



Maya Educational Foundation

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Dear Friends,

Last year, your support enabled MEF to renew all our programs, benefitting many indigenous communities in the Maya region. In Chiapas, in Guatemala, and in Belize, your interest and your involvement make these programs a reality.

This year, your contributions are providing scholarships to more than 300 students at all levels of study. Together, you and we support partner organizations offering vocational training, literacy education, family, cultural and health-related initiatives, and seminars on interpersonal and business skills to many more.

The response has been wonderful! Our field representative, in his annual trip south, collected glowing reports from individuals and communities about the difference we are making in human lives. All this motivates us to multiply our efforts to reach out to underserved communities where people are so eager to escape the poverty that a lack of knowledge perpetuates.

On this trip, MEF representatives made a long, hard journey to eastern Guatemala to meet and visit with a Chorti community in El Matasano, near Jocotán. In this isolated and remote region, the terrain is very steep, the soil rocky and poor, and the area subject to droughts and famine. Fifty Chorti families have been working with two development organizations (the only two) in the region to establish gardens and irrigation systems to turn around the long pattern of environmental degradation. MEF has been asked to partner with these two organizations to provide educational workshops to enable the Chorti to learn about permaculture, water catchment systems, and sustainable agriculture. With your help, it will be our first venture into educating a farming community about environmentally sound agricultural practices. We are excited about this. We hope you will be too.

As always, the need outstrips our available resources, so we turn again to you, our loyal colleagues, and ask again for your support for this new venture. We look forward to your participation with a mid-year donation to help underwrite this work. And we thank you in advance for continuing to hold these people in your heart.

We hope that this letter finds you well and that you have a happy, productive, and relaxing summer.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Elizabeth S. Nicholson". The script is cursive and fluid.

Secretary

Maya Educational Foundation



Two young library patrons enjoy the materials at the new library.

After two years of planning to make their dream a reality, MEF volunteers Karen Nielsen (left) and Jane Greenberg (right) stand with María Castells Arrosa, T'zununá citizen and business woman (center), in the newly opened library, Biblioteca Comunitaria T'zununá.



MEF volunteer/instructor, Judy Wilson, works with two Guatemalan university students during the English Language Program in January 2010.



Mayan women practice basketry skills at a workshop given by Oxlajuj B'atz at their facility in Panajachel, Guatemala.



Residents of El Matasano, Guatemala attend a workshop to learn about sustainable permaculture methods.



Residents of El Matasano view the success of terraces they built in the steep and hostile terrain of their village.