



# SewHope

Health ■ Opportunity ■ Education



## Annual Report 2016

SewHope exists to provide Health Care, Nutrition, Education, Spiritual Growth and Opportunity to marginalized people in one of the most neglected parts of the world – Petén, Guatemala. We believe that when we share God's love, we empower others to find sustainable solutions to the injustices of poverty.

[WWW.SEWHOPE.ORG](http://WWW.SEWHOPE.ORG)

P.O. Box 12522

Toledo, Ohio 43606

419-304-6480

*Dear Friends,*

One day I was sitting in our clinic and one of the graduating students in our Guatemalan after-school program knocked on my door. Although she had known me for years and I felt that we were friends, she was literally shaking. She handed me a typed letter. In it she thanked me for all that we had done for her and asked if we would be willing to support her because she wanted to go to college to get a degree in teaching. She had already completed the requirements to become a licensed teacher in Guatemala but she wanted to go and get an advanced degree. She graduated **NUMBER ONE** in her class because of the education she had received in our program. In exchange for our support, she wanted to work at our school every day and go to college herself on the weekends. I remembered back to just a few years ago when we tried to hire a teacher and although we were so fortunate to have found Seiner Lopez, every other person that applied had not been able to read beyond a third grade level or do the most basic math. And these were certified teachers!



So, it was with great joy that I told Marina yes of course, **it would be our privilege to have her work with us!** She has worked with our computer programs and she knows them well. Most importantly, she has been a part of Orfelinda's "Luz de Esperanza" group, and has come to know her value in this world as a child of God. Marina grew up in a large family and her parents had never gone to school. **She knows what it means to be desperately poor and because of her experience with SewHope, she has big dreams for her life.** How fortunate are we to now have her as part of our team!! This was the dream we had when we started – we hoped we would be able to educate the poorest in the local communities. We also hoped that one day some of them might work with us.

Guatemalans struggle with some of the worst health issues in the world. The country has the **fourth highest rate** of chronic malnutrition, high maternal and child mortality, and a large prevalence of diabetes and heart disease. The Guatemalan government spends about \$97 per person on public healthcare. (In contrast, the United States spent \$7,825.) In practice, this means that **many local clinics do not have essential supplies, vaccines, or medications.** Many of the local hospitals have shut down all but emergency services, leaving thousands without medical care.

There is so much that I want to tell you. I have come to love the Guatemalan people so deeply – they are a people with such a rich heritage and culture. But they have been so oppressed and denied the most basic of human rights. We are a small organization and yet I feel that our impact in this region is enormous. This is our tenth year. I am astonished at what has been accomplished. **And NONE of it would have happened without all of you.** We have had such incredible support from people here in the United States who will never travel there or meet the people we serve. All that you know is that these people are human beings, just like you and me. And they are suffering. And God has asked each of us who **HAVE**, to help those who **HAVE NOT**.

For those of us who have learned about our God through the bible, we know that God tells us over and over that we are asked to care for those who are the most in need. The message of the bible is abounding in this message. In Isaiah 58:6-7 it says "*Is not this the fast that I chose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?*"

This work in God's love has personally brought me incredible joy. I thank each one of you for the roles you have played in alleviating the suffering of people thousands of miles away. Although most of you will never meet them, I can tell you that they pray for you **EVERY** day and that you have alleviated their suffering immensely. Thank you for being part of our family – a family brought together in love.

I ask God's blessing for each and every one of you!

Anne Ruch



# Who We Are

## Our Guatemalan Staff



Ismael Martinez  
Project Director



Orfelinda Guerra  
Director of Social Projects



Mayra Martinez  
Clinic Director



Seiner Lopez  
Education Director

## Our Board of Directors in the United States and Guatemala



Anne Ruch MD  
Executive Director



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Luckey Hernandez MD  
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Trustee



Marta Balsells De Sechel  
Trustee



# Education

Education is HOPE and it is a gift that is extremely cherished amongst our families. It is a blessing to provide a solid foundation for our students as they continue to amaze us with their eagerness to learn and their incredible academic progress. The support that so many of you have provided helps foster an enriching, safe and positive environment within and beyond the SewHope classroom. The children in our program are not only rapidly advancing in grade levels but because of their achievements and their faith in themselves, they are not dropping out of school at early ages.



What does your sponsorship provide?  
80 children in our school receive:

- A loving faith-based environment where they feel cared for
- A daily nutritious lunch
- Access to a computer with educational math and reading software
- Captivating books that they can borrow to read at home
- Uniform and shoes
- A backpack, books and school supplies
- Field trips
- Music education
- Participation in sports
- Birthday and other celebrations

Visit [sewhope.org](http://sewhope.org) to sponsor a student.



# Health Care

## Cervical Cancer Prevention



Since 2007, SewHope in partnership with the Promedica Health System in Toledo, Ohio has screened over 7,000 women for cervical cancer – the number one cancer killer of women in Guatemala.

Sometimes we make trips to remote villages and sometimes local officials provide the women with bus transportation to visit our clinic.

Local health officials from neighboring municipalities meet with us so that together we can explore ways to eliminate this completely preventable disease that takes the lives of young women.



Mayra Martinez has completed training so that now she is a certified cytologist who can correctly interpret our pap smears. We are in the process of starting a cytology school so that we can expand this effort and have a sustainable and long-term solution to cervical cancer prevention.



Hundreds of women such as Lucia have been saved a premature death from a preventable disease.



# Health Care

## Maternal and Child Healthcare



### Contraception

This year we have expanded our ability to provide contraception to women. In addition to seeing women for yearly gynecological exams and ensuring their access to injectable contraception, we have now partnered with another nonprofit organization, APROFAM. They send surgeons to our clinic to provide tubal ligations.



### Health for children

Every six months hundreds of children in 13 local villages receive....

Deworming to eliminate parasites

Fluoride sealants placed to prevent tooth decay

Growth charts completed so that at-risk children can be identified and helped



**Prenatal Care** is provided at our Birthing Center. 60 healthy babies were delivered there in 2016 by our midwife Catalina.





# Nutrition



Since 2010 we have been providing a daily nutritious meal to hundreds of children in 13 village schools. This meal includes rice, a soy protein, vegetables and vitamins.

Thanks to our Project Director, Ismael Martinez, we have been able to grow additional herbs and vegetables such as cilantro, peppers, tomatoes, and onions to add to this meal to make it even more nutritious and tastier!

We are currently sending down another shipment of 100,000 of these meals.



We realize that exporting food is only a short-term solution to hunger and therefore, we have been finding other solutions to feeding starving children. Our Project Director has helped us find sustainable solutions such as....

## **A Poultry Program.**

We currently have a poultry farm with hundreds of chickens who produce eggs for the children to eat. Best of all, we use this program to teach the parents of our children how they might also be able to develop a small poultry farm at their homes which will provide eggs and potentially an income.





## Women's Food Cooperatives

Orfelinda Guerra is our Director of Social Projects. She has commissioned students from the local university to come and build a stove on our property to make large quantities of baked goods that can be used by the local families for nutrition and income. Below you can see the stove and the women's cooperative that is involved in this project.



And on the additional land that we have purchased, women have formed a co-op where they are planting many different kinds of vegetables. This not only gives the women a means to feed their families, but also a potential income that can be used to further educate their children.



## Clean Water

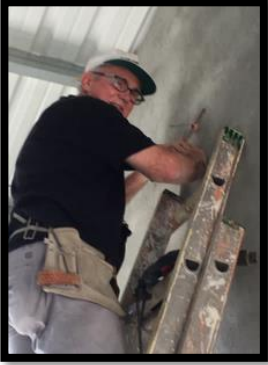
Over the last three years, we have developed a very fruitful relationship with "Clean Water for the World". They provide us with a water filtration system that can filter water at a rate of 5 gallons per minute. We have identified communities in dire need of clean water and have been able to install these water filters in such a way that the entire community can access clean water.





## Volunteers

Thank you to all our tremendous volunteers!  
Those of you who travel to share your love and your talents,  
And those of you who work so tirelessly here at home to make this work possible.



Finally...We are excited to say that our new **Hostel** is almost complete!  
It will give us the opportunity to:  
House short term volunteer teams,  
Provide housing for long-term volunteers.



# 2016 Shannon E. Wilson Award

Each year, an award is given in memory of Shannon E. Wilson, a young doctor who had worked with us many times in Guatemala before her death at a young age. Shannon's humility, kindness and dedication to serving the poor were the epitome of everything that SewHope stands for. A prolific writer, Shannon often said that she found her purpose in life by serving the poorest. She often referred to Isaiah 6:8 "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying "Whom Shall I send and who will go for us. And I said, "Here I am. Send me." This award is given in her name annually to a person who exemplifies this response in Isaiah.



Below: Lisa Gathard with Guatemalan sons, Franklin, Hanssel, & Jessi Martinez

This year the Shannon Wilson Award was given to **Lisa Gathard**, a person who responds to injustice with her heart, her mind and all her energy. Since our inception, Lisa has been one of our strongest supporters, always helping us find solutions to our greatest challenges. Her efforts were crucial in enabling us to start our after-school program. In addition to her strong involvement with our work, she and her family have brought three Guatemalan boys here to the U.S. Over the last 7 years, they provided these boys with a loving home and an education that has allowed them to achieve their God-given potential. We thank Lisa for her selflessness and willingness to step out in faith to be an example of God's love.

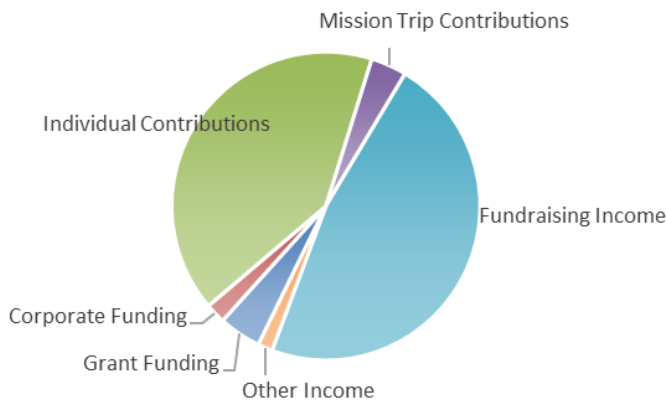


## 2016 Financial Information

Net Assets Beginning of 2016: \$226,652

Net Assets End of Year 2016: \$278,240

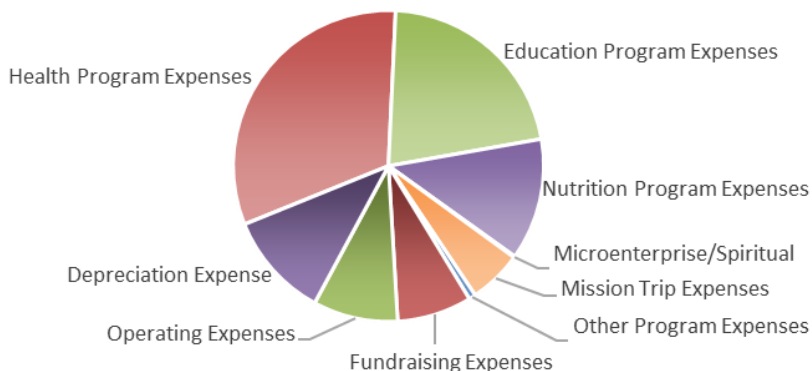
### 2016 Revenue



Grant Funding	\$8,000
Corporate Funding	\$3,795
Individual Contributions	\$73,538
Mission Trip Contributions	\$6,740
Fundraising Income	\$84,478
Other Income	\$2,740
<b>Total Revenue:</b>	<b>\$179,291</b>
<b>Net Income:</b>	<b>\$50,917</b>

Value of In-Kind (Non-Cash) Donations	\$42,126
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### 2016 Expenses



<b>PROGRAM EXPENSES:</b>	
Health Program Expenses	\$40,885
Education Program Expenses	\$27,576
Nutrition Program Expenses	\$16,245
Microenterprise/Spiritual	\$155
Mission Trip Expenses	\$7,167
Other Program Expenses	\$901
Fundraising Expenses	\$9,982
Operating Expenses	\$11,340
Depreciation Expense	\$14,123
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$128,374</b>



# Thank you to our generous 2016 Donors

## \$10,000 and above

Randy & Anne Ruch  
Michael Thaman &  
Lisa Gathard

## \$5,000 to \$9,999

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Robert & Kathleen Kolodgy  
Anthony & Rachel Novakovic  
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Toledo Rotary Foundation

## \$1,000 to \$4,999

33 For Charity  
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Ken Carey

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Kim Weeg  
Wersell's Bike & Ski Shop  
White Water Car & Van Wash

## Mission Trips 2016

We thank God for the generosity of the people who gave their time and talents on SewHope Mission trips in 2015.

Anne Ruch, MD  
Laura Ruch, MD  
Jessica Schulte, MPH  
Meridith Heckler

Randall Ruch, PhD  
Cydney Siggins, MD  
Tim Kuhn  
Sara Aja, PharmD

Visit [www.sewhope.org](http://www.sewhope.org) for more information on our mission and projects in Guatemala.

Your support, generosity and prayers are truly appreciated.