



# Planting Seeds International

Annual Report 2019



## *Dear Planting Seeds Supporters,*

Thank you so so much for your continued support of Planting Seeds. We cannot express how much it means to us and the communities we work with. Our programs would not be able to progress the way they have without your help.

Since 2017, when founders Susan and Richard Schmaltz entrusted us with the leadership of Planting Seeds, we have been able to place two teachers in the classrooms of our model schools, add a teacher coach, offer multiple family-strengthening programs and partner with an additional school in Zone 3 of Guatemala City.

Additionally, with your support, our students have been expanding their learning outside of the classroom through multiple expeditions; teachers have been implementing techniques and strategies from internal and external trainings; community members have been facilitating programs and reading more with their children; and the administrative staff has been exploring ways to innovate our methodology and our approach to coaching teachers.

Now that we have the proper amount of teachers and teacher coaches for each classroom, along with the family and community support needed for children to thrive, we are ready to grow our education programs to more schools and communities throughout Guatemala. Thank you so much to our Friends Circles, Board of Directors, Staff in Guatemala, Community Volunteers and Continued Supporters for helping us get to this point.

The goal of this report is to share the progress we have made in 2019 along with what to look forward to in 2020 and beyond. As stated above, this work is not possible without you. We would love to see you here in Guatemala sometime soon to witness the impact of your support firsthand.



**Peace, love, and solidarity,**

*The Planting Seeds Leadership Team*



# First Year Working with Hope Renewed

"I was at the preschool yesterday and was absolutely blown away by the job our teachers are doing. I can't thank you enough for this. (Planting Seeds) Has been a huge answer to our prayers."

-Jeff Ware, Executive Director of Hope Renewed

In 2018, Planting Seeds began a partnership with another preschool in Zone 3, Hope Renewed. Hope Renewed opened their preschool in 2012 with 35 kids enrolled and the numbers continue to grow as parents now place a higher importance on preschool education.

Our new partnership began when our Co-Executive Director, Mac Philips, found out that his high school Spanish teacher, Jeff Ware, was also the director of a Guatemalan organization working in zone 3. Through this pure coincidence, Hope Renewed began implementing our learning methodology in their preschool with now over 54 students in four classrooms.



In the first year of implementing our learning methodology at their preschool, all 4 of their teachers have been certified by Planting Seeds International. In our quarterly trainings, teachers have been showing their commitment to provide the best education possible and, through our in-site visits, we have experienced first-hand their dedication and the exceptional work they do to inspire children to a lifelong love of learning.

Hope Renewed preschool is located just outside of the Garbage Dump of Guatemala City, making it our second preschool in zone 3. In an area where violence, gangs, and abuse are prevalent, we have

extended our programming to reach children, youth and families. Our approach to education is holistic, where we address the needs of the whole child, not just inside but also outside of school.

Luis Calel, who has participated in our father's group since 2017, and his wife Brenda represent a good example of our holistic approach to education. This year their twin sons, Samuel and Cristian, graduated at the Hope Renewed preschool. Cristian and Samuel now have a strong educational foundation along with parents who are working to be better, more loving everyday.



# Get to Know Carla and the Future Plans for PSI



Carla López joined Planting Seeds in 2015 as a preschool teacher in our model school in San Lucas. While teaching with us, she finished her Licenciatura in Pedagogy with a focus in Administration and Educational Evaluation. After completing her third year as a teacher in our model school, Carla will be working in 2020 as an Academic Coach for one of our preschool programs, REKKO, in San Pedro Yepocapa.

Being in Carla's classroom can be life changing for a child. She provides so much love and nurturing for her students, while at the same time pushing their growth academically, socially and emotionally. She has shown an incredible amount of passion and innovation in the classroom these past three years and we feel fortunate that she will be able to share her talents with other Planting Seeds teachers. When asked how she feels about the new opportunity, Carla said that she is really excited and that teachers are just like students;

**“We are always in a process of learning and growing”.**

We are really excited for this transition not only for Carla, but for how this allows us to grow. With Carla working as an Academic Coordinator, Planting Seeds will be able to have an Academic Coach for every three preschools we work with. Additionally, because of the generous donations from old and new supporters, we have been able to place assistant teachers in our model school in San Lucas as well as our preschool in Sacala.

With all of this in place, Planting Seeds now has its model ready to expand to additional preschools throughout Guatemala. Starting in 2021, we will be accepting proposals for new Planting Seeds Schools. Schools can be requested by community members, non profit organizations or municipalities, always under the condition that the school is for children and families who cannot afford or access high quality education. While we want to provide high quality education to as many kids and families as possible in Guatemala, we do understand the importance of growing sustainably and not growing too big, too fast.

Asking Carla about Planting Seeds' future growth, she responded, “I think it's great, because there are not many organizations that are as committed as Planting Seeds and they have a different vision than other organizations.”

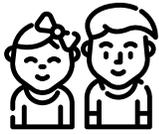
“What Planting Seeds understands and something I would advise to all teachers is that you are

not the only one that supports the child. There are other factors that support the child and you need to use that support such as family, social factors, institutional support, etc to help that child succeed.”

**Come visit us to meet Carla and see Planting Seeds Programs in Action!**



# Programs in Numbers 2019



283 Children enrolled in our programs



27 teachers trained in our methodology



190 people participated in our community development programs



6 schools

## Early Childhood Programs



## Community Development Programs



## Financials



### Program Support

Includes teacher and community facilitators salaries, schools operational expenses, community development support, scholarships and teacher trainings.



### Administration

Administration expenses includes administrative staff salaries, professional services and other expenses.



### Fundraising

Includes costs associated with fundraising events in Canada and the US, communication and public relations expenses, and fundraising staff salaries.

# Community Center Design Complete!



## What is Zone 3 and Why a Community Center?

Zone 3 is in the heart of Guatemala City, home to over 72,000 people and the Guatemala City garbage dump, where families enter the dump every day to pick and sell recycles to make a living for their family. Planting Seeds now works with two preschools and 160 preschool students in Zone 3.

After interviewing over 100 people and hosting multiple community meetings, we learned that there are

no organizational resources open to families after 5pm. The lack of open spaces and resources leaves children, youth, and adults extremely susceptible to the dangers in the community, especially after dark, when violence is most likely to occur. Additionally the Planting Seeds' family programming currently can only take place once a week due to the limitations of rented spaces. With an open community center, we will be able to provide

structured and unstructured programming at all times of day, significantly expanding our reach within the community.

With high quality education as the base for community development, Planting Seeds aims to strengthen families, collaborate with other organizations and provide a dynamic center so community members can be in charge of their development.



## The goals of the Planting Seeds Community Center are to:

- Provide a space for children, youth and families to access after 4pm when almost all community programming shuts down and violence is most prevalent
- Provide structured programming focused on strengthening families and providing continued learning opportunities for all members of the family
- Provide an opportunity for community members to help one another and exercise leadership in their own community.



## Community Design Process

Planting Seeds and Architects Taller ACA hosted 3 meetings with the entire community, where over 100 community members attended to help design their center. The community design workshops were divided into:

**Get to Know** - Families mapped out their community with the architects, showcasing needs and what spaces

and resources already existed  
**Design** - The architects brought layouts of the purchased land and designed the future center hand in hand with community members.  
**Validate** - In the park, adjacent to the community center, the architects presented a rough draft design for the center. Families provided their feedback on the design.

## Design Layout

The Community Center is divided into the following rooms.



### Floor 1 - Community

**Reception:** A place for families to congregate and learn about center activities as well as what resources are available to them in their community

**Recreation Room:** This room will have foosball tables, open comfortable seating, games and more with the goal of keeping kids and youth off the street.

**Family Nurturing Room.**



### Floor 2 - Education/Recreation

**English and Tutoring Room:** Continued learning for all members of the community.

**Parent/Child Play Room:** A space for parents to provide the necessary early stimulation for children to thrive.

**Community Library:** Home to over 2,000 books for kids, families, and organizations.

**Workout and Dance Studio**



## Capital Campaign Update

The heart of Planting Seeds is high quality education, so rather than divert funds from our preschool programs, we have been asking for one time gifts from Religious institutions, Businesses, Individual Donors and Foundations.

We are currently at \$100,000 pledged of our \$400,000 Capital Campaign Goal, which has us on target to begin construction in May of 2020.



### Floor 3 - Sports and Recreation

**Creative Expression and Carpentry Workshop**

# Where we are Where we're going



## Zone 3 and 7 Community library

### Where we are

Since March 2019, every Thursday we offer an open library for children, youth and adults, providing a safe space to read and a variety of books that engage readers. On Saturdays, community members bring a selection of books to the park adjacent to the future community center for our reading in the park program. We also started a lending-book program for individual and other organizations.

### Where we're going

Our plans include extending our library schedule and adding more books to our inventory. The community library will also begin lending books to our preschool in Sacala as well as Camino Seguro and Esperanza Renovada. This will allow parents of these schools to borrow books and read more with their kids.



## Expeditionary Learning

### Where we are

This year we added expeditions into our learning methodology in our model preschool in San Lucas. Before our two expeditions, our teachers prepared students by integrating the learning content of the field trip into their class lessons. In the days after their visit, our students carried activities in which they showed what they have learned in both expeditions.

### Where we're going

We plan to expand and strengthen expeditions within our methodology as well as implement expeditions for our other Planting Seeds schools and partner schools.



## Collaborative Raises Funds for Community Center

### Where we are

The Community Collaborative of Zone 3 organized and executed their very first community fair with a clown show, games, books, food, dancing and english activities implemented by Planting Seeds English students. Over two hundred community members participated in the fair and the Collaborative raised over Q600 for the construction of the Community Center.

### Where we're going

In 2020, the collaborative hopes organize more activities to build awareness and participation in current programming as well as preparing more community fairs. All proceeds raised at these events will be put towards the community center as the Collaborative wants to financially contribute to the future center in their community.

## Other highlights

### Skidmore

In March, Skidmore College in New York participated in Planting Seeds' Dual Exchange Program for the second consecutive year. We call the program "Dual Exchange" as opposed to a support team, because both groups have valuable knowledge and experiences to share and

learn from one another. Skidmore students led activities in our model preschool, helped teach English, and shared about their life with members of the communities with whom we work.

### Northbrook Friends Circle Event

On September 28 our Northbrook Friends Circle held their very first fundraising event! The event took place in Sheraton Suites, and count-

ed with the participation of Billy Muñoz Miranda (General Consul for Guatemala in the US), who talked about education in Guatemala, Sandy de León (Program Manager for Ounce of Prevention Fund), and with the participation of Sociedad Cívico Cultural Guatemala (who provided with typical food, marimba music and dances), and counted with 70 participants.

# A special thank you to

## Friends Circles

- Chicago
- Guatemala
- Northbrook
- Ottawa Education
- New Ottawa
- Pembroke

## Board of Directors

- Wayne Moyle, President
- Gabriel Tobias, Vice President
- Joseph Knowles, Treasurer
- Leanne Van Bavel, Secretary
- Ann Escott
- Andrea Gomez
- Sharon Workman
- Carolyn Collins-Bennett

# Save the Date for our next events!

- **Annual Ottawa Fundraiser**  
May 9th, 2020
- **Chicago Friends Circle Bowling Event**  
December 7th, 2019
- **Northbrook Friends Circle Event**  
Date Coming Soon!
- **Guatemala Fundraiser**  
Date Coming Soon!





## Get Involved Today

### Become a Monthly Donor

Partner with us giving monthly to our different programs.

### Start or Join a Friend Circle

Join an existing Friend Circle and be an active part organizing fundraisers and awareness events

### Visiting Guatemala

Know our programs first hand joining our Annual Education Tour. Contact (contact information, it can be me) to receive more information

### Supporting a specific program:

- Early Childhood Education
- Family Education
- Family Nurturing
- Girls Empowerment
- Youth Leadership

[www.plantingseedsinternational.org](http://www.plantingseedsinternational.org)

### I would like to support Planting Seeds International by:

- Making a Donation
- Becoming a Monthly Donor
- Hosting a Dinner/Small Event
- Starting or Joining a Friends Circle
- Coming to Visit our Programs!

### By making a donation today, you can have the following impact:

- \$25** provides graduation diplomas for Planting Seeds preschool students for one year
- \$50** provides materials for five teacher trainings annually
- \$150** provides a midday snack for one student for one year
- \$350** provides a preschool education for one student for one year
- \$1,500** supports one of our parent education programs for one year
- \$6,000** provides early childhood education for a classroom of 18-20 students for one year
- Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

To make a donation, please visit our website at [www.plantingseedsinternational.org/donate](http://www.plantingseedsinternational.org/donate). Checks can be made payable to: Planting Seeds International, 2860 Weller Lane Northbrook, IL 60062

Thank you for supporting children and families in Guatemala.