



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



friends_of_batahola



www.friendsofbatahola.org



P.O. Box 36159, Cincinnati, OH 45236-0159

Message from the Co-Presidents

One of the most inspiring aspects of our work with the Friends of Batahola are the relationships we have built with the people at the Center. We love seeing the “ah ha!” moments when students or donors recognize the inextricable human link we all share, regardless of our location or background. Although for those of us who aren’t bilingual, sometimes our lack of ability to directly communicate becomes frustrating. Our translators are amazing, but sometimes we just want to chat one on one and simply cannot because of the language barrier.

There is a universal language, however, and this issue is full of stories about it: music! I don’t know a word of Latin, but Schubert’s Ave Maria speaks volumes to me. When I hear “L’amour est un oiseau rebelle” from

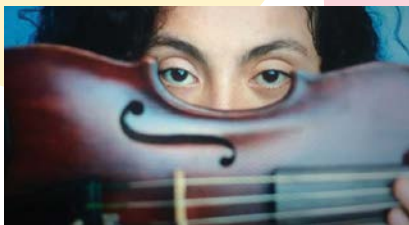
Bizet’s Carmen, my high school French can’t keep up, but I certainly know it’s a steamy love song. And when I’ve been at the Center to hear the traditional songs, I can hear the patriotism in the instruments and voices.



It thrills us that the Center helps to bring the universal language of music to life for so many. Please join us in supporting the Center through prayer and financial support so they may continue this wonderful ministry.

Tony Perazzo & Mary O’Toole

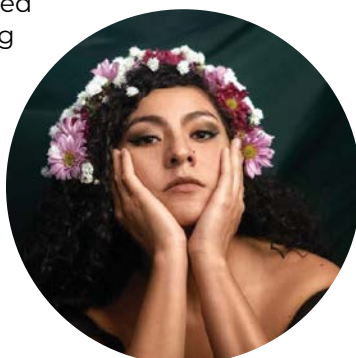
A Musical Paradise



Ana Verónica Sánchez is a philologist and a communicator, who graduated from The National Autonomous University of

Nicaragua in Managua. In the artistic field, she has developed as a violinist, singer, and songwriter.

Her artistic career began when she was only 8 years old. At that time, she enrolled in the drawing and painting course offered by the Center. As time went on, encouraged by her cousins who were in the Batahola choir, she decided to register for the Introduction to Music and Recorder course.



Ana Sánchez remembers those days of her childhood by walking around the Center’s facilities, visiting the library or playing in the garden.

“I really felt that there was a combination of resources, of emotional and artistic possibilities, something that fed me a lot since the beginning of my path here, — literally, that made me feel like I was in paradise.”

Ana Sánchez also received a music scholarship granted by the Center to study violin at the Nicaragua Conservatory of Music. In 2016, she started at the University of Costa Rica to continue on her path of becoming a professional musician.

“One of the things I liked the most were the exchanges with students from the U.S. and the Friends of Batahola delegations because those allowed me to meet people from a different country, and it was nice because they appreciated our art.”

José's Passion for Music



José Gabriel Rivas Rivera is currently in his second year of engineering economics and business at National University of Engineering of Nicaragua. His first steps in music began when he was eight and his mom decided to enroll him at the Center to study Introduction to Music and Recorder, following therapeutic recommendations.



When Gabriel turned 10 years old, the Center gave him a scholarship to study a technical guitar course at the Nicaragua Conservatory of Music where he studied for 7 years. One of his biggest accomplishments was completing a Marimba program at Flavio Galo's Marimba school and joining that school's staff as music instructor for 3 years.

Gabriel expresses with a lot of gratitude that his personal and musical growth not only depended on him but also on the formation and guidance provided by the Center.

"I always had the teachers supporting me, and they saw in me the talent I had for music."

According to Gabriel, there are three things he won't forget about the Center, and these are: his formation as a musician, his participation in important artistic musical performances and the friends he has made along the way.

He reiterates stating that one of his favorite parts was "...undoubtedly all the friends that you make at the Center, in other music schools it is not the same. The Center has a good combination and balance between the rigorous study of music and relationship-building."

Imagination Without Limits



Lidia Ramírez Ruiz was 6 years old when she took her first course at the Center, Drawing and Painting. Shortly after that she joined folkloric dance and music classes. Now Lidia is eighteen and she is a freshman majoring in product design at the Polytechnical University of Nicaragua.

Growing up she had had a fascination with scribbling and painting on the walls because she was a child with imagination and creativity. "Ever since I was a little girl, I used to doodle on everything, so my mom decided to enroll me in a course."

She remembers fondly the Angel Torrellas' Choir rehearsals on Sundays to prepare the repertoire of

the Nicaragua Peasant's Mass and the friendships that she built with her classmates that she still treasures.



"I wish I could go back to the time when we attended mass...I felt I did not enjoy that part of my life enough since I was pretty shy."

In 2018, the Center granted Lidia a full scholarship to study violin. This allowed her to continue with her passion for music without sacrificing her college education.

"A perfect day for me would be to dance until I get really tired, to paint with inspiration without time limits or simply to be in a pretty place playing my violin".

Photos provided by Lidia Ramírez Ruiz

Friend of Batahola: Maggie Rosch

I have been connected to the Center since 2010 when my son, Ian Grotton, visited the Center with the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM) Parish immersion trips. In 2015 I was also able to visit the Center with my son, Michael Grotton. I served as IHM Twinning Coordinator from 2018–2020, nurturing the relationship between the Center and IHM so that each community had the opportunity to learn from each other, pray for each other, and share resources. I joined the FOB Board of Directors

in 2018, where I have served on the Development Committee and most recently as Chairperson of the Communications Committee.

I live in Belfast, Maine, with my husband, Rob Grotton. I currently work on a farm and at an environmental consulting firm. I have three grown sons. I enjoy knitting, hiking and swimming with the Master's Swim Team.

When I read the Batahola Prayer, I am reminded of my responsibility

to work for social justice.

Let us risk ourselves as instruments of transformation of people and of society, to build a more just world, with equity and without violence.

I consider it a privilege to serve on the FOB board and to be a small part in building a more just world.

