

The New Haven/León Sister City Project is a 25 year old progressive, bi-national, grassroots organization that fosters a partnership between the communities of New Haven and León, Nicaragua. Our mission is to promote social justice. Our work is focused in the rural community of Goyena outside León.



New Haven/León Sister City Project



2009 Annual Report

New Haven/León Sister City Project
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THANK YOU! Many thanks to all our donors and friends for their continuing generous support. We are all, organizations and individuals, to a greater or lesser extent dealing with challenges in our present economy. A disproportion of the burden, however, is borne by the poor. Most recently the world has been witness to the suffering of the people of Haiti. The earthquake that struck pointed out the absence of infrastructure, the shoddy construction in the capital itself, the lack of preparedness as well as the environmental devastation that exacerbated the effects of the quake. Haiti's underdevelopment is not an accident of history. Decades of U.S. intervention in Haiti's internal politics, international exploitation of its people and resources, as well as years of rapacious dictatorship, have all contributed to Haiti's current plight.

Haiti is this hemisphere's poorest country, Nicaragua the second poorest. Nicaragua, too shares the history of U.S. intervention, international exploitation and dynastic dictatorship. The people of both countries have been victimized but are not victims. They are resilient, resourceful and determined to be agents of their own history. They continue to sing, dance, hope and laugh even as they struggle.

The Sister City Project has chosen to accompany the people of León as they forge their history. You are part of that partnership. We thank you and look forward to your continuing support.

NHLSCP Financial Statements FY 2009

Current Assets

Cash and Other Current Assets **125,256**

Liabilities

Total Current Liabilities 17,260

Net Assets

Unrestricted 51,998

Board Restricted 40,827

Health Fund 8,620

Total 101,445

Net Income 6,551

Total Liabilities and Equity **125,256**

Statement of Revenue and Expenses

Support and Revenue

Contributions 120,282

Service Revenue 81,341

Investment Income 1,349

Total **202,972***

Expense

Program 162,851

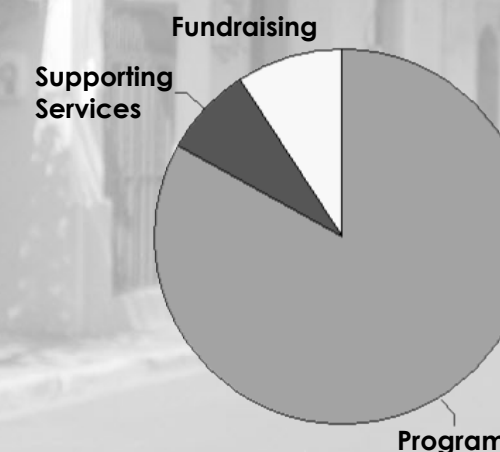
Supporting Services 15,340

Fundraising 18,230

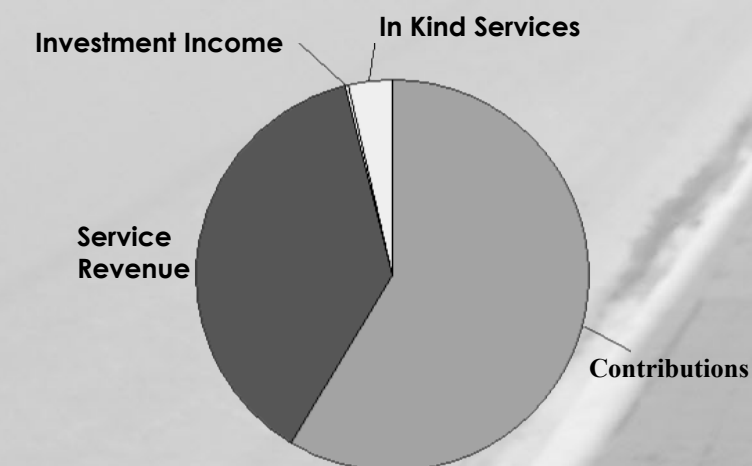
Total **196,421**

Net Income (Loss) **6,551**

Expenses 2009



Support and Revenue 2009



* Does not include In-Kind Services - \$ 7,270



Hopkins/Mann delegates and Goyena residents take a break.

2009 CONTRIBUTIONS

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Fairfield Warde High School

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New England Biolabs
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“Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system ... or it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world.” Paulo Freire

“The life I touch for good or ill will touch another life, and that in turn another, until who knows where the trembling stops or in what far place my touch will be felt.” Frederick Buechner



Dear Friends

People often wonder if the work of non-profits like NHLSCP is having an impact. What they want to know, naturally, is whether NHLSCP is making a positive difference in the lives of others. We have little doubt that we – through delegations, the Education Program in Goyena, internships, support for sugar cane workers – are having an impact. We can see the results – albeit on a small scale - and that's a good part of what this 2009 Annual Report is about.

But part of this question is an awareness of the pressing challenges Nicaraguans face. Poverty. An overwhelmed and under funded educational system. Weak political institutions. Right now, climate change and the global economic crisis are creating new and serious threats to people's efforts to overcome poverty. The challenges are so great. Will this ever change?

NHLSCP responds to these challenges in two ways. First we continue to build person to person relationships helping to make connections that can change lives. It's through these relationships – and an awareness of people's needs and gifts – that ideas are born, projects are created, resources are found, people are mobilized, and transformation happens. Both here and in Nicaragua.

Secondly, we look to confront the systems – the “powers and principalities” in Biblical terms - that are undermining our efforts. In the case of sugar plantations we see how low wages and bad working conditions condemn families – whose children we educate – to grinding poverty. So we struggle to get out the worker's story and shine a light on the World Bank loan and negligent company practices. We see how precarious life can be in Nicaragua in the face of hurricanes and drought, so we're supporting efforts locally and in Nicaragua to address environmental issues that are so critical to rural, agricultural communities. And we are seeing successes both in concrete terms (food for workers, changing company policies) and in increased awareness and participation in these struggles.

NHLSCP is at its heart an educational organization – both for USians and Nicaraguans – hopefully a transformational, liberating education. Our success can be measured by how well we create the sense that small actions can “touch another life” and another..... and whether we're able to convert that awareness of our own power into sustained action on behalf of a better world for all of us.

In 2010 we will continue to invite people to join in this communal effortto help put ideas into action to build better lives in the face of some of the toughest challenges imaginable.

Sincerely,

Joy Gordon and Roy Money
Co-Presidents

Education

Education in Goyena continues to be the primary work of NHLSCP, from preschool to adult education. Below head teacher Sonia Matute with parent training, and preschool teacher Lesbia Acevedo Matutei with her students.



NHLSCP decided in 2009 to devote more resources to improve the preschool program in Goyena given the critical role learning at that age plays in children's lives.

Fundraising

As part of the 25th Anniversary Celebration supporters donated over \$16,000 to a new fund to support education work in Goyena. Board member Mike Soares and students from Fair Haven School (below) after a coin drive, led by 3rd graders (middle), raised \$500.



Antonieta Chavez, the León office administrator, sorts clothing collected from León high schools for distribution in Goyena.

Environment

Environmental issues - hurricanes, pesticide overuse, burning of trash and sugar cane fields, decreasing water tables - continue to have an impact on Goyena. Adalis Castro shows off a papaya seeding (top) she and her grandfather are growing on their farm. Lindsay Dillon and Shelly Altman hold banner (middle) as part of a local event calling for more action on climate change.



Above, NHLSCP Delegation Coordinator Erendira Vanegas with leaders of ASSOCHIVIDA, the association of ex-sugar cane workers who are negotiating with Nicaragua Sugar Estates Ltd., and the World Bank over a epidemic of chronic renal failure among workers. 2009 saw significant progress and a public health study has begun to try to identify the epidemic's cause.

Delegations

Delegations in 2009 included Fairfield and Yale universities, Temple Emmanuel and Hopkins and Horace Mann high schools. Below members of the Hopkins/Mann delegation help residents construct a new classroom. Below Jean Silk of Temple Emmanuel (middle) and Danielle Young (Hopkins/Mann) with children in Goyena.



2009 Delegates Fairfield University: Dina Franceschi, Terry Jones, Melissa Martinez, Kira Gustafson, Jill Holman, Evelyn Saiter, Kerri Horgan, Caitlin Liguori, Jessica Randall, Michaela Kehoe, Eddie Mazar, Jennifer Zocco, Thomas Vitlo; **Yale Reach Out:** Alexis Johnson, Antonio Ingram, Christine Saffold, Jessica Norton, Rasesh Mohan, Rebecca Cooper, Sarah Toomey, Vy Tran; **Temple Emmanuel:** Arlene Aizer Cohen, Jean Silk, David Elkin-Ginnetti, Debbie Elkin, Jane Kovel, Peter Stolzman, Lee Stolzman, Rise Siegel; **Hopkins/Mann:** Susan Bennitt, Silas Meredith, Sarah Levine, Ryan DSouza, Jessica Cohen, Lily Philben, Eric Coffin-Gould, Francesca Smith, Nicholas Aeppl, Ryan Daley, Andrew Boone, Dana Apkon, Danielle Young, Michaela Thompson, Douglas Steinberg, Matthew Weber, Daniel Shank, Mira Armstrong, Brenton Arnaboldi, Michael Hwang

Interns

This year seven interns traveled to Nicaragua to work in our education program, the health clinic, and to support the work of ASSOCHIVIDA - the association of ex-sugar cane workers. Below interns Mira Fishman and Bethany Slifko with Allison Vasquez. Sam Purdy teaches chess (center). The other interns were Katy Mayall, Tim Druzilla (in bottom photo with ASSOCHIVIDA), Scott Wagner and Jen Plaster.



2009