

HEART TO HEART

The latest news from *Connecting Hearts Ministry*, a ministry of Chapel Hill Christian School



Kendra enjoys time with her "amiga."

Mi Amiga by Kentra Sovine

"Adios, mi Amiga." As I looked down into the eyes of a young girl I had just met a few hours earlier, her words struck me. She called me "friend!"

This past July, I went with a group from Fresh-water Community Church to Guatemala, where we partnered with Connecting Hearts Ministry. Our

group arrived at the airport in Guatemala City and drove to Peronia, where we spent the night before an early departure the next morning to La Tinta. Since we were only spending a couple days in La Tinta, one of our primary goals while there was to paint the inside and outside of the San Marcos School. In my mind I felt our trip to La Tinta was more task-driven, and the real relational time with the Guatemalan children would be back in Peronia when we returned. I could not have been more mistaken.

From the moment we stepped out of the vans at the school, kids were swarming us. If a hand was free, immediately someone was there to hold it. We were struck by their richness – richness of relationship and human affection towards us and one another.

The material poverty in La Tinta was unmistakable. We visited the home of a sponsored student that lived in a small hut with a couple of neighboring huts right next door. We learned there had been four huts previously, but now there were only three. Rain had caused flooding that washed one of them away. It was a sobering experience to pray with families for safety from the rain. The realization that many of us have never had to fight for survival of any kind, much less a primal survival against the elements, struck me as once again I was reminded of the material wealth we possess.

Back in Peronia, we enjoyed more moderate temperatures. We spent a day at the Amigos Christian School teaching classes and playing with the kids at recess.

As I talked with teens from our group and heard about their experiences, the theme of love and relationships was prominent for everyone. They made comments like, "We have difficulty showing love to people we have known forever, but they just met us and they show us love like we are family or their best friend."

I don't think any of us envied the poverty or living conditions of the Guatemalan children we met, but we were made keenly aware of the relational poverty we live in – often by our own choosing.

As I looked down into the eyes of a young girl I had just met, she showed me the love of Christ, love that was undeserved but given freely. She called me "friend."

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Dear Friends... A NOTE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

What a wonderful experience I had this summer watching groups serve the Lord in Guatemala as they passed out new shoes, taught in classrooms, visited homes, and painted schools in extreme heat! There was a sense of great joy among all of the groups. I know God will use all that was done to touch lives for eternity.

"God is not unjust and will not forget your work and the love you have shown Him as you have helped His people and continue to help them." Hebrews 6:10



In Christ, Kelly Foguth





Mikenna and Michaela began sponsoring Eylin in Kindergarten.

house, my mom asked, "Who is there?" We said "Álvaro!!" Although our mom did not know him, we knew because we had seen his picture many times at CHCS. As soon as he walked in, we got so excited. He was so fun! He is learning a lot of English and is doing very well.

Our Friend in Guatemala

by Michaela and Mikenna Slayman, CHCS 5th Graders

This summer we had the opportunity to go to Guatemala. We did many fun and life-changing things. One was meeting Álvaro.

When he knocked on the door of our

Álvaro is good at telling stories. He told us about how he is scared of chickens because his mom had a lot of chicks when he was little. He did not know that chickens don't take baths, so he lined them up to take a bath. Once he wasn't paying attention and was talking to his mom. He held a chick underwater too long and it didn't survive. His mom yelled at him. He told us that one time he saw a chicken in La Tinta and ran, because he thought it was going to hurt him.

The last night we were in Guatemala, Álvaro shared about how he thinks Connecting Hearts Ministry has really changed and impacted his life. He also shared that he really understands what Connecting Hearts means now.

We all loved meeting Álvaro! He made us feel happy inside and grateful. He is very special, and will always be in our prayers!

Did you know?

- Connecting Hearts Ministry is offering a **new type of trip to Guatemala** in January for grandparents or adults who would like to become acquainted with CHM. The trip will be slower paced than the trip for students and parents, and will introduce travelers to the Amigos School and many CHM sponsored students. Anyone who is interested may contact Danna Hall at dhall@chapelhillchristianschool.org for more information.
- Connecting Hearts Ministry is now a **registered non-profit organization in Guatemala** (ONG) called Ministerio Conectando Corazones.
- Nataly Rivera** has joined Connecting Hearts Ministry as our Administrative Assistant in Guatemala. Nataly's sponsorship with CHM began when she was in kindergarten at the Amigos School. She recently graduated from San Carlos University in Guatemala City with a bachelor's degree in Linguistic Science. We believe God has prepared Nataly by uniquely gifting her for this job. She has worked alongside us by translating for CHM groups in Guatemala. Her responsibility, integrity, and passion for ministry as well as her relationship with the Lord are outstanding. Thanks to generous friends of the ministry, she began working for CHM "on the ground" in Guatemala on September 1. Welcome aboard, Nataly!



Nataly enjoying a good laugh with Kim Maher!

Praising...

- ♥ Diane Orihel and Dru Lanoue headed up the "Heart and Sole" project in July, which provided a new pair of tennis shoes to all students and staff at the Amigos School – 365 in all!



New shoes! What an exciting day!

- ♥ Fredy recently graduated from college with a degree in Business Administration. He has overcome many hurdles to achieve this milestone! Fredy is the second college graduate of CHM!



Congratulations, Fredy!



Mrs. Crider has left a wonderful legacy!

IN MEMORY: Katherine Crider, dear friend of Connecting Hearts Ministry, recently entered heaven. Her life was an inspiration to all who knew her. She and her dear family – Keith, Anna, Katey, Luke, and Mary LePage, and Tom and Mary Weatherwax – have been instrumental in the lives of many sponsored students. All who knew Mrs. Crider have been touched by her life.



CONNECTING HEARTS MINISTRY

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