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DONNA WILCOX HART AWARD

Event

On April 24, 2013, the Donna Wilcox Hart Award was presented to the organization Chantiik Taj Tajinkutik A.C., one of the Amigos de San Cristóbal grant recipients for 2013. Chantiik received the award in recognition of their work on innovative projects which support child and youth workers in San Cristóbal de Las Casas. Nancy Orr and Yatziri Zepeda presented the award to Andrea Fustaci at the Chantiik center.

The award ceremony is a time for family, friends and others to honor the memory of Donna Wilcox Hart, an amazing woman who had a special love for San Cristóbal, Chiapas and its people. The award was established four years ago, when an anonymous donor, who has supported Amigos since its inception, offered to set up a matching \$3000US grant in Donna's memory. Each year, the Amigos Project Committee selects an outstanding new project to receive the award.

Yatziri Zepeda, the Amigos director at the time, read a brief text about Donna's life and the reasons Chantiik was chosen to receive the award this year. Then Amigos Board member Nancy Orr presented the plaque to Andrea Fustaci, Chantiik's representative, who spoke a few words of gratitude on behalf of





Different moments of the event

all the youths who participate in the project.

Nancy and Yatziri were accompanied by several Amigos members, including representatives of the Amigos Project Committee. The trainers for the Chantiik bakery and computer workshops and some of the young participants were well represented at the ceremony. Also in attendance were some university students interested in learning about Chantiik's economic development projects.

Special thanks to Chantiik for hosting the celebration at their training center and allowing us to see the bread making and selling project and to sample the delicious cookies made by the students. It was a day of happy celebration to honor both the memory of a special woman and a very worthwhile Amigos partner project.



12 GUAYACANES DEL SUR

Visit



Participation in the event

On Sunday, June 9, projects committee member Alison Abbott visited one of the projects 12 Guayacanes has in the Comalapa región near the Chiapas border. She was accompanied by two young visitors from Chicago and Helena Blanco and Julio Arce, representing Madre Tierra Mexico (MTM).

It was there that MTM's "First Meeting, Farmer to Farmer" took place. Among those participating were other groups that helped collaborate with MTM as well as a few interested in connecting with them in the future. There were

at least sixty in attendance.

The meeting began with a welcome from Director of 12 Guayacanes, Nolberto Lopez, who gave special thanks to Amigos de San Cristóbal for their support over the years.

A large part of the agenda was dedicated to sharing ideas and experiences related to healthy foods and the dangers of snack food. Many farmers work in the production of nutritious foods but eat poorly on occasion due to having little time and money.

A range of production areas were mentioned, including corn, beans, tomatoes, and the problems and solutions which were found in each.

At noon we were invited to eat foods prepared by the village. Afterwards, we toured the different projects of 12 Guayacanes, including those supported by Amigos this year. These were five fish tanks with protection nets, security light fixtures, construction of a bread oven, and composting modules.

THE FARMERS SHARED EXPERIENCES about food healthy and nutritious



Fish pond



Bread oven



Mealtime



Caracol greeting

PHOTO EXHIBITION "K'ELBANEGETIK"

Casa de Las Flores

K'elbanegetik ("The Ones who are Looking") is the title of the photographic exposition organized by Casa de Las Flores. Its objective is to show us the way in which the working children who collaborate with the organization perceive their reality.

Children, educators, and friends came together on the morning of July 17th at the Museum of Popular Cultures of Chiapas to view the photographic work.

Casa de Las Flores is a day home for working children and one of the projects supported by Amigos de San Cristóbal this year.



Volunteer and head of Casa de Las Flores explain the project

Claudia Castro Arreola, the head of the organization, told us that she had had the idea for organizing this exposition for years but that it was the arrival of volunteers from the Ibero León that finally made it possible; she praises the commitment and professionalism they showed in their organization of the exhibit.

Curre Gámez González, volunteer and head of the project, explained to us that they began by



Photo exhibition



Children who participated in the photo workshop

giving the children a photography workshop teaching them how to use pinhole cameras. The children made their own cameras with recycled material, took photos, and were able to follow the process from beginning to end. Some photos were also taken using disposable Kodak cameras.

This exhibit brings us closer to these children's lives; through it, we see how important it was for them that the exposition be held in a public place,

such as the museum, because it dignifies their work, given that anyone can come and see it. Claudia also explained to us the differences between girls' and boys' participation in the project: for example, for cultural reasons, it's easier for boys to express themselves, to go outside and take photographs, and to speak. Girls, however, use a pseudonym for their work in order to protect themselves, since they are prohibited



from doing things that boys are allowed to do, like playing or studying. For girls, who are accustomed only to working in selling their artisan work, it was harder to break the ice and do new things, because they don't normally have their parents' permission to do these types of things.

protection for their family members.

The Casa de Las Flores project is a refuge for girls and boys, and at times the refuge includes

The children, thanks to the support of the Ibero volunteers, were able to see their photographs in large format. The exposition is intended to be a travelling exhibit that can be seen by people in various parts of the city, such as the Parque Central and other plazas—places where the children normally work.

THE CHILDREN used the pinhole camera technique to take pictures



Some members of Amigos were at the event



Children pose with their photographs

COURSE OF "FORTALECE LEGAL"

Legal and tax obligations

On the 6th of July, Fortalece Legal, a legal company from Mexico City, offered a seminar about legal and fiscal obligations for organizations that wish to obtain tax-exempt status. This will allow Mexican donors to claim their donations to Amigos as tax-exempt.

The course was taught by Ángeles Anaya, lawyer, and Juan Javier Toledo, certified public accountant.

Beatriz Alvarez, Administrative Assistant to Amigos, participated in order to better understand the process of getting the status and the new obligations we shall have.

In the course we learned the linkages between the legal requirements and the day to day activities and the process to qualify for resources from the government of Mexico.



Training course



Participants from NGOs that were in the course

We did some questions of the trainers:



WHY DO YOU THINK IT IS GOOD TO APPLY FOR TAX-EXEMPT STATUS?

To receive private donations that are tax deductible in Mexico, this is going to help to increase your chances of funding. (Ángeles Anaya).



WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNAL ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL IN ORGANIZATIONS?

It is essential, because it is what will allow you to know the real situation of the organization to carry out the operations efficiently and transparently. If you have this information you can make the right decisions. (Juan Javier Toledo).

As you know, Amigos de San Cristóbal is in the process of requesting this status called "Donataria Authorized". Our director Esteban Jiménez and the lawyer Ángeles Anaya had a working session to discuss some details of the Bylaws.



GRANTS 2014

Amigos de San Cristóbal
opens call for 2014
funding

Amigos de San Cristobal has opened its announcement and call for submission of applications for funding for projects to be implemented in 2014.

The criteria that Amigos will apply to evaluate the funding applications appear on the website www.amigosdesc.org. The closing date for NGOs to submit their funding applications is September 1, 2013.

This year the the Amigos Projects Committee has worked diligently and made some changes in the format for funding applications, seeking to achieve a more useful method for planning and evaluation of projects.

Specifically, a new table is now included for describing the purpose, the components, and the activities of the project, so as to enable



measurement of project success. Therefore some new supporting documents have been developed: definitions of key words and a sample table, where the funding applicants can find definitions for new concepts and examples of how the terms are used, in case they may have any doubts.

After September 1, a committee of experts will choose the best projects, the most innovative, those with the most impact, and those projects that provide assistance and services that are measureable and of better quality.

THANKS TO PROJECT NEIGHBORS

Since 2009, Project Neighbors as been a major partner with Amigos de San Cristobal, enabling tax deductions for those that donate from the United States through them.

This has been possible thanks to the unwavering support of George Terrell, who has been doing all that is needed so Amigos can receive donations through Project Neighbors.

The work that George does at the Centro de Tecnología Adecuada y Sustentabilidad de Los Grupos Indígenas (Center for Advanced Sustainable Technology for the Indigenous), CATI,

has increased this year, and therefore beginning June 2013 it will no longer be possible for Project Neighbors to receive donations for Amigos.

We wish to express our deep appreciation to George, and to Linda Haskell, for all the support we have received from them all these years. And to our donor friends, we wish to remind them that donations they may make to Amigos through the Maya Education Fund will continue to be tax deductible in the United States.



NEW OFFICE

As part of our organizations growth and strengthening we are pleased to announce that since the beginning of July we now have an office located on Calle Dr. Flipo Flores 49 Bis, the corner of Jose Maria Santiago, Barrio de Guadalupe.



The telephone number is (967) 631-7002.

Many thanks to Nancy and David Orr for donating the space for the office.

We hope that you will come visit us soon.

NEW LOGO

Amigos has a new logo that symbolizes what we and our partners represent.



The abstraction of the letter "o" represents four people shaking hands. It is a symbol of unity and

friendship. At the same time it also represents one of the most used icons within the brocade of San Andres Larrainzar in the highlands of Chiapas where many of our partners work.

Amigos is grateful to Mai Martínez for listening to the heart of Amigos and representing it so well in her design of our new logo.

The logo uses two colors: purple and red. Purple represents hope and is the color of reflection. It is also associated with emotions. Red is rarely used and when it is, it calls attention and transmits force and determination.

The type used in the logo is San Serif Typography. It is organic, giving the feeling that the letters come together in harmony.

NEW DIRECTOR

As we announced in the last bulletin, Yatziri Zepeda ended her contract with Amigos and now we have a new director. His name is Esteban Jiménez Lobeira and is a native of San Cristóbal de Las Casas. He has a Law degree from the Universidad Anahuac México Norte and a masters en Corporate Law from the same school. He has worked in private aid institutions as well as in programs for the

upbringing and training of youth and children. Also he has collaborated in the area of administrative and legal consulting for colleges and universities. He has been in San Cristóbal for several months and now he is working full time with us. We give him a big welcome and wish him the best in his new career here with Amigos.

