

San Pedro Nonualco, July 2006

Dear Friend,

Thank you for taking time to learn about the exciting new scholarship program in San Pedro Nonualco, El Salvador.

El Salvador, like many across the globe, is struggling to emerge out of its history of widespread poverty and share in the benefits of the globalized, modern world. Yet despite decades of local and international efforts, poverty hasn't gone away, particularly in rural areas where it affects 44% of households. Poverty and all its causes and consequences: low education levels, poor health conditions, family disintegration, emigration, endemic gang violence, make its eradication difficult. An incredible 70% of El Salvadorian youths do not finish High School with over 50% citing financial reasons for not attending classes.



Magdalena López studying for University



High School scholar Reyna G. Cerón

Six years ago Tony Gasbarro, a committed and visionary Peace Corps Volunteer, returned to his home state of Alaska after serving for two years in the department of Chalatenango and having seen first-hand the need for improved access to education began a scholarship program for the youths of El Salvador. Tony is a board member of the *Project El Salvador*, an NGO that has been working in El Salvador for over 20 years. Tony coordinates their scholarship program has helped over 200 youths get their education, visiting twice a year to check-in and meet the scholars. This includes youths from Chalatenango, Sonsonate and four High School and one University student

from San Pedro Nonualco.

At the end of last year a committee was formed in San Pedro Nonualco to administer the scholarships composed of a group of teachers, Dr. Rolando Barillas and a Peace Corps Volunteer. The committee also established a goal of raising money to expand the program, giving more intelligent but needy youths the chance for a more successful future.

The students attending high school receive a scholarship of \$150 to cover the matriculation and monthly fees charged by the institution and the remaining used to subsidize the costs of books, uniforms and other essential expenses. The committee's goal is to always have enough funds at hand to pay for at least two years when accepting a recipient. Each student must



José Transito Pérez at home after classes

maintain a high grade point average, conduct themselves well and complete regular community service.



Saul F. López is making the grades

Improving the future of Salvadoran youth needs the support of everyone and a donation of any size would be greatly appreciated. Donations are made through *Project El Salvador* and the funds are forwarded here for use. Because of this donations are tax deductible in the US. Due to our small size and the volunteers of the committee, administrative costs are minimal and nearly all money donated will go directly

to the Youth Scholarships. To make a contribution contact Tony directly (with the information below) and be sure to specify your donation is for **students of San Pedro Nonualco** as he administers scholarships in other parts of the country as well.

Please pass this letter on to friends or family that has interest in supporting the youths of San Pedro Nonualco. Your contribution and support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely:

Dr. José Rolando Barillas

Prof. Margarita del Carmen Molina de Molina

Prof. Mirna de la Paz Romero de Barillas

Contact Information:

Tony Gasbarro e-mail: tonygasbarro@yahoo.com

2687 Horsetail Trail

Fairbanks, AK. 99709-6055

USA

Phone: (907) 455- 6287

Project El Salvador Website: www.projectsalsalvador.org