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**COME CELEBRATE  
XELA AID'S  
20TH ANNIVERSARY!**

**DATE:** Sun, Dec. 2,  
2012

**TIME:** 1-5 pm

**WHERE:** 246 Canon Dr.,  
Santa Barbara, Calif.

**HOSTED:** By Tim and  
Ashley Snider

**FRIENDS, FOOD, FUN!**  
Join us for a Summer  
Trips Reunion and to  
celebrate your favorite  
Xela AID memories!  
Reconnect with others



## LIVE. LEARN. THRIVE!

### Xela AID News - September 2012

### Greetings!

We've just returned from summer volunteer trips to Guatemala, and have lots to tell! Read the first installment below. MANY THANKS to all who responded when we reached out for help in launching our very first computer labs just a few weeks ago! (See the story in left-hand column, this issue.) Didn't travel? There are plenty of pictures to enjoy and ways to help! Just follow links after each story to Facebook PHOTO ALBUMS (remember to **Like, Comment and Share!**) and consider joining us next summer. Don't forget to check progress on our 20th Anniversary Endowment Campaign [XELA AID FOREVER](#) launched earlier this year. READ ON!



*Thumbs up to Xela AID's new computer labs, says Martín!*

### COUNT 'EM, THREE!

We've had a wonderfully busy summer. In June, "**Proyecto Educativo**" focused on education projects; "**The Dewell Group**," motivated mothers and their sons and daughters from Santa Barbara, traveled in July; and the "**Veterans**" group made up almost entirely of returnees and Xela AID directors completed their trip in August.

who have served with Xela AID over the years, enjoy delicious wine and cheese in a lovely setting, and browse a silent auction to benefit your favorite Xela AID projects!

Please note: Space is limited and your **RSVP is required!** [Reserve now!](#)

**SEEKING SILENT AUCTION ITEMS!** Have one to donate? [Contact Leslie](#)

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*A dozen children crowd around as Cliff Hague gives ad hoc computer lesson.*

### **XELA AID COMPUTER LABS ARE AN EXCITING FIRST!**

The mists of San Martín Chiquito are abundant with corn, beans and other healthy food crops, loving families and bright, hopeful children - but **not** with working computers or an Internet connection

Here is a bit of what we accomplished, with more detail to come in this and future newsletters. We:

- > Worked side by side with our partners to reinvigorate a garden, planting chiles and cabbage. The caretakers' charge: Make this is a "**sustainable garden**," where profits from sales fuel future plantings.
- > Arranged for and staffed **educational field trips** for children to learn in a new setting, and helped them with English which they are excited to learn.
- > Completed **art mentoring projects**, nurturing creativity, building confidence, and creating a wonderful opportunity for volunteers to connect with the children of San Martín.
- > **Built capacity** with Xela AID's [Leaders of the Future](#) Group in business planning, including a small business that they will launch and run soon.
- > **Empowered our Leaders and [Fair Trade Weaving Cooperative](#)** members as each group worked together to identify two families in extreme poverty, chart a plan for home improvements, then partner with Xela AID to implement those plans ("Change a Life" projects).
- > Opened Xela AID's **first two computer labs** (see story at left).
- > During these trips, **SIXTEEN children were sponsored** for school scholarships through our [PEX program!](#)

Xela AID thanks all this summer's volunteers for their participation and generosity as they worked side by side with our Guatemalan community! We'll share additional detail about the trips in upcoming issues. In the meantime, DON'T MISS our great **PHOTO ALBUMS** featured at the end of the following stories.

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### **PROYECTO EDUCATIVO VOLUNTEER RETURNED ENRICHED**

**By Rachel David, Xela AID Volunteer**

I've read before, "Travel is the only thing you buy that makes you richer." I cannot think of a better way to describe my trip to Guatemala with *Proyecto Educativo*, Xela AID's volunteer educational assistance program.

Working with preschool

-- until now! A project led by Xela AID Advisor **Cliff Hague** resulted in Xela AID's first student computer lab going on line, and then a second. **The labs represent San Martín Chiquito's first working computers and Internet connections available to students!**

Xela AID committed to Internet labs about a year ago after leadership viewed a groundbreaking film by researcher and TED speaker [Sugata Mitra \(VIDEO\)](#), who concluded that where there are computers, kids WILL learn and with astonishing results!

The two labs - one at Xela AID's June Russel Glennon Clinic and Community Center and at *Institucion Nacional de Educacion Basica, San Martín Chiquito* (a middleschool) - went online in August as part of the results of Xela AID's "Veterans" trip, the third of three volunteer vacations held this summer.

through high school aged students for 14 days, my group and I (made up of mostly English instructors from Cal State Fullerton and a nurse from Long Beach) taught lessons in English, organized games and field trips, and restocked their *Centro de Estudios* (Study Center) with various craft and educational supplies. At the end of the two weeks, this first time out-of-the-country traveler boarded the plane to go home much richer than when I left.



I walked away from this trip humbled, and with the renewed belief that each of us, no matter how small or large our contribution, can make a significant impact. I was exposed to a new culture; selfless children, teachers and volunteers; and a country with breath-taking scenery.

Now that I am back, I am homesick for Xela!

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*Many thanks to each of Proyecto Educativo's volunteers for 2012, which included Sarah Bereiter, Rachel David, Coralyn Foults, Jennifer Liddel, Terry Liddell, Sarah Maestas, Rachel Murphee, Chris Ruiz-Velasco, Beth Saur and Amber Tavasolian.* The trip was led by Xela AID Director **Sheryl Fontaine**.

*See Rachel's [PHOTO ALBUM](#)*



*Dewell Group with Xela AID partners on R&R at Attilan.*

Xela AID is grateful to Cliff, and to **Don and Kathy Logan** for leading the charge by covering the pricey installation of satellite receivers at both locations. **Sue Rikalo** funded all-important training. "**Proyecto Educativo**" committed funds for two computers. Kathy Logan "texted" for dollars with great success!

**Thanks to all** who committed funds while on the trip, replied to texts, an email appeal, and a Facebook posting and messages, also among those:

**Ellen Caldwell, Shelby Churchill, June Russell Glennon, Terry Liddell, Linda and David Chesterfield, Tom Logan, Pat Maxwell, Dove Benari, Amanda Moore, Sharon Thorson, and Dan and Lissa Petersen.**

Learn more about the making of the computer labs by taking our [\*\*PHOTO TOUR\*\*](#)

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## "DEWELL GROUP" DELIVERED WITH STYLE AND HEART

Our second summer group to travel to Guatemala was the "Dewell Group," organized by **Liz Dewell** of Santa Barbara. Our *jefa* extraordinaire provided leadership and lent her great energy throughout our whirlwind 8-day trip! The team included 18 volunteers - 16 Santa Barbara moms and their teenage children and two Xela AID Directors. These moms and their kids poured their hearts into their work (and looked great doing it! See Tessa, below...)

The Dewell group received a special, 20th Anniversary welcome, complete with a live marimba band, and presentations from community leaders praising Xela AID's work over the years. Pine needles had been spread across the cool, tile floor of the clinic to create a festive pine forest scent as we walked to take our seats.

Projects included **Art Mentoring** led by **Ashley Parker Snider** where volunteers worked with children to produce gifts for their loved ones. A **Sustainable Gardening** project produced two garden patches alive with chiles, cabbage and other edibles that will be used and sold. A **Sewing Project** led by **Tessa and Liz Dewell**, who donated a sewing machine and shared their time teaching, created new capacity among Xela AID's Tesoros del Corazón Fair Trade Weaving Cooperative. (The ladies' weavings are featured as the source for Santa Barbara-based [\*\*Joji Bags\*\*](#).) And finally, a



*Volunteer Tessa at right, stylin' at Lake Atitlan with Catarina and Catarina.*

"**Change a Life**" project focusing on what became known as "Casa Verde," AKA "Maria's House," made life healthier and MUCH more comfortable for a family living in extreme poverty.

Thank you for all your great work Dewell Group: **Liz and Tessa**





*Juana with her sponsor, Janet Taylor*

**CALL FOR PHOTOS:  
BECOME PART OF  
XELA AID'S  
RECORDED HISTORY!**

We're putting together Xela AID's history in photos. We're asking past participants and those who have attended Xela AID events over the past 20 years to send your favorite photos to add!

The history will be shared along our Facebook timeline, and kept in hardcopy for posterity.

Please send digital photos to us [by email](#), or if you don't have access to a scanner, send hardcopies to:

**Xela AID  
3571 Windspun Dr.  
Hunt. Beach, CA  
92649**

Tell us **WHAT'S GOING ON** in the photo, **IDENTIFY** those in the photos if you can, and **INCLUDE THE YEAR** you believe the photo was taken!

\*\*\*

**Dewell; Kira, Brendan and Andrew Fay; Kolleen and Zachary Greenwald; Karen, Larkin and Brendan Ingram; Kristin, John and Erin Linehan; Ashley Parker Snider, and Henry and Greer Shull, and Moonsook and Miles Waters!**

*Meet these volunteers, see some of their accomplishments, and add your comments by clicking through below:*

- > [DEWELL GROUP TRIP ALBUM](#)
- > [CASA VERDE, BEFORE AND AFTER](#)

**LORENZO'S STORY: HE AND 15 OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE GOT CLOSER TO THEIR DREAMS THIS SUMMER!**

Lorenzo had about lost hope. At 17, he is the oldest child in his family and has had to cope with an alcoholic father and the recent loss of a brother.



*Lorenzo, far right with Ashley Snider and three other children she sponsored this summer through Xela AID's PEX Educational Sponsorship Program.*

As the oldest, the responsibility of helping his mother buy food falls to

Lorenzo - he had been using the dollar or so needed each day to get back and forth to school and to buy school supplies to buy food for his family, instead. He values education, and one day wants to be an architect or an artist; he didn't think he would be able to continue in school.

Lorenzo's situation changed when **Ashley Parker Snider** stepped in to sponsor the young man (and three others!) this summer. Lorenzo received his first distribution of funds September 1, and will now be able to continue in school!

"There are no words to express how grateful I am," Lorenzo said upon learning of the sponsorship. "This is the only thing that could have made it possible for me to stay in school!"

For their generosity in sponsoring children this summer, we



**XELA AID FOREVER  
ENDOWMENT - We're  
off to a great start!**

In this, our 20th year,  
Xela AID established an  
endowment to make it  
possible for us to  
ensure childrens'  
health and education in  
perpetuity!

[Follow our progress  
and help us grow.](#)

thank **Kira Fay, Kolleen Greenwald, Karen Ingram, Kristin Linehan, Frank Long, Michelle Knowles, Rhonda Porter, Ashley Parker Snider, Sue Rikalo, Ron Truppa, and Moon and Miles Waters, Mel Dinkel and Leslie Baer Dinkel!**

See our PHOTO ALBUMS of [Sponsored Students](#),  
and those still [Seeking Sponsors](#).

Cost of sponsorship depends on grade, and starts at just more than \$1 a day (\$375 per year!). To learn more or to make it possible for a child to be empowered for life through education, contact [Pat Maxwell](#).

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#### **COMING UP...**

- > Catching up with the "**Veteran's Group**," the third volunteer group of the summer
- > **Casa Azul: The House that Love Built.**
- > Xela AID's **clean water project** is improving the health of families throughout San Martín Chiquito.
- > **Leaders of the Future** funded to start their first business.
- > **Meet the Weavers of Tesoros del Corazon.**

Thank you for your continued support and interest in Xela AID's work in sustainable community development. We are tremendously grateful to our Xela AID family, people like you, who are partnering with children and families to overcome poverty and to thrive!

**Sincerely,**

*Leslie C. Baer*  
Leslie Baer Dinkel, President



