

Mission Statement



Our mission is to be an arts, culture and educational institution committed to the development of our community and those whose socio-economic, gender and generational condition and position leave them most vulnerable. We strive to be recognized for the competence, efficiency and efficacy of our actions, because our staff team

is capable and committed to our mission, vision, values and principles, displaying a spirit of solidarity free from all types of discrimination toward the population we work with.

Further, we promote formative and transformative culture and education, so that those we work with may be capable of recognizing their values and exercising their rights, in order to live their lives fully in conditions of peace, dignity and equality.



Vision Statement

Our vision is to live a humane and just lifestyle with preference for the poor and according to the Gospel, rooted in the value of sharing who we are and what we have to help transform society into the Kingdom of God. We promote a culture of gender and generational equity, which enables women and men of all ages to discover and affirm their human rights, self-esteem and the equality of all people.



How to Help

Ways you can help offer hope and keep alive the dream of Sr. Margie and Fr. Angel:

- You can pray for the Center.
- You can support the Center's work with financial contributions or in-kind gifts.
- You can donate to sponsor a student and end the cycle of poverty through education.
- You can travel on one of our mission trips in March or June to Managua.
- You can raise awareness about the Center's work.
- You can hold a garage sale or other event to support the Center.
- You can learn more about the challenges facing Nicaragua.



Contact Information

In Nicaragua, contact:

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For donations to the Center:

Friends of Batahola
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Friends of Batahola (English)
Centro Cultural Batahola Norte (Spanish)

"Tomorrow is a New Dawn..."



**Cultural Center of
Batahola Norte
Managua, Nicaragua**

The History of the Center



In 1983, Sr. Margarita Navarro, CSJ, originally of Cincinnati, OH, and Fr. Angel Torrellas, OP, a missionary from Spain, came from their prior work in Mexico to volunteer in

a poor community in Managua, called Batahola Norte. Among a populace of about 25,000 people, they began a humble mission...visiting homes, starting simple sewing and music classes along with basic literacy instruction. Those few simple classes are now multi-tiered, professionally oriented, government recognized courses for an enrollment of over 1,000 students. Another 2,300 individuals benefit from external academic scholarships, use of library resources, children's story hour, youth in arts programs and violence prevention outreach programs. The Center has grown from a one-room structure to an oasis of classrooms, gardens and colorful wall murals in the midst of profound poverty.



Who We Serve

Not only do the residents of Batahola use the Center, but men, women and children from over 140 neighborhoods are served, as well as some students who travel from outside Managua to attend Saturday classes. Women make up about 75% of the adult student body.



The Center's Focus

Our work is organized around four strategic program areas:

Education and Training Program. Where poverty and violence hold so many back from reaching their full potential, we believe that learning new skills creates a necessary path to economic independence and personal development. This program offers over 20 courses in Basic Adult Education, vocational-technical training and performing or visual arts.

- Basic Literacy, Levels I,II,III
- Baking and pastrymaking
- Basic and International Cooking
- Cake decorating
- Cashiering
- Communicative English
- Computer Operator
- Cosmetology and Hairstyling
- Handicrafts
- Natural medicine
- Sewing/tailoring
- Drawing
- Painting
- Drama
- Music
- Dance



Educational Support for Children and Youth. Barriers to education abound in Nicaragua, and we believe that education is the key to breaking generational cycles of poverty and violence.



Through individual scholarships and a community library, this program supports vulnerable children, teens and their families, so that students enroll and remain in school.

Youth Arts Groups and Cultural Promotion.

Nicaraguan schools provide few or no opportunities for creative development, a process that is essential to the growth and resilience of young people. This program organizes youth performing arts groups and provides a space where the local community has access to cultural activities and exchanges.



Gender and Generational Violence Prevention Program. Domestic violence is alarmingly common in Nicaragua. We believe



everyone has the right to live free of violence, so this program works to prevent violence against women and children, empowering individuals and communities to reduce risk factors for violence and identify and escape violent situations.