

IMPACT REPORT

GUATEMALAN EDUCATIONAL
OUTREACH, INC

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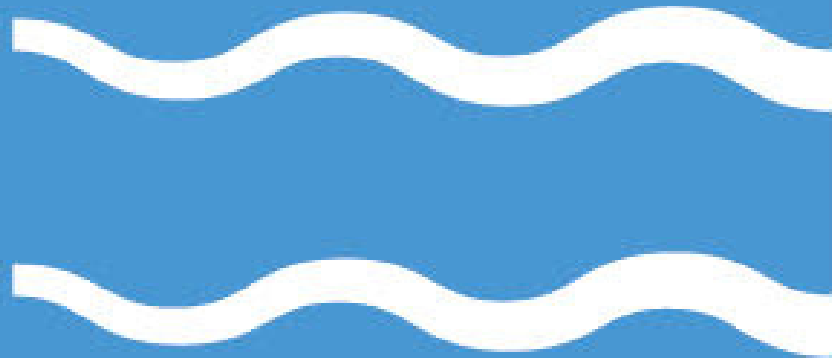


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ABOUT US



Mission

To promote opportunities in targeted communities in Guatemala to improve access to education for those with limited financial resources.

Goals

GEO supports efforts to provide education in rural Joya Honda, Guatemala at The Little Mountain School. Our goal is to change the trajectories for the future of our students by giving them a quality education, enabling them to obtain employment opportunities and earn living wages as adults.

Vision

To be an educational community of excellent academic standards, working toward the integral development and training of students, employing professionals committed to ethical and moral principles, producing young people who are competent and capable of positively influencing their society.

Values

Love, respect, acceptance, collaboration, equality, solidarity, punctuality, responsibility, honesty, happiness, integrity, gratitude.



ABOUT US



I remember when I went to school for the first time in the mountains of Palencia, Guatemala. I was seven years old and I went into 1st grade. I think we were 22 students. By the time I finished 6th grade we were four students. I was the only one who made it through high school. More than forty years later, you would think that things would be different. But not much has changed with this situation.

In 2016 Forrest Day, a friend from Lexington, Kentucky, asked me if we could do something to help out in Guatemala. I told him that maybe we could do something in education. We went to the place I grew up and discovered that things are much like they were when I was a child. Many children drop out of school and very few make it through high school. Some don't even know how to read and write. We decided to begin a school that would provide high-quality bilingual education in order for the children to finish high school and have better opportunities for getting into college or finding a job.

We started small, but we are growing. In this report, you can see what has happened since then, especially in the last year, with our school, "Escuela la Montañita" (The Little Mountain School), in Joya Honda, Guatemala.

One of the many things that make me very glad is the fact that, so far, we have had zero dropouts. All our students who have enrolled over the last five years are still at the school. As of the 2022 school year, we have six classrooms. We are educating local children from pre-K to fourth grade. Our hope is to add one grade level each year so that our current students, and those who enroll in future years, can complete their education at The Little Mountain School.

Thank you very much for being part of our team. Together we will continue enabling more children to achieve their potential.



Fr. Miguel Alvizures
President



>> SUMMARY OF SITUATION IN GUATEMALA

Dear GEO supporter,

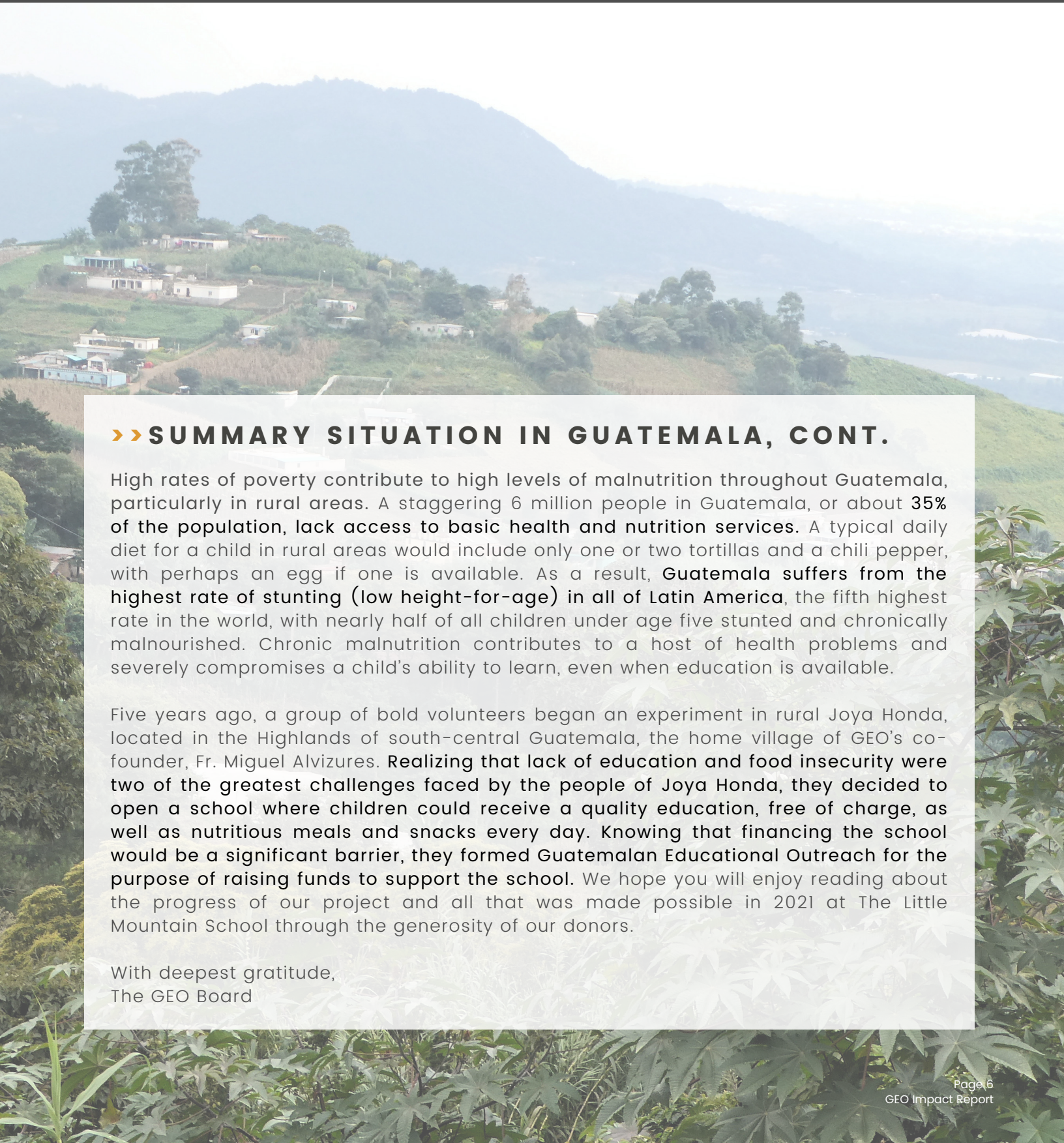
Guatemala is one of the most biologically diverse nations on the planet, rich in natural resources. With a population of roughly 18 million people, Guatemala has the largest economy in Central America. However, these advantages have not translated into prosperity for the people of Guatemala. Decades of civil war, followed by more decades of governmental corruption and vulnerability to natural disasters, have left a host of problems in their wake. Hope for the future of Guatemala lies with the next generation. But they face at least **two major challenges: lack of education and food insecurity.**

In theory, the Guatemalan government provides six years of free, compulsory education to the country's children. The reality is, however, not so positive. **Guatemala spends only 2.8% of its gross domestic product on education**, the lowest percentage of any Latin American or Caribbean country. Most primary school teachers have only a high school level education themselves. The entire system is under-resourced, especially in rural areas, failing to meet minimum standards for space, materials, equipment, and sanitation. Computers and Wi-Fi are often not accessible, especially in rural areas.

Poverty is the biggest barrier to the children of Guatemala receiving an education. The Guatemalan government does not supply books, materials, uniforms, or transportation and, with more than half of the population living below the poverty line, **many families cannot afford to send their children to school.** It is often deemed a better option for children to contribute to the financial welfare of the family by dropping out of school at an early age and going to work. As a result, Guatemalan children receive an average of only 4 years of poor-quality education, with only 3 in 10 children completing 6 years of school. Over 25% of the population is illiterate, the highest rate of illiteracy in Latin America, with the percentage rising to over 60% in some rural areas.

The lack of education for the people of Guatemala is one of the main driving factors in generational poverty. Nearly 60% of the population lives below the poverty line, with more than half a million people living in extreme poverty, receiving an income of less than \$1.90 (US dollars) per day. Without an education, there is little hope for earning a living wage. And so, the cycle of grinding poverty continues.

ABOUT US



>> SUMMARY SITUATION IN GUATEMALA, CONT.

High rates of poverty contribute to high levels of malnutrition throughout Guatemala, particularly in rural areas. A staggering 6 million people in Guatemala, or about **35% of the population, lack access to basic health and nutrition services**. A typical daily diet for a child in rural areas would include only one or two tortillas and a chili pepper, with perhaps an egg if one is available. As a result, **Guatemala suffers from the highest rate of stunting (low height-for-age) in all of Latin America**, the fifth highest rate in the world, with nearly half of all children under age five stunted and chronically malnourished. Chronic malnutrition contributes to a host of health problems and severely compromises a child's ability to learn, even when education is available.

Five years ago, a group of bold volunteers began an experiment in rural Joya Honda, located in the Highlands of south-central Guatemala, the home village of GEO's co-founder, Fr. Miguel Alvizures. **Realizing that lack of education and food insecurity were two of the greatest challenges faced by the people of Joya Honda, they decided to open a school where children could receive a quality education, free of charge, as well as nutritious meals and snacks every day.** Knowing that financing the school would be a significant barrier, they formed Guatemalan Educational Outreach for the purpose of raising funds to support the school. We hope you will enjoy reading about the progress of our project and all that was made possible in 2021 at The Little Mountain School through the generosity of our donors.

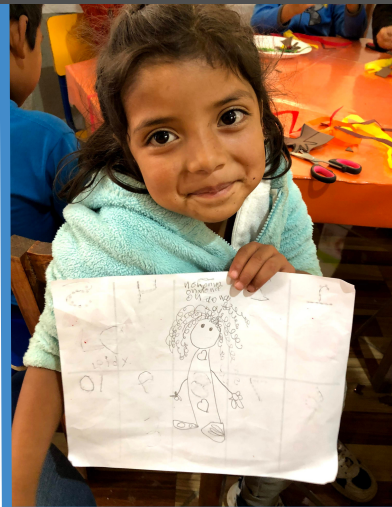
With deepest gratitude,
The GEO Board

ACCOMPLISHMENTS



101
STUDENTS ENROLLED

- 22** Pre-K students
- 22** Kindergarten
- 21** First grade
- 20** Second grade
- 16** Third grade



ACCOMPLISHMENTS



5 GRADE LEVELS
8 TEACHERS
5 SPANISH TEACHERS
3 ENGLISH TEACHERS

Classes are taught in Spanish and in English. Students also receive instruction in K'iche, the indigenous Mayan language.

Spanish instruction is...

controlled by the Guatemalan Ministry of Education and covers four categories: artistic expression, social/natural environment, communication/language, and skills/learning. Topics of instruction include:

- Reading
- Writing
- Math
- Science
- Social studies
- Physical education

English instruction is...

left to the discretion of the teacher. Because of the challenges of learning during the pandemic, our English teachers decided to focus on making sure our students had a good foundation in the basics, including:

- Reading
- Writing
- Spelling
- Phonics
- Numbers
- Basic conversational skills
- General vocabulary
- Days of the week
- Months of the year
- Weather
- Moods/feelings



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

>> HOW THE LITTLE MOUNTAIN SCHOOL HANDLED THE PANDEMIC

We started the year optimistically planning on having small groups of students in the classroom. We quickly realized that wouldn't be happening because of the rising number of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations. Parents came to school every other Friday to collect homework packets so students could work from home. In addition to these packets, teachers provided instruction through weekly videos along with individual and group video calls. Despite the challenge of the majority of our students having limited internet access, the combined effort of our teachers, parents and students made working from home possible.



The combined effort of our teachers, parents and students made working from home possible.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS



1,820

meal packets were distributed in 2021 to the households of students.

>> NUMBER OF MEALS

Before COVID-19 the school provided two meals and a snack daily for each student. Breakfast usually consists of beans, eggs, cheese and tortillas. Lunch is often a soup with chicken, carrots, potato and güisquil (a locally grown green squash, grown in the field in front of the school during certain times of the year) served with tortilla. Snacks are usually fruits or tostadas (like a hard tortilla) with beans or avocado spread on top. In 2021 teachers and staff were served similar meals daily and since students were learning from home food packets were sent home every other week. These packs included diet essentials such as beans, rice, masa (used to make tortillas), oil, oats, pasta, and milk. We sent one meal packet home per household every two weeks for ten months of the school year, totaling 70 packets every two weeks or 1,820 meal packets.



>> IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

In 2021 the school employed:

7

**LOCAL GUATEMALAN
TEACHERS**

3

**LOCAL GUATEMALAN
STAFF/ADMINISTRATORS**

**We also employed
multiple construction
workers who built our
new classroom.**



ACCOMPLISHMENTS



"It's a joy to be part of the school. We want to thank all of the teachers and supporters of the school who are providing new opportunities for our children. Thank you for all of the support and love that you give our children."


-Mom to kindergartener Renata



“

Thank you for the education you've provided us.

Imelda (kindergarten)




“

I'd like her to be an independent woman capable to do all on her own.

Mom of 3rd grader Angela

"I want my kid to be someone important in society."


- Albertina (mom of pre-k student Axel)



“

I want the best for him, you know I am a mom and I love my kids; like all moms I want my kids to advance in life.

Mom to 3rd grader Oswaldo




“

Thank you to the school, you've taught me how to better myself by learning a lot of things. I love all my teachers.

Jordan (kindergarten)

"Thank you to the Little Mountain School for teaching my child so many things. He's been enrolled for two years now. He completed pre-k and kindergarten and is now in 1st grade and I've seen how far he has advanced at LMS. Thank you to the teachers who work daily to educate my child. Thank you to the Spanish teachers who have taught my child to improve his communication and socialization. Thank you to the English teachers who have been very patient with him while he learns a new language."


-Maria Carolina (mom to kindergartener Jordan)



“

My greatest wish is for my kids to be important in society, I want them to study a lot so they can have better opportunities than us.

Zulma (mom to 1st and 3rd graders, Sebastian (left) and Marvin (right))



IMPACT



>> CHANGES IN THE COMMUNITY

1

All students, boys AND girls, 1st - 4th grade, remain enrolled with 0% attrition. Parents now WANT their kids to go to school.

2

This attitude has replaced what we saw five years ago, which was mostly a sense of hopelessness.

3

At that time, most children left school to help their families by going to work, earning some sort of meager income. Now parents are full of hope for the future of their children, and are willing to sacrifice personally to provide that opportunity.

4

El Camino (page 13) made a difference in the mindset of parents in terms of what the local community can accomplish. Parents are now thinking, "If Fr. Miguel walked all the way to Costa Rica, I can make a sacrifice for my kids, too. Others are making an effort; we can, too."

5

People now have hope.

6

A Guatemalan board was created made up of local citizens. This has largely transferred most of the decision-making about how the school is run from the GEO Board to the local community.

7

Levels of enthusiasm among our teachers has greatly increased. Local Guatemalan professionals have been working with our teachers, doing in-service training. Professional development of teachers has increased, stressing teamwork and the values set by GEO and The Little Mountain School.



FUNDRAISING

>> CAMINO DE SAN JOSÉ

Pope Francis designated 2021 as the Year of Saint Joseph. As Fr. Miguel Alvizures was waiting in Guatemala, unable to return to the United States until he received his visa, he decided to use the time to raise funds for The Little Mountain School. And so El Camino de San José (The Way of Saint Joseph) was born. Fr. Miguel was joined by friends Eduardo Lemus, Ignacio Bautista, and Leo Chaverri. Their walking route stretched over 550 miles through the Central American countries of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Costa Rica. Their effort raised over \$35,000 for GEO and The Little Mountain School. The experiences of Fr. Miguel, Ignacio, Eduardo, and Leo along the entire Camino have been recorded, complete with many beautiful photographs, in their blog. You can read about the places they visited, the people they met, and the lessons they learned at

www.thewayofstjoseph.org/news.



FUNDRAISING

>> REINA'S RUN

Former GEO President Reina Slaymaker ran the Philadelphia Half-Marathon in November as a fundraiser for GEO and the Little Mountain School. Her goal was to raise \$100 for each of the 13.1 miles, totaling \$1,310, but generous donations immediately came pouring into her online campaign (via the GiveButter fundraising platform) and her goal was surpassed in just 3 days. So she DOUBLED her goal, totaling \$2,620, which was also surpassed. The campaign brought in over \$3,000! She is extremely grateful and inspired to lead more race fundraisers for GEO in the future.

>> LOCAL BUSINESS CONTRIBUTIONS

Sav's Restaurant & Gourmet Ice Cream, a local Lexington, Kentucky, restaurant featuring West African cuisine, hosted a fundraiser for GEO in late October. Ten percent of sales from that day went to GEO to support the Little Mountain School.

Reina's run brought in over
\$3,000 for GEO.



FUNDRAISING



THE LITTLE MOUNTAIN COFFEE

"I love the coffee and I love helping the school!"
- quote from a customer of The Little Mountain Coffee Company

>> COFFEE SALES

There is always a need for continuous revenue streams to support The Little Mountain School. Friends of Fr. Miguel Alvizures suggested creating a coffee business. Fr. Miguel talked to many local coffee growers and businessmen and started The Little Mountain Coffee Company. In December of 2021 The Little Mountain Coffee Company started selling coffee at a local Catholic church in Lexington, Kentucky. The goal in 2022 is to expand sales to other churches in the Lexington area. The profits from The Little Mountain Coffee Company sales go to support The Little Mountain School.



FUNDRAISING



>> SISTERS OF CHARITY OF NAZARETH GRANT

The Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Ministry Fund was established in 1997 to support work for justice for oppressed peoples, especially the economically poor and women, and to care for the earth. In recognition that GEO's mission correlates closely with their own fund criteria, the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, a Catholic order of women based in Nelson County, Kentucky, have been generous to Guatemalan Educational Outreach for several years. In 2020 they granted an award of \$23,000 to fund the salaries of three Guatemalan teachers at The Little Mountain School for the 2021 school year. The GEO Board is especially grateful to the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth for furthering the shared mission of seeking systemic change in rural Guatemala by financing education for the children of Joya Honda and surrounding communities.

>> MATCHING GRANT

In 2021, an anonymous donor offered a \$15,000 matching grant to GEO. Through the hard work of our Board and friends, we were able to raise the entire amount, and thus take full advantage of this donor's generosity.

>> NEW SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION GRANT

Near the end of the 2021 school year, two visitors to The Little Mountain School saw first hand how the school's current facilities will soon be inadequate to meet the needs of the school's rapidly growing enrollment. This generous couple surprised the GEO Board with a \$200,000 restricted grant for the purpose of building a new, larger school building. This amazing gift will ensure that The Little Mountain School will have sufficient space to serve all its students for years to come. The faculty, staff, students, and families of The Little Mountain School, as well as the GEO Board, are incredibly grateful for this amazing gift!



FUNDRAISING



>> CHILD SPONSORSHIP

The fall of 2021 saw the launch of GEO's Sponsor a Student program. There are three ways to sponsor a child:

- BASIC** → covers the child's tuition
- INTERMEDIATE** → covers the child's tuition plus food (breakfast, snack, and lunch)
- FULL** → covers the child's tuition, meals, school maintenance, teacher wages, and additional administrative costs

The money raised will be directed to a common fund to maintain the proper balance of the expenses of all the students in the school. However, each child will be matched with only one sponsor, and sponsors will have the opportunity to receive individual updates from their child. Sponsoring a child is one of the most rewarding and inspiring ways to change a child's future. Sponsorship assists in meeting the basic needs of students at The Little Mountain School, helping prepare them for life while also benefiting their families and the entire community.



FUNDRAISING

>> VISIT FROM MARY QUEEN TEAM

In October 2021, a team from Mary Queen of the Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Lexington, Kentucky visited Joya Honda, Guatemala and The Little Mountain School. They spent time getting to know some of the students and their families, visiting some of their homes. They also helped out with some repairs at The Little Mountain School. Their visit gave the team members first-hand knowledge of the community of Joya Honda and the work being done at the school. It also greatly increased interest in the work of Guatemalan Educational Outreach, with several of the team members desiring to continue working for the benefit of the children of The Little Mountain School upon their return to Kentucky.

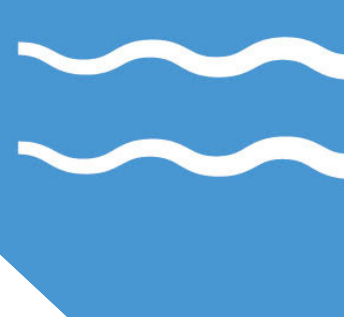
"The visit to the Little Mountain School was wonderful and transforming. I am so touched by the love and dedication between the teachers and administrators, students and their families. We saw love in action. I am in full support of the mission to help a community out of poverty through education as well as better nutrition and loving support. I see this as a way of preventing continued poverty and despair and instead giving hope and a good future to this community."
- MQHR Visiting Team Member

"Upon visiting with the families, I was struck by their dedication and by how much the parents believed in and valued their children's education. The children were eager to show off their schoolwork and the English they had learned. The Little Mountain School is giving Guatemalan families a reason to hope for a better life and a better future."
- MQHR Visiting Team Member

"The experience warmed my heart. We visited several families of students. Both the parents and the students were happy with what the school had to offer. They saw a better future. The teachers were very dedicated to the school and the students. We were able to do some painting of the school. It was a positive experience. The participants decided to sell coffee, as a school fundraiser."
- MQHR Visiting Team Member



FUNDRAISING



>> INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS

Former GEO President Reina Slaymaker participated in the University of Kentucky Professional Learning Series for Non-Profit Leaders in January-April 2021. The course covered important aspects of non-profit leadership including financial planning, social media and marketing, administrative operations, and more. The series also matched GEO with a University of Kentucky student intern, Jake Kahoe. A frequent donor to GEO generously covered the cost of the



course for Reina to attend. Upon completion of the course, participants were able to compete for grant awards for the non-profit organizations they represented and served, and Reina's presentation was awarded a \$1,000 grant to GEO and The Little Mountain School!

In January 2021 Grehan Associates, a University of Kentucky student-run communications and marketing firm, accepted GEO and the Little Mountain School as clients for their marketing work. These UK students have generously donated their time, energy, and talents to help GEO and The Little Mountain School with social media, newsletters, website maintenance, and more.

>> OVERALL FUNDS RAISED FROM ALL SOURCES



Through the hard work of our Board Members and friends and the generosity of our donors, Guatemalan Educational Outreach was able to meet its 2021 fundraising goals.

FUTURE



>> RETURN TO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION

The Covid pandemic meant that The Little Mountain School had to teach remotely for the entirety of 2021. It is our fervent hope that in-person instruction can resume in 2022. The faculty and staff of The Little Mountain School are following the mandates of the Guatemalan government and are eagerly awaiting the opportunity to fully reopen their doors.

>> ADDING A CLASS

The plan for the 2022 school year at The Little Mountain School includes adding a new 4th grade class to accommodate our students as they progress. And our pre-K class will be populated by a whole new group of students! With about 20 children per grade level, it is expected that enrollment at The Little Mountain School in 2022 will be about 120 students.

>> PAVING THE ROAD IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The road to The Little Mountain School has been in rough shape for some time and is not an easy road on which to drive. In 2022, in partnership with the local government, it is hoped that the approach to the school will be paved, making access to the school easier and safer for the students and staff of The Little Mountain School



FUTURE



>> NEW BUILDING

In 2018 The Little Mountain School started accepting 5 & 6-year-old students. Each year the school adds an additional grade. In 2021, a third grade was added. The original classroom buildings could no longer support the growing student population. A decision was made to build a new school. In 2021, the design of a new school was completed. Construction is expected to start early 2022 and be completed before the start of the 2023 school year (January 2023). The new school will be the home for local students from 1st to 6th grade



THIS IS THE SITE OF THE NEW SCHOOL BUILDING, JUST ADJACENT TO THE CURRENT FACILITIES OF THE LITTLE MOUNTAIN SCHOOL.

FUTURE

>> CHILD SPONSORSHIP - RELATIONSHIPS WITH SPONSORS

Many of the students at The Little Mountain School now have sponsors through GEO's Sponsor a Student program. In 2022 we would love to see every one of our students with a sponsor! Additionally, we hope to find a way to begin building relationships between our students and their sponsors, knowing that many sponsors will never be able to actually visit Guatemala. If you would be interested in sponsoring one of our students, please visit our website at:

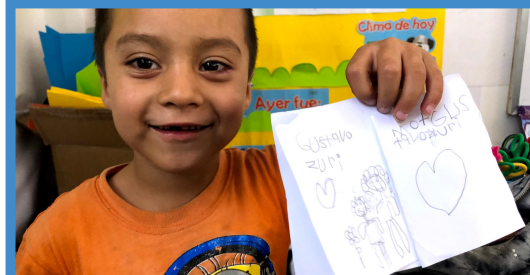
www.guatemalaneducationaloutreach.org/sponsor-a-student

>> FUNDRAISING GOALS FOR 2022

At The Little Mountain School, it costs about \$1,200 to educate and feed one child for one year. With an anticipated enrollment of about 120 students, we will need to raise nearly \$150,000 dollars to meet our goals. In addition, we need roughly another \$60,000 to complete the new classroom building at The Little Mountain School. All told, there is a need for more than \$210,000 dollars.

The Little Mountain School and GEO depend on the generosity and hard work of our donors and friends to change the future for the citizens of Joya Honda and the surrounding area by investing in the lives of their children.

Please consider how you can be involved. No donation is too small, and every effort makes a difference!



HOW YOU CAN HELP

>> BUY COFFEE

The Little Mountain Coffee Company donates its profits to GEO for the benefit of The Little Mountain School. If you live in the Lexington, Kentucky area, you can pick up a bag of The Little Mountain Coffee at Mary Queen of the Holy Rosary Catholic Church or St. Paul Catholic Church in Lexington. The Little Mountain Coffee is also available at St. Leo Catholic Church in Versailles. We're hoping that you will soon be able to find The Little Mountain Coffee at other churches in the Lexington area and at Benedictus Bookstore in Lexington.

>> HOLD AN EVENT

What are you already doing that could benefit GEO?

- Are you participating in an event such as a 5K? Why not ask friends to sponsor you and donate their contributions to GEO?
- Do you have a messy garage? How about cleaning it out, holding a yard sale, and donating the proceeds to GEO?
- Would your kids like to spend an afternoon running a lemonade stand? What if you agreed on the condition that they would donate that cash to GEO?
- Do you own a business? Would you consider donating a portion of your profits for one day to GEO?
- Are you a coffee drinker? Guatemala is known for its wonderful coffee! How hard would it be to skip your Starbucks one day a week and give the money you save to GEO?
- You get the idea! Get creative! We'd love to hear your ideas!



>> SPONSOR A CHILD

One of the easiest ways to be involved is to sponsor a student. Just visit <https://www.guatemalaneducationaloutreach.org/sponsor-a-student/>. Choose a student and your preferred level of sponsorship. Then fill out and submit the online form. It's that easy!

HOW YOU CAN HELP








>> VISIT THE LITTLE MOUNTAIN SCHOOL/JOYA HONDA

Many people have found that visiting Guatemala and The Little Mountain School opens their hearts in a way that words never can. Would you be interested in making the journey to this beautiful country? We'd be happy to help you with planning and contacts. Send us a note via teamgeoky@gmail.com and we'll get the ball rolling!

>> SPREAD THE WORD

Please tell all your friends about GEO and The Little Mountain School!

- Like us on Facebook and Instagram, then share our posts
- Tell your friends about our Sponsor a Student program and point them to our website: <https://www.guatemalaneducationaloutreach.org/sponsor-a-student>
- If you live in the Lexington, Kentucky area and would like a member of our board to speak at your church or civic group, just let us know! You can contact us via our website at <https://www.guatemalaneducationaloutreach.org/contact-us/> or at teamgeoky@gmail.com
- We'd love to advertise or include a brief article in your church's or organization's newsletter. Please reach out to us at teamgeoky@gmail.com

-  [GUATEMALANEDUCATIONALOUTREACH.ORG](https://www.guatemalaneducationaloutreach.org)
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IMPACT REPORT

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GEO
Guatemalan
Educational Outreach

OEG
Objetivos Educativos
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