or take on a challenge. I have a story about one of my challenges — how I shared my mantra with some very special students in Guatemala, and then how I followed my own advice with another challenge.

Ever since I was a little kid, I was fascinated with the weather. Back in 2006 I returned to college to earn a degree in meteorology. But my math and science grades in high school deterred me from going after this dream because it required extensive calculus, chemistry and physics courses.

To succeed in these difficult courses, I developed the mantra: “**Failure is not an option.**” Repeating this often encouraged me to continue the difficult studies. While traveling with **TEACH** this past July, we met the high school scholarship students at INSPA along with Padre Carlos, Padre Abel, and Vilma. I listened to the students share experiences about school, their



The **TEACH** summer delegation visits with INSPA parents and students. Padre Abel is on the far left, and the author is next to him.

challenges and their successes. (INSPA stands for Instituto San Pablo, a middle and high school.)

Many of the students spoke about the difficulty of physics. It was then that I recalled my own mantra, and I decided to speak up and encourage them that “Failure is not an option.” I told them, “Yes, physics and other school courses may be difficult, but they are not impossible, and like me, you will succeed.”

Recently, I decided to quit smoking cigarettes after nearly 25 years, another big challenge. But this time I was armed with my mantra, “Failure is not an option.”

I can say that I’ve been smoke-free since October 1, 2018. I hope this message will inspire you and others to never give up.

*Christian Zamarra joined his mother, Shari, to travel to Guatemala in July 2018.*



Editor: Toni Maltagliali

This newsletter is published two times a year by **TEACH** (Toward Educating America's **CH**ildren) a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. EIN 05-0521491  
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## OUR MISSION

The mission of **TEACH** is to actively respond to the schooling needs of underserved children, in Mayan communities in Guatemala.

**MISSION APPEALS HEARD IN THREE STATES**

*By Donald Gantz*

This year **TEACH** had the opportunity to make parish mission appeals in the Diocese of Charlotte, NC (two parishes), the Diocese of Patterson, NJ (two parishes) and the Diocese of Bridgeport, CT. Padre Carlos Menjívar of the Claretian Missionary Fathers of Central America, who lives and works among Maya community in Guatemala, delivered two parish appeals in Charlotte in July and one in Patterson in August.

Padre Manuel Sanchez, also of the Claretian Missionary Fathers of Central America, delivered the second Patterson appeal in August. **TEACH** Board members hosted the padres during the trips and supported the appeals by providing information about **TEACH** to parishioners. Board Members Fred and Mary Walker personally delivered the appeal in Bridgeport in July. The generous donations received through the annual mission appeals have been critical additions to the **TEACH** budget. **TEACH** co-founder David Megel is seeking opportunities for diocesan parish mission appeals for 2019.

Padre Carlos Menjívar’s parish in eastern Guatemala consists of some 85 villages with a total population of approximately 25,000 persons who are primarily indigenous Q’eq’chi. In his mission appeal homily, he stated: “In addition to many ministerial duties, we are devoted to providing an opportunity to attend school to the thousands of Mayan children who live in the



*Padre Carlos and Jimmy Swain, who was adopted from Guatemala, visit at St. Anthony of Padua parish, in Patterson, NJ.*

mountains of Guatemala and would otherwise not be able to go to school. Unfortunately, few Mayan children have that opportunity. And yet education, we know, is the only way to break the cycle of poverty that binds them.”

A sizable portion of the **TEACH** budget goes to Padre Carlos’ parish to support an elementary school, a boarding facility, and scholarships for post-elementary education. **TEACH** has also supported

the parish with funds to build a kitchen and dining facility for the boarding students. And we are currently providing money to build an elementary school in one of the parish’s rural villages. **TEACH**’s funds pay for the materials and skilled labor, while the local men provide the manual labor gratis as their way of “buying into” the projects.

*Donald Gantz is a **TEACH** Board member.*

**Yes, I would like to be a **TEACH** Sponsor**

*Please ask a friend to be a sponsor of **TEACH**. \$30 a month (\$360 a year) will keep a child in school.*

*I'll sponsor:*

Boy  Girl *in primary grades*

Boy  Girl *in middle school*

*The Semuy Basico Middle School*

*I have enclosed a check in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_*

**Make all checks payable to **TEACH****

*Mail to: Toward Educating America’s CHildren  
P.O. Box 188  
Burke, VA 22009*

*I cannot be a sponsor now, but I am enclosing a donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_*

*Name \_\_\_\_\_*

*Address \_\_\_\_\_*

*City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_*

*Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (Other) \_\_\_\_\_*

*E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_*

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