

SEW⁺HOPE

STRENGTHENING AND EMPOWERING WITH
HEALTH, OPPORTUNITY, AND EDUCATION

2014
ANNUAL
REPORT



DEAR FRIENDS,

In this annual report, we hope to show you how SewHope's efforts are succeeding in battling the "most ruthless killer in this world", one that causes the greatest suffering on earth: poverty. In these pictures and stories, I hope you will realize that your prayers and donations really are making changes in the lives of the people we work with, particularly the women and children. While our goal is always to share God's love, we recognize that people in despair come to know that love through actions, not just words.

Every year, I am humbled to see the tremendous growth in our impact in the Petén. We continue to touch the lives of thousands of people through our projects in nutrition, education, public health and healthcare for women and children. In the following pages, you will read about many of our successes throughout the year, including the story of a woman named Santos and her four children, three of whom suffer from muscular dystrophy. Through our efforts, they received a suitable home, a means of earning an income and a more dignified life. Even the local community was uplifted at what was accomplished.

The story of Santos and her family is the story of all that SewHope works to achieve. We work to give people hope – hope in themselves and faith that God will act through others to ease their suffering. Is this not what we talk about when we say that God calls us to serve his neediest?

So, I challenge each of you when I say that it is really not good enough to say, "There but for the grace of God go I." If we believe what we say when we proclaim that all men are created equally, then it is morally offensive to think that it is permissible for other humans to live in starvation, abuse, neglect and great suffering. Extreme poverty tries to mock our faith. But when we work together sharing our gifts, our time and yes, our money – real change CAN happen, real dignity can be restored and that is the change that God asks us to make.

God Bless,

Donna Puch



SEW HOPE

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Mayra Martinez	- Professional Nurse
Seiner Lopez	- Director of After-School Education (New 2015)

OUR MISSION

We will rely on the transformative nature of God's love to partner with the poor, marginalized and exploited in Petén, Guatemala to empower them to end the injustices of poverty and to bring about sustainable solutions in their individual lives and villages. We envision communities and individuals transformed by the love of God and equipped with the skills and tools to self-determine their futures.

STRENGTHENING AND EMPOWERING

Casa Materna Birthing Center Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

At the request of local midwives in the Petén, we have completed construction of the first free-standing birthing center in the region. The local community donated the land, helped in the construction and is committed to making this Center a sustainable facility. Our hope is to ultimately use it also as a training center for advanced practice midwives. In January 2015, with the help of Dr. Coral Matus and midwife Ginny Hiltner, the first healthy baby was delivered in our birthing center – her name is Coral Virginia!

Cervical Cancer Prevention

Almost 5,000 women have been screened for cervical cancer. At least 600 women have been saved from a premature death from the most common form of cancer in Guatemala. Until now, the cytology department at Toledo Hospital has so generously screened all of these tests. Words cannot express our gratitude for the amazing efforts of the Toledo Hospital Cytology Department and their Pre-Analytic techs, Cytotechnologists and Pathologists; especially Helena Howe, Anatomic Pathology Supervisor and Chetti Smith, Cytology Supervisor. We simply could not have saved these lives without their support.

In 2015, we are beginning to achieve our goal of developing a sustainable model for testing in Guatemala. We have successfully raised the funds to send Mayra Martinez to school for training in cytology and we hope that she will lead us in developing our own school in Guatemala within the next two years.

Nutrition

In our agronomy program, Hanssel Martinez is working with families to grow their own fruit and vegetable gardens and to install fish and poultry farms. The Guatemalan People express confidence in SewHope seeing these projects come to fruition. In 2014, five new fish farms were started as a combined effort between SewHope and the community. We were also able to raise community gardens growing plantains, peppers, cilantro, chili and jalapeño peppers and fruit trees. Our food dehydrator allows for preservation of this vital nutrition. The families involved in these programs can choose to sell part of their harvests, generating an income in addition to nutrition for their families.

Clean Water

In 2014 we began a new partnership with an outstanding organization called **Clean Water for the World**. Individual long lasting water filters have been distributed to numerous families and two complete water filtration systems have been installed in a local school and in our clinic for the entire community to use.



...WITH HEALTH, EDUCATION AND OPPORTUNITY



Education

Students are making great strides in reading and math in our after-school computer-based education program. Because the programs are self-paced, the children have been able to sometimes achieve 2-3 grade level improvements in a few short months. In April 2014, none of our students were able to pass a basic math facts test. Just 8 months into the program, 38 students passed with 100% accuracy and 31 students have moved on to higher level math. During this time period, our reading program also made great strides – with 93 students participating, our average reading speeds increased by 19 words per minute! They are developing a real love for reading and we have been astonished at how well they have done. We are able to offer a library filled with hundreds of books for the children to enjoy, donated each year by the Ottawa Hills School System here in Toledo!



Rewarding the students with practical things - like solar lights for their homes - has helped to engage their parents. Achievement certificates and field trips to the zoo and the beach have also gone a long way to inspire these wonderful children!

SewHope Containers

Our fifth 40-foot container arrived in Guatemala complete with food, medical supplies, solar lights and power equipment for our agriculture program. Because of this shipment, 70,000 meals containing soy, rice, dried vegetables will be served to children each day in 13 village schools. Thanks to the WW Knight Family Practice Center in Toledo, enough medical supplies and equipment were sent to fill our Birthing Center as well as our new medical clinic.



THE SANTOS FAMILY



Many of you know the beautiful story of the Santos family and I believe that our relationship with that family really sums up all that we are about :

In February 2014, while walking along a dirt road, Anne Ruch came to visit a woman named Santos who had four children. Her husband was long gone. The five of them lived in a shack similar to what we often see in Guatemala – some boards thrown up to create walls, a floor of rocky, hard dirt and a roof of branches and banana leaves – able to only keep out some of the rain. All five slept and lived in one dark room with no windows. All their meals consisted only of tortillas and black beans. Santos had no job other than washing the clothes of other villagers. However, unable to even afford a concrete sink, these clothes were washed on rocks that she collected in the hills. She had no stove – not even the kind common in the region, with no chimney. It is important to remember that this story is not too different from thousands of others.

What made her story different was that her three boys suffered from a form of Muscular Dystrophy. Unable to understand any of the genetics, all Santos knew was that her boys seemed normal at first but eventually became weaker and weaker until they were all confined to wheel chairs. In Guatemala, your children are your only hope for income in the future, so any little dream she could have ever had was lost long ago. There was something about her desperation that compelled Anne to make a promise. Anne says of the experience, "Sometimes when I'm down there, I just feel God reminding me of that famous quote of Martin Luther King, ' Just take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase.' So I took that step and I promised her and myself that we would change the life of her family."

Upon returning home to Ohio, Anne sent an email out to SewHope's supporters. In just 48 hours, we had raised \$13,000 to change their lives completely.

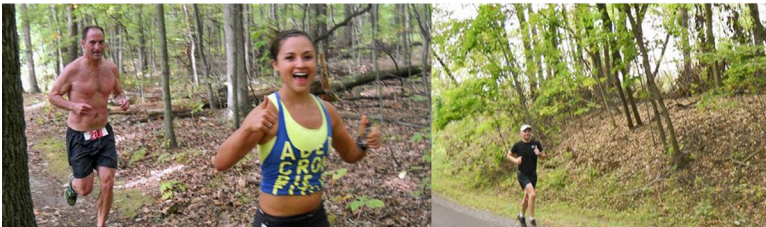
*This is their new home. Now they are able to live with dignity. Santos has a real stove with a chimney, a separate bedroom so her sons can sleep apart from her and her daughter. Her little business has taken off so she has a steady income. In addition, she now has a poultry farm and they are eating chickens and eggs and are able to have a little income. Her daughter is also thriving in our after school program. **In fact, she has made more progress in one year than any other child in the program!***



RUNNING FOR HOPE

Part of our initiative in cervical cancer prevention is increasing awareness in the communities. In February 2014, we hosted our **First Annual SewHope Run for Cervical Cancer Prevention**, a 4K walk/race. An astonishing 1,500 women walked/ran with us that day. They carried banners about the terrible reality that so many women are dying of a completely preventable disease. At the end of the race, everyone went to a stadium where several women spoke about family members who died and where people from SewHope could talk about how to prevent this. March 26 is "Cervical Cancer Prevention Day". SewHope plans on having this event every year on this date.

Here at home, we were able to support our efforts in Guatemala with Miles for Missions at Side Cut Metropark in August and the Oak Openings Stampede at the Oak Openings Metropark in September. We were so very proud of all of the walkers and runners who came out for these events to support our efforts.



SHANNON E. WILSON AWARDS



Each year, SewHope gives an award in honor of Shannon E. Wilson, a young doctor who died unexpectedly at an early age but whose life exemplified all that SewHope stands for. Shannon was a young doctor who accompanied us on our early travels to Guatemala. She was one of those people who was the epitome of humility and love and who was always available to do God's work. A prolific writer, she often wrote about how she found her purpose in life by being amongst the poorest. She often quoted 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 honor annually to an individual who exemplifies this response from Isaiah. In 2014, we easily identified two people:

Doug Karl and Jim Skon have spent the last 20 years committed to profoundly improving the educational system for the poorest in Belize. In the last two years, they have now expanded their work into Guatemala by joining SewHope in our education initiatives. Through their efforts, we have sent over 80 computers, set up a wifi system, developed an electronic medical record in our clinic and began an internet based educational program for almost 100 children. But, perhaps most importantly, they are amongst the people in this world who have said, "Yes! Please send me."

LOOKING AHEAD...

We began construction of **SewHope's Health Clinic and Education Center** in November 2014. ***We are in need of an additional \$50,000 to complete this construction.*** The building will not only function as a place to see patients but also as a training center for teaching local health promoters, nurses and doctors to learn the skills to continue this work in a sustainable fashion. ***With an additional \$50,000, we can also build a hostel on the same land*** that will house education, construction and medical teams travelling to Guatemala as part of our mission. Because the Petén is a very remote region of Guatemala, finding places for potential long term volunteers is extremely difficult. This hostel would allow us to greatly enhance our goals.

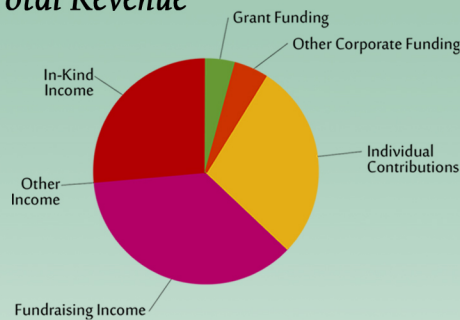


2014 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Net Assets - Beginning 2014 \$178,727
 Net Assets - Ending 2014 \$194,678

2014 Total Revenue

Grant Funding	\$8,500
Other Corporate Funding	\$8,800
Individual Contributions	\$56,875
Fundraising Income	\$72,430
Other Income	\$490
In-Kind Income (non-cash)	\$52,772
Health	\$28,276
Education	\$331
Mission Trips	\$12,188
Fundraising	\$10,404
Administrative	\$1,573



Total Revenue: \$199,867

2014 Total Expenses



Program Expenses	\$97,599
Health	\$25,769
Education	\$23,040
Nutrition	\$20,558
Microenterprise	\$112
Special Projects	\$13,287
Mission Trips	\$14,833
Fundraising Expenses	\$16,789
Operating Expenses	\$8,224
Depreciation & Other Expenses	\$8,768
In-Kind Expense	\$51,172

Total Expenses: \$198,270

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

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MISSION TRIPS 2014

We thank God for the generosity of the people who gave their time and talents on SewHope mission trips in 2014:

Anne Ruch	Moira Cassidy
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P.O. Box 12522; Toledo, Ohio 43606

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