

New Haven/León Sister City Project
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NEW HAVEN LEÓN

Sister City Project



NH/LSCP supports education and sustainable development in Nicaragua and New Haven.

2019 Annual Report

Thank You for your ongoing support!

Make a Plan to Amplify Your Impact!

If you would like to extend your support of New Haven Leon Sister City Project to make a lasting impact, there are several gift arrangements to choose from. Making a meaningful gift is easier than you think. A gift in your will or trust, for example, is accomplished by adding simple bequest language to your will - and you'll join others already part of *New Haven Leon: Presente!*

Whether you would like to put your donation to work today or benefit us after your lifetime, you can find a charitable plan that lets you provide for your family and support NHLSCP.

More information at newhavenleon.org on the Give page.



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New Haven,
Connecticut

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Nicaragua

Sisters since 1984

*Above: Education Coordinator
Ivett Fonseca with Goyena
Afterschool Program students.*

Dear Friends of the New Haven/Leon Sister City Project,

Building leadership is embedded in all of our programs in the rural communities of Goyena and Trolio. For example, in the Education Program, the preschool students are having fun as they learn. They love coming to school. All students in the Afterschool Program work in small groups; some students catch up on work from the school day, while others create independent projects related to their learning and present them to their peers. This gives students experience in working independently, public speaking, and explaining their ideas to others. All of these are life skills, and are certainly necessary for would be leaders.



The Domestic Violence Prevention Program (DVPP) cultivates leaders through education and experiences. Interactive workshops in women's, human, and legal rights raise the consciousness of their dignity and self worth. Planning and participating in many marches and demonstrations in Leon and Managua (before such gatherings were banned) enable women to envision a different and better life for themselves, their families and communities. A number of these women have taken on leadership roles in the program and assisted with the DVPP in Troilo.

The six youth in the center pages represent a larger group of young people who have been impacted by their work with the NH/LSCP. They speak for themselves. They are filled with life and on a path to productive and fulfilling futures. Fabiola, Erika and Yahosca in Nicaragua and Catalina, Kiana and Adrian in New Haven witness to what your generosity accomplishes.

We thank you for that and trust you will continue your support. You are truly our partners in this work.

Patty Nuelsen
Director of Development

NB: The programs described above changed abruptly with the arrival of COVID 19. The preschool has become more of a day care center where children are safe, supervised and receive nutritious meals and a snack. The after school students pick up a packet of homework once a week to complete. They do come every day to pick up a generous full meal to take home (See photo above). The DVPP is now exploring next steps including possibly food co-op, or family gardens to respond to the economic crisis and continue to build leadership and independence.

NH/LSCP Financial Statements

	FY 2019	FY 2018	FY 2017
Current Assets			
Total assets	192,954	211,666	192,183
Liabilities			
Total Liabilities	24,372	26,439	38,122
Equity	168,582	185,227	154,061
Total Liabilities and Equity	192,954	211,666	192,183
Statement of Revenue and Expenses			
Support and Revenue			
Contributions	143,704	138,711	127,654
Net Service Revenue	1,814	10,989	22,369
Investment Income	11,674	(2,844)	8,281
Costs of Goods/Services	(1,386)	(6,293)	(30,253)
Gross Profit	155,806	140,563	148,706
Expense			
Program	128,483	97,121	105,430
Supporting Services	4,250	1,690	8,406
Fundraising	17,719	14,464	14,780
Total	150,452	113,275	128,616
Net Income	5,354	27,288	19,278

2019 Contributors

Breathing Room Yoga
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Students whacking a pinata on first day of Goyena Afterschool Program.

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Dear Friends,

We at New Haven/Leon Sister City Project are often trying to communicate to our members about some crisis far away, and explain what's at stake. Well, now you are part of the same global COVID-19 crisis, and it can't be hard to imagine what this means for impoverished communities where there are few resources and people need to stay active to be able eat the next day. Of course, we hope you are well and safe.

Looking back at 2019, we thought NH/LSCP had plenty to deal with trying to help families get through the political/economic crisis in Nicaragua and also to mobilize people here on the climate emergency front. But - similar to how climate disasters overwhelm different regions periodically - we are all being pushed by this new public health calamity. As a community of people who have acted out of solidarity, NH/LSCP might be better prepared to move ahead during tumultuous times.

2019 did bring new energy to our León staff as Yaranesi Perez joined the NHLSCP staff, bringing lots of experience with her. She grew up in rural Goyena, got involved with NH/LSCP arts and sports programs at age 12, and was a leader in our Ecological Youth Brigade program. Yara was one of the first in her community to graduate from college, and had been leading our Afterschool Program. She is also is the mother of a 2 year old boy.

We also began a new afterschool program in Troilo in 2019 in response to the political and economic crisis initiated in 2018. After seeing consistent educational progress in Goyena over the years, it was a bit shocking to see students in Troilo not reading in 3rd and 4th grade. While this experience affirmed the positive impact of the Goyena work, it underlined the need for system wide reform. It also affirmed NHLSCP's work on leadership development for parents and students - and also through the women's program - which are helping create a more active leaders able to advocate for deeper changes.

In New Haven, we began a youth climate organizing effort that had significant success building pressure on the City to act to reduce carbon emissions. The youth - high school and some college students - were able to get the New Haven Board of Alders to pass a climate emergency resolution and to have the Mayor commit \$560,000 in capital funds towards climate projects. We are still working on having the City invest in energy, transportation and green jobs projects as a way to both address the climate crisis and to help with economic recovery. Actually, in both New Haven and León, we are working extensively with youth leadership (see centerfold) who bring new energy and hope to difficult situations.

We are very concerned that the COVOD-19 crisis will overwhelm the healthcare system in Nicaragua, but the León staff are helping educate residents and are adjusting programs to continue to support children and families.

New Haven Leon SCP continues to thrive and lead because of your support. We really need to step it up to juggle multiple crises (see girls doing spoon game above!), but are sure we can have a positive impact.

In hope,

Chris Schweitzer
Program Director

Cover: New Haven youth rally on steps on City Hall in September calling for climate mobilization.





Catalina Homann (center back) is a junior at Wilbur Cross High school in New Haven. "I always appreciated the few things I heard about the Climate Movement so I came to a meeting, not expecting to get as involved as I am now. By trying to make New Haven a better town for the environment and for those struggling, I found a sense of purpose and accomplishment, like I was actually making a difference which is the main reason I continue to work to fight climate change. I have also found other high schoolers who can relate to the same concerns I have about the growth of our country's climate emissions which allows me to enjoy the climate work I do even more. Even though the tasks can get overwhelming and discouraging at some points, I remind myself that the small actions I do now will make a difference in the long run."

Kiana Flores, 16 years old, is a junior at Cooperative Arts and Humanities High school in New Haven. "The Climate Crisis has become far more than just one of my 'interests'. As a proud Honduran and climate activist, I understand that The Climate Crisis is not a privileged issue, and that it's adverse effects will hit our marginalized communities the hardest. Through our work within the New Haven Climate Movement Youth, we strive to uplift youth voices to demand change within our city government and institutions. The news of tomorrow can be terrifying, but we aren't hopeless, and we can get together, get involved, and speak out." Kiana, back left in the photo below, and is shown collecting signatures for the Climate Emergency petition last summer.



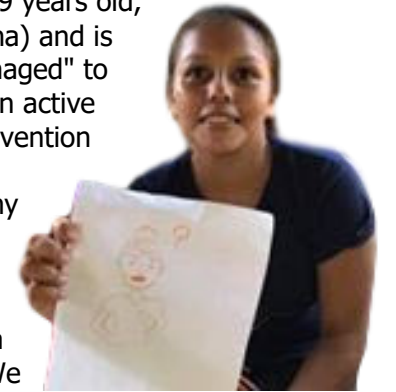
Ericka Dixiana Chevez Manzanarez is 19 years old. Her dream was to be a nurse, but she could not pass the entrance exam since rural education is less demanding. However, she did not give up, and opted to study the special education career at UNAN León, and is in her first year there.

She never thought about being a teacher, but over time she has fallen in love with the career and the art of teaching. This passion was identified when she started supporting the teachers and students of the Troilo Afterschool Program, and she was offered a NHLSCP Youth Brigade scholarship to support her work and her studies.

Ericka works every day of the week with the Afterschool teachers. On Saturdays she attends classes at the university, further developing what she has learned teaching the children. In the future this will allow her to return to her family and have a better opportunity to get a good job. In the picture she is hanging COVID-19 posters around the community.

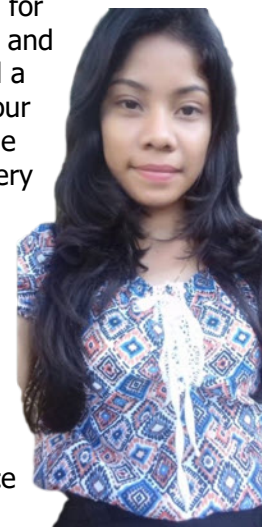


Fabiola Pérez Moreno, 19 years old, lives in the Nueva Vida (Goyena) and is the mother of a girl. She "managed" to finish high school, and has been active with the Domestic Violence Prevention Program for three years. "This group has helped me a lot in my personal and social life. I think that one of the most important things I have learned is to recognize the value I have as a human being and a woman. We live in a society that says since we are born that women are worth less than men, and this belief is socially reproduced and accepted. Today I consider that I am a woman who knows how to defend her rights, but also how to support other women who need me. I know how to apply psychological first aid to women who need accompaniment because they are victims of male violence. The issue of sisterhood has touched me a lot. Women must be united to change the macho patterns."



Youth Leadership in León and New Haven

Yahosca Perez Alonso, 18 years old, is from the Nueva Vida Goyena community. She was part of the NHLSCP Ecological Brigade, which was formed for high school youth that had interest in the care and preservation of the environment. "We learned a lot about the protection of flora and fauna of our community, and as a group we investigated the environmental problems of the area. It was very nice to be able to meet with other leaders and other schoolmates and delve into these important topics. As a community displaced by Hurricane Mitch, we know natural disasters due to climate change always have greater impacts on rural communities like mine. Although we in rural Nicaragua are not the main polluters in the environment, it is important to recognize how we can help reduce pollution in our own communities."



Adrian Huq (with mic below) is a high school senior at Metropolitan Business Academy in New Haven. They are a co-founder of New Haven Climate Movement and the Youth Team Leader. They recognize climate change as a devastating current and future issue and that action must be taken in order to sustain our planet and everything living on it. As someone who cares deeply about the state of our planet as well as social justice, fighting climate change and for climate justice is a fight of top priority. Adrian plans to pursue Environmental Studies in college with a focus on recycling/waste management and continue activist/organizer work in the future.

