friends of Batahola

Annual Report 2025



Raquel Donaire: Looking to the Future with Hope

At 25, **Raquel Antonia Donaire** is completing her final year in a nursing program at the National University of Nicaragua. Since 2018, the Center has been an important part of that journey, providing opportunities for learning, service, and personal growth.

Raquel first came to the Center after encouragement from an older sister who was already involved. Through vocational training courses, she developed new skills and confidence before later joining the scholarship program, working with children as part of her community service.

In 2025, the Pat Berning Fellowship arrived at a pivotal moment. Family challenges had led Raquel to consider leaving the Center, but the opportunity offered a new path forward. Balancing university coursework, clinical internships and community service responsibilities has not been easy, yet the experience reinforced a belief in what is possible through perseverance.

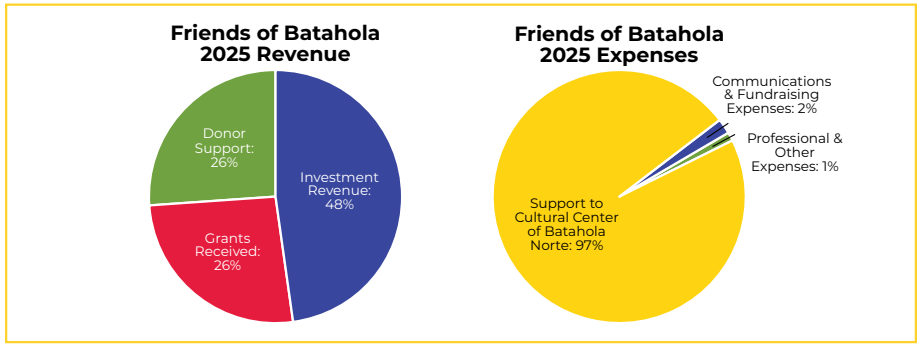
Today, Raquel is preparing to complete her final clinical placement and begin her nursing career. She credits the Center with helping her approach challenges with an open mind and a willingness to try new things.

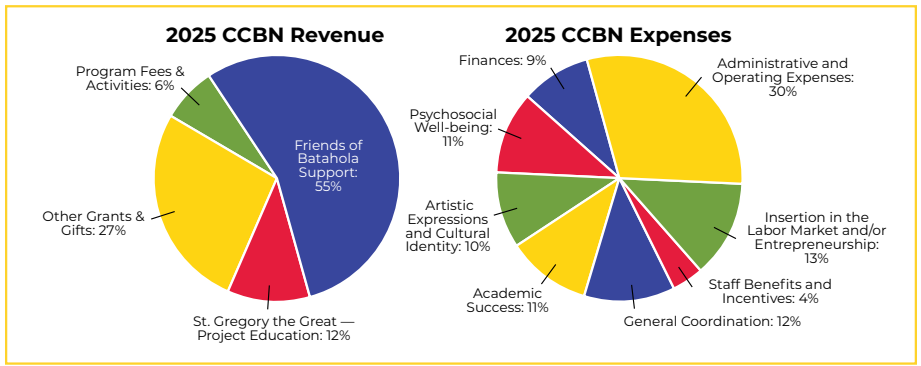
As graduation approaches, Raquel says the friendships, encouragement, and sense of belonging she found at the Center are what she will miss most.

“Since I came here, I feel like my mind can disconnect from my worries,” Raquel said. “I will always carry with me the affection and support of the people who have been an important part of my growth. Among them, I found unconditional support and maternal figures who have meant so much to me.”

After eight years, Raquel’s story reflects the lasting impact of the Center and the opportunities it provides young adults to pursue their goals with confidence.

We use the professional services of a CPA to prepare our 990 tax report. Ninety-four 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.





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“Shared Humanity: Supporting Each Other with Honesty and Solidarity”

Physical, Psychosocial, and Emotional Wellbeing





Children, adolescents, and women participated in activities designed to strengthen confidence, build healthy relationships, and promote emotional well-being. Through clubs, workshops, and community initiatives, children and youth took active roles in recognizing important days such as International Women's Day, Children's Week, and the International Day Against Violence. Their creativity and leadership were also reflected in the publication of a collection of micro-literature created to help prevent sexual abuse in educational settings.

Women participating in reflection and support workshops reported increased confidence, improved emotional well-being, and a greater ability to set healthy boundaries and make decisions based on their own needs.

Throughout the year, the Center also provided **41 counseling sessions**, supporting individuals as they worked through grief, trauma, and experiences of violence.







Academic Success



The Center continued to support students at every stage of their educational journey, serving elementary, high school, and university students through academic enrichment activities and family engagement opportunities. Programs were designed to recognize each student's unique strengths while creating opportunities for personal, academic, and social growth.



At the end of the school year, **79 students** celebrated their accomplishments through educational excursions alongside family members and mentors. These experiences not only recognized academic achievement but also strengthened family connections and created lasting memories.







Artistic Expression and Cultural Identity

Through courses in music, dance, drawing, and painting, **160 children** and adolescents developed artistic skills while building confidence and creative expression. **44 young artists** took their learning a step further by participating in performance groups that shared their talents at the Center, in schools, and in local churches.

Partnerships also expanded access to the arts. Ten students from the Christian School for the Deaf participated in workshops and exhibitions, creating a more inclusive artistic community. Young writers celebrated another milestone with the publication of *The Garden of Emotions*, sharing their voices and creativity with a wider audience.











Workforce Development and Entrepreneurship



The Center's vocational training programs continued to create opportunities for economic mobility and personal growth. During the year, **428 students enrolled** in 16 vocational training courses, while **20 young people and adults** completed primary education. Scholarships helped expand access to training, particularly for women seeking new career opportunities.

In addition, **60 young adults** participated in workforce readiness training to build practical skills, confidence, and knowledge of the job market. **11 women entrepreneurs** also received coaching and business development training to strengthen their small businesses and prepare for future growth.





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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.