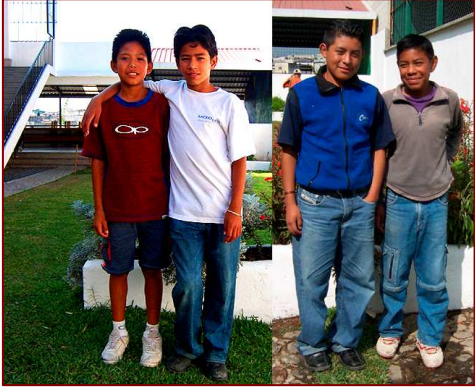


Safe Passage –Winter 2005 Newsletter

Safe Passage 6th graders are accepted to prestigious Guatemalan private school

We are very excited to announce that six sixth graders have received scholarships at a highly regarded local private school for



boys here in Guatemala called Kinal. For the past several months our 6th grade students studied diligently in preparation for the required entrance exam. They were accepted based on their academic records, individual interviews with the school director and solid scores on the exam. Their hard work and success marked an incredible achievement for all of us at Safe Passage. They will begin the school year this January. Kinal is known as one of the best private schools in Guatemala City and has a strong focus on technical training. Coincidentally, it is located just blocks from the Safe Passage site and for years Kinal students have walked by in their uniforms on their way to school. We are very proud that now Safe Passage students will be among them!

Julio Palala, Angel Roque, Tomas Cedillo, Juan Carlos Yos (not pictured: Carlos Noj, Wilmer Tum)

Safe Passage -2nd place winner of the Juan Bautista Gutierrez Foundation Award

Safe Passage received second place in a countrywide competition among local and international non-profits here in Guatemala to receive the Juan Bautista Gutierrez Foundation Award. The program was honored at a dinner attended by the First Lady of Guatemala. It was a very proud moment for Hanley and the Guatemalan staff as the award represented local recognition for local work. The Juan Bautista Gutierrez Foundation prize is awarded to programs that are working to raise the living standards of Guatemalans and was created to motivate Guatemalan non-profit organizations to expand and to grow in areas relating to education and health. <http://www.prensalibre.com.gt/pl/2005/septiembre>

Former volunteer returns to visit project after 4 years

My experience volunteering at Safe Passage was life-shaping. I remember writing of my time, "It's confusing sometimes. Inside the doors of the school we paint volcanoes, sing about worms, make papier-mâché pigs, share healthy meals, do homework and have bean-sack races. I'm often so busy having a good time that I forget what the other option is for these children. The other option is a terrible thought that puts a lump in my throat that I never seem to be able to swallow." Over the last 5 years I've done various forms of volunteer work for NGOs on four continents, I can easily say that I have never seen a project make such amazing progress and advancements in such a short amount of time. In the most obvious way, the project has grown from serving 230 children to over 500! And the new center and housing facilities easily match, if not surpass the professional, beautiful and creativity-inspiring ambiance of any in developed countries. And that which moved me to tears, was that the project has matured from assuring not just the short-term safety and health of the children, but has also adopted a long-term dedication to safely guiding the children to alternate, educated, creative and self-sustaining futures as well. You have my personal gratitude. It's only due to your continued contributions and long-term commitment to the project, that I can finally swallow that lump in my throat and have hope. - *Christina Rivera, former volunteer*

A note from the Director

Six years ago I started the program with 40 children and was asked by local school director "Why bother with those children? It's too late, they said... Too late to make a difference." Today six boys are entering one of the most reputable private schools in Guatemala and 34 children have graduated from 6th grade and are entering junior high next year. This is a remarkable achievement considering the fact that they are the first in their families to receive an education. Every day successes like these remind me that it is never too late to make a difference. We at Safe Passage are very grateful to all of you for your ongoing caring and support. In January over 500 children are depending on us to send them back to school. These children cannot afford the books, school supplies, uniforms and enrolment fees required by the local public schools. We continue to need your help to give these children the education they deserve and the opportunity to reach their full potential. Your support goes so far here in Guatemala. It is changing lives!



We would be so grateful to be included in your holiday giving.

Thank you

Hanley Denning

Founding Director, Safe Passage