

November 1, 2012

Dear Friend of Batahola,

I have been privileged to visit the Cultural Center of Batahola Norte first as a Friend, like yourself, and more recently as a member of the FOB Board. I have seen first-hand how well the legacy of its founders—Sister Margie Navarro, CSJ and Fr. Angel Torrellas, OP—continues to grow. Currently, there are nearly one thousand people from needy areas of Managua being served by the Center, which provides marketable skills to women and cultural enrichment to children and adolescents. True to the founders' vision, the staff of CCBN raise up women and children to lead lives of human dignity and attain a strong sense of self-worth.

Walking around the Center, I have been enormously impressed by the energy of the place: the bustling activity of cooking classes or the intense concentration during computer classes; the total focus of children learning to dance or master the flute or struggling to draw a human figure to scale. Scholarship students help to keep the grounds remarkably clean and tidy, and everywhere the sense of pride of all involved with the Center is palpable.

I decided to become more involved with the Center for three reasons: (1) I admired the work being done by the Friends of Batahola who are so dedicated to continuing the founders' work and I was inspired to join them; (2) I observed the Center's leadership and staff working heroically to turn a vision into reality; and (3) I witnessed success stories of women and children at the Center whose lives are being so wonderfully changed.

Claudia Mercado is one of these women. Thanks to the Center's scholarship program, Claudia Mercado graduated from college with a degree in philosophy and communication and works at the Center as the Violence Prevention Project promoter. Claudia is living her dream: working and giving back to the place that helped her grow. Looking back on who she was when she entered the scholarship program, Claudia recalls a humble young woman who was completely dependent on her grandmother and mother. These two women didn't have the necessary resources to finance her university education, so Claudia looked for alternatives.



The Center became not only a source of economic support but a source of spiritual and personal growth for Claudia. Through scholarship activities at the Center—updating the informational bulletin board, facilitating Story Hour, cleaning, working in the library, giving mural tours and facilitating values-based workshops—Claudia learned how to work with children, be responsible and be a leader. Now, she focuses on multiplying the skills and values she gained during her time as a scholarship student with other youth seeking to enrich their lives. Our donations supporting Claudia’s scholarship have multiplied, supporting Claudia and the Center participants she now educates. This is true success.

I invite you to look more closely for yourself at CCBN’s work by visiting the website, www.friendsofbatahola.org. See how the staff is fulfilling its mission of promoting “formative and transformative culture and education” so that those they serve may “live their lives fully in conditions of peace, dignity and equality.”

We encourage you to make a donation today so that the Center can continue to respond to the call of the Gospel in its unique and important way.

Sincerely,



Dick Gruber
Friends of Batahola Board Member

P.S. Friends of Batahola is a certified 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible and 97% of donations fund the work of the Cultural Center of Batahola Norte, Managua, Nicaragua.

We’re on the Web...

friendsofbatahola.org • bataholavolunteers.wordpress.com • Facebook: Friends of Batahola (English) / Centro Cultural Batahola Norte (Spanish)

Friends of Batahola • P.O. Box 36159 • Cincinnati, OH 45236-0159 • www.friendsofbatahola.org

Friends of Batahola is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization providing resources for the growth and sustenance of the Cultural Center of Batahola Norte, Managua, Nicaragua.