



# Casa Canadiense

CANADIAN~NICARAGUAN SOLIDARITY

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## Casa Celebrates 20 Years

This year marks the 20th anniversary of Casa Canadiense, but its inception goes even further back to the solidarity movements that emerged in the 1980s in support of the Nicaraguan people and the winds of hope brought by the Revolution in 1979.

When listening to the stories of those who helped give birth to Casa Canadiense and have sustained it ever since, we can't help but think about the strong bonds that have been weaved with threads rooted in solidarity and a thirst for justice. We can't express enough gratitude to those who shared in the hardships and devastation of war and worked towards the achievement of peace in Nicaragua.

Casa is now continuing their commitment to a people who struggled for liberation and continue to walk in search of social justice, not charity. Nowadays, Casa keeps faithful to the values that ignite this initiative in the early 1990's: solidarity and social justice.

In 2012, through our Community

This hammock-making cooperative provided training for children that had been survivors of sexual abuse.



Development Program we reached eight communities located in different regions of Nicaragua: Estelí, Managua, Chinandega, Nueva Segovia, León and Masaya. A total of nine community projects were financed, all as diverse as their locations, providing these communities with new self sufficiency alternatives, contributing to the empowerment of rural women and strengthening the solidarity bonds between the peoples of Nicaragua and Canada.

As we near 2013, we look forward to continuing to support some of the most impoverished communities and grassroots organizations –which frequently lack access to mainstream funding- and to starting new partnerships with Nicaraguan and Canadian friends. Our 2013 Casa Project Fund will be comprised of nine projects, all of them with a strong focus on education.

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### Casa's First Coordinator Looks Back on 20 Years

*Sherry Campbell, Casa's first coordinator in Managua, shares her reflections on her experience 20 years later:*

My time at the Casa was the most formative of my life. I was 26 when I began my journey to Nicaragua. It is an experience that I continue to look back on and learn from. The groups I hosted were inspiring and challenging. The youth came with such courage and openness as well as their own personal struggles as many had suffered hardships themselves. The groups of young people were immersed in this culture of engagement and curiosity. One thing I always had in common with them was that most of us believed we knew and understood everything we needed to know. Having who you are, your values, your relationships, and who your community is or will be are questions that are hard to wrestle with at any point in your life. To watch young people struggle with these questions and definitions over my years at the Casa is the experience that has resonated the most with me. It is one of the many things that will always make the work of the Casa pertinent!



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**January**

Maria Wong is hired as Casa's first Youth Outreach Officer in Canada.

Students from Robert F. Hall CSS (Caledon), St. Thomas Aquinas CSS (Brampton) and Champlain College (St. Lambert) visit Casa and its projects.

**March**

Students from St. Edmund Campion (Brampton) and Notre Dame Secondary School (Brampton) visit Casa and its projects.

Participants in the North-South Educator Dialogue with Pueblito Canada make a stop at Casa.

**May**

Rosario Alanís from FUNARTE visits Toronto and works with students to paint a mural at Robert F Hall CSS in Brampton.

Casa hosts first ever Spring Debrief Workshop in Canada bringing together 60 students from 6 of our partner schools.

Casa holds its third annual orientation workshop with local partner organizations in Managua.

**February**

Madeline Mendoza joins the Managua team as interim coordinator.

Students from St. Augustine (Brampton) and West Vancouver Secondary School (Vancouver) visit Casa and its projects.

Casa attends inauguration of school in Santa Julia built in memory of David Hutson, along with Barb McCambridge and Susan Guilbault, from the Hutson family.

**April**

Casa attends inauguration of the new school in Jinocua, a project funded by the Casa Project Fund.

**June**

Madeline starts as Centre Manager.

Casa attends the inauguration of another Casa project: the renovation of a classroom especially for children and youth with special needs in Niquinohomo.

Casa host a celebration of Harry Smaller's contribution to Casa in Toronto.

Casa, in conjunction with Pueblito Canada, awards First Annual Global Education Award to the North-South Awareness Project and Greater Essex County District School Board.

Students from St. Joseph Secondary School (Mississauga) visit Casa and its projects.

Casa launches its blog!

**New School Opens in Santa Julia**

Susan Guilbault (left) and Barbara McCambridge (right), both members of the Hutson family, traveled to Nicaragua in February to attend the inauguration of the school built in the community of Santa Julia, El Crucero, in memory of their brother, David Hutson (1949-2009). They are pictured here alongside Dolores Esquivel, founding member of the Gloria Quintanilla Women's Cooperative, the community organization that implemented the project. More classrooms will be built in the coming months with support from a group of teacher candidates from the University of Winnipeg, who will visit the community for two weeks in May 2013. The school, once fully operational, will serve 100 children and youth from four communities.

**Spring Debrief Workshop**

In May, Casa held its first Spring Debrief Workshop bringing together 60 students from six different Peel region schools who went to Nicaragua during the 2011-2012

school year. The goals of this day were to connect groups, to provide space for reflection, to reinforce learning through workshops, and to connect students with social justice opportunities.

**Schools through Casa Canadiense in 2012**

School	City of origin	Participants	Host community	Donation (CAD)
Champlain College	St. Lambert, QC	20	Santa Julia, El Crucero	\$8,783.88
Robert F. Hall Catholic Secondary School	Caledon East, ON	25	Mozonte	\$5,000.00
St. Thomas Aquinas Secondary School	Brampton, ON	14	Jinocua, Somotillo	\$5,000.00
St. Augustine Secondary School	Brampton, ON	16	Villa 23 de julio, León	\$2,880.00
St. Edmund Campion Catholic Secondary School & Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School	Brampton, ON	16	Niquinohomo	\$5,095.14
St. Joseph Secondary School	Mississauga, ON	14	Estelí	\$5,000.00

**Totals****105****\$29,759.02**

## July

Bruce Toombs spends time in Santa Julia, El Crucero photographing the daily life in the community.

## September

Casa holds its AGM in Toronto.

The Christine King Cooperative in Estelí celebrates the achievements of the women enrolled in the 2012 Pastry Making Course, a project funded by the Casa Project Fund.

## November

Carl, Jay, Marnie and Tom pay Casa a visit with a special mission in memory of Danny Dearing from Manitoulin Island.

## August

Carolle Domen arrives to take up her post as Global Education Coordinator.

## October

Casa participates in the Scotiabank Charity Challenge and raises almost \$10,000.

## December

Delegation season starts again with the arrival of Dawson College (Montreal) and Champlain College (St. Lambert).

### FUNARTE Muralist Visits the GTA

In May 2012, Casa Canadiense and Robert F. Hall CSS from Caledon East teamed up to bring FUNARTE muralist, Rosario Alanís Games to the GTA. Rosario worked with students at Robert F. Hall to design and paint a portable wall mural. He also participated in Casa's first Spring Debrief workshop with 60 students who returned from school trips to Nicaragua, which was held on May 8. Here Rosario is picture alongside students from Robert F. Hall during the painting of the mural.



### YAC Scores Halloween

The YAC collected non-perishable food for a local food bank, instead of candy on Halloween night.

"Tonight I realized that getting involved with Casa Canadiense was one of the best choices that I have made in my life because I had the opportunity to meet so many amazing people with the same passion and zeal to make a change that I have." - YAC member, Christopher.



## Community projects funded by Casa Canadiense in 2012

Partner organization	Location	Project	Contribution (USD)
FUNARTE	Estelí	Mask-making and entrepreneurial training for youth in Estelí	\$5,500.00
Gloria Quintanilla Women's Cooperative	Santa Julia, El Crucero	Creating a coffee cooperative	\$4,018.64
Community of Jinocua	Jinocua, Somotillo	Construction of a classroom for a secondary school	\$5,500.00
Indigenous People of Mozonte	Mozonte	Office renovations	\$5,497.80
Christine King Cooperative	Estelí	Basic course in pastry making and microenterprise	\$4,697.00
Community of Anexo a la Villa 23 de Julio	Anexo a la Villa 23 de Julio, León	Afterschool program for youth	\$3,280.20
Movimiento Comunal, Niquinohomo chapter	Niquinohomo	Renovation of a classroom for youth with disabilities	\$2,951.30
Podcasts for Peace	Barrio Acahualinca, Managua	Integrated program in digital arts for youth	\$5,476.57

**Total contribution**

**\$36,921.51**



# 2012 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



## Jiñocua: Construction of Classroom for Secondary School

Casa Canadiense funded the construction of a classroom that allowed youth from Jiñocua and surrounding villages to access high school education, with 32 first-year students attending in 2012. "They have made a good investment, they have made my heart joyful, my classmates are happy too because now we have more education" – Kleymer Méndez, Jiñocua student. *Photo 1: inauguration of the high school classroom in Jiñocua*



## Gloria Quintanilla Cooperative: Creating a Coffee Cooperative

The Gloria Quintanilla Co-op in Santa Julia launched the first stage of a coffee cooperative project with the planting of 12,000 coffee plants. This project serves the 16 co-op members and their families by providing them with a new livelihood. "We'll work from the very beginning of the process to the end, from planting to packaging and labeling. We want to sell coffee ready to make", said Eloísa García, President of the Cooperative. *Photo 2: Doña Irma, a member of the co-op*



## Podcasts for Peace: A Community Program for Youth in Barrio Acahualinca

This after school program for youth in Barrio Acahualinca, Managua promotes creative expression in 120 youth through digital arts and empowers young emergent community leaders working for social justice. The project offers training for children and youth in digital arts, computers, jewelry-making with recycled materials, dance, and financial savings and provides movie nights and homework support. *Photo 3: kids making thread bracelets at Podcasts for Peace*

## FUNARTE: Promoting Youth Entrepreneurship through the Arts

A group of 26 youth from impoverished neighborhoods in Estelí are learning how to make masks and receiving entrepreneurial training. The project aims to strengthen cultural identity as well as provide an alternative source of income for these youth. *Photo 4: two kids attending the mask-making workshop*

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### Continued from cover

Some of these projects are: the construction of a secondary school in Jiñocua, education for artisans, the construction of a community hall in Las Cruces and the support of preschool programming at the CCBN library, among others. We are also preparing to host delegations of Canadian students who come to visit every year to share and work with their Nicaraguan brothers and sisters, as part

of our Global Education Program.

Thanks to all of our friends in Canada and Nicaragua who have supported Casa Canadiense's work throughout the years. We look forward to continue walking with you.

-Carolle Domen and Madeline Mendoza

## THANK YOU

Celina Yang, for her all her work on logistics for the Scotiabank Charity Challenge.

Katie Daly, for her leadership on the Programs Committee.

Laura Allen, for all her Office Administrator work this year.

Christine Hutchings, for all her work as volunteer bookkeeper over the past several years.

Rob Bell, Galen Cohee-Baynes, Yazmina Gutierrez and Marcia Saavedra for their contribution to Casa through the Local Advisory Committee in Managua.

Casa Canadiense would like to thank the following institutions and foundations that provided financial support to Casa Canadiense and its projects in 2012.

Nicasinto (Toronto)  
North Kamloops Rotary  
Notre Dame CSS (Brampton)  
Ontario Trillium Foundation  
Robert F. Hall CSS (Caledon East)  
St. Augustine SS (Brampton)  
St. Edmund Campion CSS (Brampton)  
St. Joseph SS (Mississauga)  
St. Thomas Aquinas SS (Brampton)  
Volunteer International Christian Service (Edmonton)

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Toronto, Canada

107A 2238 Dundas St. W Phone: 647.352.3340  
Toronto, ON M6R 3A9 Email: toronto@thecasa.ca

Managua, Nicaragua

Residencial El Dorado, Casa No. 326 Phone: 505.2249.5542  
De donde fue la Casa de las Bromas 5 cuadras al lago Email: casacanadiensemanagua@gmail.com