

# *Friends of Batahola*

## *Annual Report 2014*



*They say a person needs just three things to be truly happy in this world; someone to love, something to do, and something to hope for.*

— Tom Bodett

# Building Hope in 2014

## Children and Youth:

Claudia, age 18, was thrilled when she was accepted into the CCBN's **Scholarship Program** four years ago. Through the program, she not only completed her degree in accounting and finance, but she also gained practical experience interning as an aide in the CCBN administrative office. This year, with her university degree in hand, Claudia found a job in her field. In 2014, 42 girls and 26 boys from disadvantaged

families, like Claudia's, remained and excelled in school, maintaining grades averaging above 80%.



The **CCBN Library** served 1,334 visitors, providing an ideal place for working on homework, after-school tutoring, and reading programs for children like Carlos, age 9, and his sister, Yalesca, age 7. Their mother,

Patricia, brings them to the library's weekly "Story Corner." She said, "Their time in the library sparked an interest in reading. They no longer view reading as homework; for them, it has become a hobby." In 2014, "Story Corner" drew 468 children from Batahola and surrounding neighborhoods to read stories, play educational games and make crafts.

Learning art and dance opens a child's world to the beauty of expression and creativity. For Renee, age 20, a student who has taken dance classes at the CCBN since 2007, learning to dance also developed her leadership skills, as she helped classmates learn difficult steps, and it provided her with a way to support herself. Today, Renee is a dance teacher in a local school. In 2014, the **CCBN Arts Program** gave 234 children the opportunity to participate in music, dance, theatre, and painting classes, opening doors to a future full of hope and beauty.

For José David, age 17, participating in violence prevention against women workshops lit a spark of hope in him. He and his friends had seen



and talked about the violence around them, but they did not have the resources or knowledge to do anything about it. Through the *Unpacking Dating Workshop*, José David gained the tools he needed to start changing his community. José David is one of 15 members of the **CCBN Young Adult Violence Prevention Team**. In 2014, they worked together to share information about identifying risk factors for violence in dating relationships. They provided peer education to over 200 adolescents from Batahola and surrounding neighborhoods.

## Women and Families:

Carolina, age 40, dreamed of contributing to her family's income by learning a trade, but her husband was abusive and would not allow her to leave the house. In 2014, she made up her mind to enroll in cosmetology classes at the CCBN, becoming one of 487 women who gained practical skills to increase their economic stability through the **CCBN Women's Education Program**. In addition to taking classes, Carolina also joined 30 other women in the **CCBN Self Esteem and Leadership Program**. As a result of the program, she learned how to communicate more assertively, stand up for her rights, and decrease the level of violence in her home. Today, Carolina is a new woman, having defended her right to study. Carolina is currently teaching cosmetology at a local high school. She uses her personal testimony of domestic violence and personal change to help other women in the community.



Gloria, age 52, was born in rural Nicaragua, but moved to Managua at the age of 18 to find work. She always dreamed of studying, a dream deferred by the realities of supporting two children as a single mother. As her children grew older and moved out of the house, they encouraged Gloria to do something for herself and suggested that she go back to school. Now, when she finishes her daily tasks of preparing and selling food from home, Gloria takes night classes at the Center. In 2014, Gloria finished level two of the **CCBN Adult Basic Education program**, along with 19 other adult women. She said, "I have loved this class. I learn so much and have met new people. I find it to be very relaxing. My dream is to get my degree and then take computer classes."

## Community:

Most Nicaraguan children lack access to books at home. To address this issue, a team of more than 20 youth volunteers from the **CCBN Library** organized the *A Story in Your Home* campaign, bringing books to the homes of 150 Batahola families. Yahaira



and her daughter, Carla, age 7, remember welcoming the group of students who came to their home to share stories with them. Before the campaign, Yahaira and her family did not participate in any activities at the CCBN, and Carla did not know how to read. Now, Carla goes to the CCBN tutoring and homework help group on Friday afternoons. She not only has learned how to read, she and her mom read together every day!

Dominga, age 15, lives in Jorge Dimitrov, one of the poorest and most violent neighborhoods in Managua. Most families do not have a steady income, and the youth are at high risk of engaging in gang and drug activities that plague the community. In 2014, Dominga was one of more than 200 residents of Dimitrov who benefited from the **CCBN Rights and Equality Project** which promotes community engagement through dance classes, a theatre group, storytelling workshops, and a network of women and men working on preventing violence against women. Today, Dominga is a youth ambassador for the **CCBN Youth Violence Prevention Program**. She shines like a star in the community, thanks to her strong sense of hope both for her life and the future of her community.

Word of mouth is often the most effective way to spread the message about CCBN community programs and activities. The **CCBN Prevention of Violence Against Women Team** turned to local leader Melba Fatima, known in Batahola for her work as an advocate for children and women, to serve as a connection between the government, the community, and the CCBN to advertise and support the first-ever CCBN violence prevention street carnival. More than 400 Batahola residents participated in this festive event, which highlighted the important role of community in preventing violence.





# Thank You

The following names are the donors who supported the CCBN with their donation's to FOB in 2014. The people whose lives you touch through your donations are grateful for your generosity and the hope for a brighter future.

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These are donors who have remembered the Friends of Batahola in their estate planning. The board members of Friends of Batahola are proud to have arrived at this point, when we can be assured the endowment will see the needs of the Cultural Center of Batahola Norte well into the future. (If you have remembered us in your estate plans, please let us know so we can add your name to this circle. If you would like more information about a legacy gift please contact us.)

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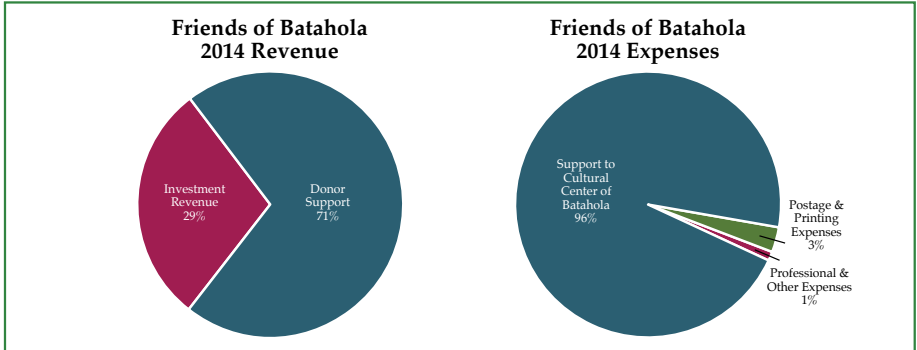
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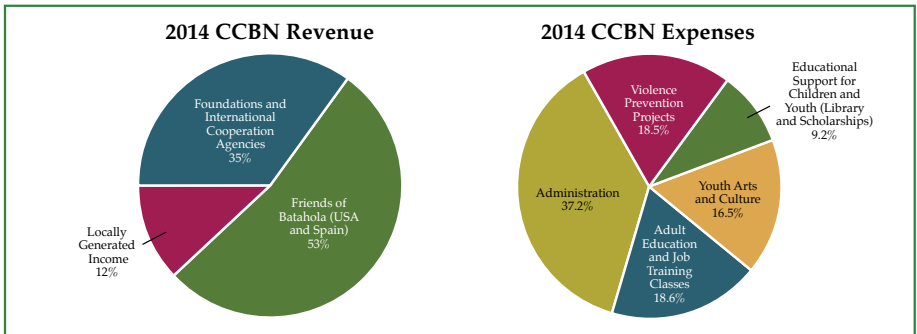
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We use the professional services of a CPA to prepare our 990 tax report. Ninety-seven percent of donations go to the direct support of the Cultural Center of Batahola Norte. All board members are volunteers, and there is no paid staff.



The CCBN is an oasis in the midst of Nicaragua’s many challenges. The Friends of Batahola are committed to the on-going support of the CCBN through friendship, prayer, solidarity and financial support, as the CCBN works to educate and empower people from Batahola and more than 140 neighborhoods of Managua, Nicaragua.



## Vision Statement

The Friends of Batahola (FOB) are inspired by the vision of the Cultural Center of Batahola Norte (CCBN) founders, Sr. Margie Navarro, CSJ, and Fr. Angel Torrellas, OP, and will continue their mission of empowering the people of Nicaragua.

## Mission Statement

Friends of Batahola supports, sustains and promotes the CCBN in Managua, Nicaragua, through prayer, financial assistance, solidarity and building community, thereby responding to the call of the Gospel.

We're on the Web...



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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.