

Safe Passage News

Visitors and volunteers

Volunteers

are an important part of the Safe Passage program. They provide the children with the individual attention and caring they so desperately need. We welcome both short and long term volunteers and visitors.

Safe Passage currently has 11 long term volunteers...6 from Germany, 1 from Maine, 1 from Ohio, 1 from Minnesota, 1 from Florida, 1 from Belgium, 2 from Massachusetts and 1 from Norway. Long term volunteers commit to live in Guatemala for 1-2 years in order to assist in Safe Passage efforts.

In addition to having our 2nd group of Bowdoin students for a week of service learning, we also enjoyed the presence of several new groups and visitors throughout this year.

Our hope is that more of you will continue to experience the project first-hand through a volunteer experience or a week of service learning. Your skills, time and talent are appreciated and needed!



“The building is very beautiful and there is a lot more space to play than in the other place and I like the building very much.” Jonny (Homy) Gonzales Salazar- 8 years old



Volunteer, Janna DeWan, from the First Parish Church of Yarmouth pictured with a group of girls she is tutoring.

“We are all still marveling at the life-changing experience we had at Camino Seguro. Our friends and colleagues can sense the excitement in our voices as we attempt to describe the indescribable, and seem genuinely interested in learning more.” Harris Family (Tallie, Joel and kids Maddy 10, Pheobe 14 & Morgan 17 - July '04)

“We all left euphoric about the week we spent with you all. I am certain that our groups' visits will instill a greater sense of partnership between our church and Safe Passage that will serve to benefit both communities.” (Andrea Maker-Cumberland Congregation Church –June '04)

A dream come true

We recently

completed the move into the new building and what an incredible change it is!!! The new educational center was made possible by a restricted gift from a private individual and is truly a dream come true! The hope and spirit in the air is amazing! There is a wonderful breeze, ventilation, light and water...all things we didn't have before. The children and staff are thrilled. The new building has 8 classrooms, 4 bathrooms with showers, a computer room, a

kitchen, a library and a clinic nearly finished on the 3rd floor.

Program Developments

We recently started an early intervention program serving 30, 2 and 3 year olds who were in very dangerous conditions in the dump. These little children were accompanying their parents every day into the dump. As a result of the early intervention program, they are now safe in the presence of caring, loving teachers and volunteers.



Gerardo Garcia Bernal- 2 yrs old.
(early intervention) Gerardo likes playing with stickers, balls & toy cars.

As a result of the urgent situation facing children in the dump, we recently added several pre-teens and teens to the first grade transition classroom. This program is designed for older children who have not yet attended school due to working full time in the dump. Our hope is that this year we can enroll them in school.

“I think the support from Camino Seguro and for me to be in the program is very important, because this gives the option for me to study

and continue studying.” Aron Sicaja Lopez-12 years old

We also recently obtained a donation of land near the Guatemala City Dump from a local Guatemalan man. The land is donated to us for 20 years and will serve as a community garden and park. We hope that is will one day be the site of a vocational center serving adults and youth affiliated with Safe Passage.

Thanks to the generosity of one individual we also now own land in a small village outside of Antigua, Guatemala. We are working to obtain support for an environmental education and farming training project involving at-risk 12 and 13 year olds who are still working full time in the dump. Our hope is that the land can be part of a sustainable agriculture project serving children who desperately need an alternative to working in the dump.

Other big news is that Safe Passage was awarded a grant from the Great Bay Foundation in Portland, Maine to launch a vocational training program in the hotel and tourism industry. The hotel will be run by Safe Passage students and will serve as a training ground for youth entering high school. We hope it will serve as a source of needed vocational training for the youth while also raising awareness and generating some sustainable program support.

Thank you for caring and for believing in Safe Passage!

Hanley

Safe Passage
PO Box 663
Yarmouth, ME
04096
www.safepassage.org