



CASA-PUEBLITO STRENGTHENING ARTS AND CULTURE EDUCATION IN ESTELÍ

Iván Josué Sevilla Corrales lives in the Barrio Arlen Sui in Estelí. He is nine years old and lives with his mother and his sister. Iván is an intelligent and creative child.

Sadly, the Barrio is faced with the challenges of economic migration, youth violence, poor health, and many single parent families like Iván's. Most people in the community work in tobacco factories earning \$160USD per month. All of these barriers make it harder for children like Iván to reach their full potential.

Fortunately, Casa-Pueblito has been partnered with the community for the past three years. Together Barrio Arlen Sui and Casa-Pueblito have been working to strengthen and broaden the arts and culture education offered to low income children and youth. This is great news for Iván, who loves to play the trumpet.

Music has become an integral part of Iván's life and has helped to build his confidence and focus his energy. When asked about his hopes and dreams for the future Iván says, "When I'm a grownup I want to work and support my mom. I would like to teach others how to play music.

When I have children I will teach them music."

Iván is a model student studying guitar, flute, choir and music theory classes as well as the new trumpet class. Iván participates in the performances that are organized by the music school. He says "I like it when people enjoy the music and applause [sic]."

Through the community partnership, Casa-Pueblito offers art classes in addition to the music lessons. Iván says "If I could I would join the painting and drawing classes but they are at the same time of [sic] my music class."

Iván has a lot to say about how he believes the project will change the community for the better. "The music classes have helped me to behave better at school. Before I was very mischievous, I would talk a lot during classes, I didn't take notes... now I study more. After music classes I go home and do homework. The other children (classmates who don't attend the music project) don't behave, they just talk and don't take notes. I think that if they come here (to the music project) it would help them to do better at school."



FROM THE ARCHIVES: CASA AND PUEBLITO PROVIDE LUNCH TO PRESCHOOL CHILDREN



The recent amalgamation of Casa Canadiense and Pueblito Canada is not the first time these two organiza-

tions have worked together to promote community development in Nicaragua. In November of 2007, Pueblito Canada and Casa Canadiense partnered on a project to bring lunch to children in the Reparto Schick area of Managua. Casa had been working on a pilot lunch program at the Rayito de Sol No. 1 preschool in Barrio German Pomares for many years. In partnership with Pueblito, they were able to expand this program to five more schools in the area throughout the three year program.

The first preschool to host a lunch program through this partnership was Arco Iris No. 1 in Barrio Carlos Nuñez Sur. Here, parents who were part of the volunteer parent committee volunteered their time to prepare the meals

and purchase the food from the local market on a rotating schedule. The meal plan consisted of a balance of nutritious, delicious and easy to prepare meals, including a rice, chicken and vegetable dish, soy-based meals, juice with a plant-based supplement and fish-head soup. The meal plan was designed to be cost efficient; Casa and Pueblito were able to run the program at one preschool for \$2000 each year.

Casa and Pueblito continue to work in partnership with community groups throughout Nicaragua to this day and the recent legal amalgamation of the two is expected to strengthen and expand these links throughout Canada and Latin America.

WORKING IN SOLIDARITY ACROSS BORDERS

Casa-Pueblito's Program Manager María Wong is working tirelessly to connect our international work with the struggles of children and youth in our communities in Canada. In 2012, Pueblito launched the *Our Voices in School* pilot project. Last year, we launched *Voices for Change: Developing Leadership in Inclusive Education*. Both projects are generously funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Studies indicate that we are witnessing an alarming drop-out rate of 40% among Latino-Hispanic youth in Toronto – a rate that far surpasses the national average and appears to be growing. Casa-Pueblito is working with students, teachers, and the Latin American community in response to this achievement gap through *Voices for Change*. *V4C* is a Toronto and Peel-based program that promotes diversity and inclusivity in our schools and in our communities by:

- **Building leadership** among Latino-Hispanic youth through our monthly Change-Maker meetings, skills development workshops and Leadership Camp so that youth feel prepared to

take on leadership roles within the Latino-Hispanic community and advocate for teaching that addresses their needs.

- **Promoting inclusivity** in our schools through our education workshop series, *Becoming Cultural Allies* in order to help teachers better understand the needs of students in our schools and to incorporate diverse approaches in their teaching. Teachers will be better prepared to engage students in learning, thereby improving their success and retention rates.

We are completing the first year of this 3-year project and have so far trained nearly **100** education professionals in the Greater Toronto Area in inclusive education.

We are also gearing up for our Leadership Camp this June. Ten Latin@-Hispanic students will spend 4 days and 3 nights at the Ontario Education Leadership Centre in Longford Mills. Youth will have the chance to reflect on their Latin American identities and gain confidence in their leadership abilities. Keep an eye on our website for project news and updates!



Teacher candidates from York University after completing our PD in Inclusive Education, *Becoming Cultural Allies*, at Casa Más.

"Our Voices, and now Voices for Change, is a unique initiative that puts student voices first. As a current high school teacher, I will also be a part of the Professional Development sessions to help build the existing toolkit and learn about supporting some of our most marginalized students. I urge you to tell your friends and family about this great opportunity to support our Latin American community."

- **Derik Chica**, TDSB teacher & Co-founder of the Latin American Education Network

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENTS

Carl Melvin, *President*

Michael O'Sullivan, *Vice-President*



Dear Supporters of Casa Canadiense and Pueblito Canada,

As many of you will know from past communications, Pueblito Canada and Casa Canadiense have been involved for quite some time in a process designed to amalgamate the two organizations. We are delighted to announce that the two organizations have been operating as one since January under the name Casa Canadiense – Pueblito Canada (or, more simply, Casa-Pueblito).

These are not easy times for organizations such as ours. There are many worthy causes that seek donor support and furthermore, with the demise of CIDA and its matching funds program, it is now not possible to secure matching funding for our overseas projects. It is therefore very important that we remain credible vehicles of collaboration with our Central American partners and that we offer you, our donors, a place where you can invest with confidence in the work that we do overseas and with young people in Canada. These practical considerations, coupled with the complementary nature of our

work, led the boards of both organizations to realize that an amalgamated organization would strengthen our ability to offer global education to young people in Canada, provide project support to children and youth in Central America, and service learning opportunities in Nicaragua to Canadian students.

Both organizations have a history with trusted partners in Nicaragua and Guatemala. We continue to support the work of these partners. Casa brings its resource centre in Managua (literally, the casa) and its service-learning program which provides the opportunity for scores of students from Canada to have an intense immersion experience in Nicaragua. Pueblito brings its Voices for Change program with Hispanic students in the Greater Toronto Area.

The amalgamated board is composed of long serving members of both of the previous boards including the undersigned. Carl, until recently the chair of Casa, serves as President of the amalgamated board while Mike, who was the President of the Pueblito board, serves as Vice-

President. Other members of the board include members with a great deal of experience in the work we do as well as an equal number of (far) younger people. Katie Daly, the former Program Manager of Pueblito now serves as the Executive Director of Casa-Pueblito.

The staff and board of Casa-Pueblito have hit the ground running. In addition to on-going program support with our partners, several student groups have recently returned from Nicaragua, two university students are preparing to go to Nicaragua as interns, the work with GTA Hispanic students is underway, the annual Fiesta de la Vida social and fundraiser will be held at the end of April and planning for the fall Brunch & Auction has already started.

We look forward to your continued engagement with Casa-Pueblito.

Sincerely,

Carl Melvin and Michael O'Sullivan

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**CASA
PUEBLITO**

FIESTA DE VIDA



Fiesta
de **vida**
celebrate. educate. innovate.

Thursday, April 30th

7:30 PM - 10:30 PM
Artscape Youngplace
180 Shaw Street, Room 108
\$25/Ticket

Please join us on April 30th for our annual Fiesta de Vida, a celebration of our programs, supporters and the alumni who have helped make us so successful. This exciting event features drinks, appetizers, live music, a silent auction and our annual Fund-A-Need auction which allows you to donate to our innovative community development programs in Nicaragua. Each ticket includes one drink as well as complimentary weekend admission to Lula Lounge! Tickets are available at the door or through our website (www.pueblito.org). We look forward to celebrating with you.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:

ALEX PRYSE | OUTREACH AND FUNDRAISING INTERN



Alex is an intern at Casa-Pueblito who works on a wide range of projects from translating to fundraising and event planning. Born and raised in Boston, he is a graduate of the University of Toronto with degrees in both Spanish and Political Science, who is passionate about discovering innovative ways to bring about change in local and international communities. Alex has past experience working in both fundraising and finance, and in 2010 he spent time studying and working in the field in Kenya. In his spare time he enjoys playing soccer, traveling, and watching Netflix.

WEB EXCLUSIVE

In February 2014, Robert F. Hall Secondary School and St. Augustine Secondary School visited the community of Salamanca in Nicaragua. Check out our web exclusive to see the community members send their love to the students who stayed with them.

www.pueblito.org/resources/web-exclusive