



Juana

María

Miguel

Apolonia

Izabela

## More than scholarships

– by Miguel Costop

In the world of non-profit organizations involved in development, there may be a tendency to measure success only with quantitative measures—number of houses built, number of students educated, amount of budget, etc. But there are very important aspects that defy quantification.

After this year's student conference, four young women from the northern part of Huehuetenango of the Chuj linguistic group spent three days at our office. They each are in their second year of university studying midwifery. They were to attend a midwifery conference in Chichicastenango in the following week and needed a place to stay. Fortunately, due to recent renovations we were able to provide lodging. This proved to be an opportunity to hear in greater depth about their stories, struggles and dreams.

All four agreed that there are few opportunities for indigenous women from their area to study, especially at the university level. There is considerable pressure for women to only marry

have children and take care of the house. For example, Juana is 25, single and the only daughter in her family to study at the university. She told us, "I thought it would not be possible for me to study because I was older and in my community most women my age are already married. Now a younger cousin is saying "I want to study at university like Juana." Juana was very emotional as she related this.

Apolonia is 25 and married with a 14-month old child. She related that many people in her community disapprove of her attending university and say "why does your husband allow you to go out so much? Your place is at home taking care of your son and husband." Apolonia never thought that she would travel and meet so many people in other communities. Few in her village travel to other communities, especially not the women. Her husband and mother-in-law support her by providing child care when she needs to be away.

At 29, Izabela is the oldest. She has a 6 year old daughter and is separated from her husband. She has had to learn to fend for herself and with the support of her parents continues to strive for a better life for herself and her daughter.

The youngest, Maria, is 24 and appears to be the leader. She shared that a belief in her community is that having a child by cesarean section means that the mother is a sinner. Some women have died rather than have a cesarean performed. Through her studies, she is now aware that this belief is not true.

We observed during their stay at our office how highly organized and motivated these young women are. They supported each other, studied together and were undaunted by challenges. We were sorry to see them go as they filled our office with such energy and enthusiasm. Their example reinforced for us how important Progresas's work is. Not only are they acquiring professional skills, but they are breaking down barriers, emerging from superstition to knowledge, opening paths and inspiring others. They are changing their lives and that of their communities.- 😊

## Annual Student Conference

- by Fred Dobb

As a two-time ESL tutor, student sponsor and new member of the Progresas Board, I attended the annual conference for the first time. I appreciated the chance to see our scholarship students from all over Guatemala interact with friends old and new. The spirit of the student rally is unmatched by any student get together anywhere.

I was moved to see how my former students had matured and developed more self confidence. I had only read about some students' community service projects and school activities, but at the conference I got to ask them about how Progresas has supported them. Have no doubts, to be part of the Progresas family is a transformational experience. Besides scholarships, we provide academic and personal guidance, contact with caring volunteers, and a sense of belonging.

The theme of the Thirty-Fourth Annual Progresas Student Conference was "Become Your Own Best Teacher."The event was held at the Mariapolis

Retreat Center in Mixco, just outside Guatemala City, May 4th and 5th.

It was my honor to provide the Sunday morning session focusing on ten ways to improve self-study methods using examples from Learning English as an additional language. We discussed individual learning preferences, how English proficiency develops, and even made snow.

The following card was provided to all in the form of a luggage tag.



There were ten learning stations staffed by Progresas student assistant teachers. I was very proud of our ex-becarios and current students as they motivated their groups and served as English language models. Each station was

based on one of the ten steps to success. Activities ranged from memorizing Langston Hughes's poem "My People" to board games to exploring the original peoples of the Arctic regions.

Student observations at the end of the morning included these:

- Today we learned:
- That through error we improve
- To overcome fear in learning
- Ten steps to personal success



Students Ramiro and Piana practicing reading

## Some of our new students in 2019

**Ana Lucrecia Popol Estrada** is 23 years old and comes from the Aldea Varituc, San Martin Jilotepeque in the department of Chimaltenango. She comes from a family of subsistence farmers who are better off financially than some



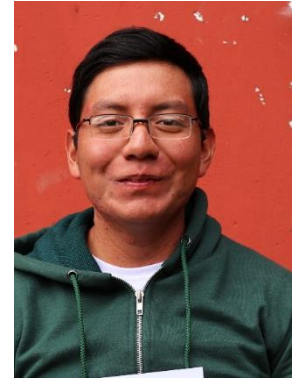
because her father has emigrated to the United States and sends Q3000 (about \$400) a month back to the family. She has 6 brothers and 1 sister, 3 of whom live at home and 2 of whom are still studying. This is Ana's first year as a Progresista student but in January she began her 3<sup>rd</sup> year of studying sociology at the University of San Carlos in Guatemala city.

During her first two years at the university Ana supported herself by working as a full time domestic servant earning Q1000 per month (about \$130) plus room and board. When she learned that she could not study sociology on a weekend plan she managed to talk her new employers into allowing her to study mornings by promising them that she would diligently complete all her duties as a full time maid. When she learned that her employers would be returning to the United States this past December she turned to the internet where she found and applied to PROGRESA.

Ana says she chose to study sociology because she thought it would help her to understand the realities of her life and her country. She comments that this is a major which is rarely chosen by rural students but she thinks she chose correctly because analyzing the themes of social problems helps her to see clearly the "disconnection between the rural areas and the capital." Her hope after she graduates is to find work where she can help with sustainable development of the rural population. In time she

would like to complete a masters degree with a focus in economics which she feels would complement her study of sociology. Her desire is to develop programs which inspire the children in communities like hers to continue their education and improve their standard of living.

**Jhony Estuardo Otzoy Sajbochol** is 21 years old and comes from San Juan Comalapa in the department of Chimaltenango. He is an only child who was born when his mother was 17. The relationship with his father did not last and his



mother returned home to live with her family until she married his stepfather four years later. He now lives with his mother and stepfather. His mother sells tortillas in the market and is the major earner in the family. His stepfather is a farmer and grows at least some of the corn which they need for making tortillas.

Jhony is studying law at the San Carlos University. The expenses were high so he searched for work at various restaurants and finally landed a job at TGI Fridays. He was able to study two years by himself but money was not enough. He has classes daily so he can't continue with his job and is commuting from Comalapa in order to save money. The trip takes about 2 hours in each direction and involves at least 2 and sometimes 3 buses. At this point his mother is giving him Q25 a day which pays for most of his transportation and he is bringing his lunch so his additional expenses are not very large. He began by accepting only the scholarship money from Progresista but within a month he realized this would not be enough. Even with the additional loan money he is struggling to make ends meet. In time the stress of the long commute or the need to participate in group work may make it necessary for him to move to Guatemala City which would increase his expenses significantly.

## News from Exbecarios

### María Josefina Tubac Quill

Josefina is originally from the village of Saquitacaj in the Poaquil municipality of Chimaltenango. She was in the program during the years 2007-2012 studying for a degree in Social Work at the Rafael Landívar University. Josefina is the current director of the Home for the Elderly "My Golden Years" of Poaquil. This is a national program that serves people over 60 years old. Their goal is to improve the quality of life for the elderly through a holistic developmental approach. The center provides nutritional food for those who come to the center. Occupational therapy, social and recreational activities are also provided in order for the elderly to have a stimulating environment for a healthy lifestyle.



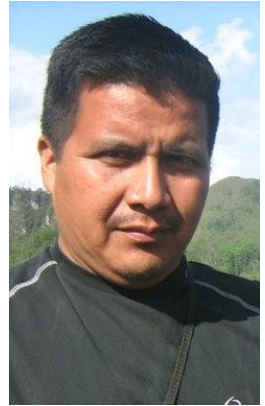
### Yesika María Karina Tucubal Sanahí

Yesika is originally from Comalapa, Chimaltenango. She was in the program during the years 2014-2016 studying the PEM in Bilingual Education. In addition, she worked at Progreso for two years as an administrative assistant and a support to the students. Now Yesika is completing her final requirements to graduate with a Bilingual Education Degree. She is working at the Mayan Languages Academy of Guatemala, specifically with the Kaqchikel linguistic community. The objective of this organization is the rescue and promotion of Mayan languages and the Mayan culture.



### Pedro López Baltazar

Pedro is originally from Jacatenango, Huehuetenango. He was supported by the program during the years 1996-2000 in the career of agronomic engineering. He completed his studies, but for economic and personal issues began working as a teacher. As time passed, Pedro realized his potential as a teacher and his passion for teaching. He returned to university and graduated with a Bachelor of Education and Educational Administration. He is currently completing a master's degree in education. He works as an educational assistant for "Proyecto Puentes" financed by USAID and World Vision. The project seeks to improve skills and abilities for work and access to employment opportunities and entrepreneurship in young people from 15 to 24 years of age. "Although I did not end up an agronomist, being in the program definitely opened the doors for my career as a professional in education and working towards a better future for myself and my family"



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[www.guatemalafriends.org](http://www.guatemalafriends.org) or write us an email to [progreso3@gmail.com](mailto:progreso3@gmail.com)

## PROGRESA STUDENT ROSTER 2019

### UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

<i>Major / Names</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Major / Names</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Language</i>
<b>Secondary teaching (3 to 4 years)</b>			<b>Agronomy (5 years)</b>		
1 Julio Manuel Yat Santos	24	K'iche'	1 Antonio Carrillo Puac	29	K'iche'
2 Zulmy Vanessa González Canahui	21	Spanish	2 Rosa Amalia Vásquez González	22	Achi
3 Dina Patricia Parabal Morales	28	Kaqchikel	3 Tomas Cristobal Us Us	25	K'iche'
4 Daniel Hernández García	57	Mam	4 Edwin Alexander Chilisná Chipel	20	K'iche'
5 María Teresa Joj Lux	28	K'iche'	5 Elizabeth Noemí Ajanel López	20	K'iche'
6 Ramírez Mateo Domingo	20	Q'anjob'al	6 Jacobo Roderico López de León	26	Spanish
7 Fidel Alexander Lúe Són	24	Kaqchikel	7 Juan José Luis Toyon Tum	29	Spanish
8 Juan Nix Morales	20	K'iche'	8 Karen Quib Bol	21	Q'eqchi'
9 Hermelinda Concepción Miguel	30	Q'anjob'al	9 Marta Lidia López Hernández	24	Awakateko
10 Manuela Wendy Ramirez Cotiy	28	K'iche'	10 Simeón Cosigua Saloj	26	Kaqchikel
11 Silvia Alcira Tzirin Cua	33	Kaqchikel	<b>B.A. in Education (5 years)</b>		
12 Alonzo M. Aguilar Raymundo	30	Q'anjob'al	1 Martín Morales Salazar	27	K'iche'
<b>Nursing (3 years)</b>			2 Rosa Beatriz Xiquitá Baján	23	Kaqchikel
1 Brenda Elizabeth Brito Santiago	25	Ixil	3 Sandra Verónica Sirin Maxía	23	Kaqchikel
2 Luisa Florinda Tzunux Joj	22	K'iche'	4 Maydy Rosemary Hernández S.	24	Kaqchikel
3 Nelson Ernesto Sam Caal	18	Q'eqchi'	5 Dolores Ical Jóm	24	Poqomchi'
4 Rut Noemí Román Tahuico	18	Achi	6 Delfina Tojil Cumatz Par	26	Kaqchikel
5 Meyli Cecilia Matom Velasco	27	Ixil	7 Walter Ramirez Láinez	25	Mam
6 Elgar Dionel López López	22	Achi	8 Ana Maria López Colaj	33	Kaqchikel
7 Brenda Marisol Ismalej Osorio	21	Achi	<b>Psychology (5 years)</b>		
8 Concepción Damián Chicajau	23	Tz'utujil	1 Griselda Elizabeth Sol Cajbón	35	Kaqchikel
9 Denis Anibal Chub Xol	21	Q'eqchi'	2 Alejandra Beatriz Gómez Guzmán	26	Ixil
10 Piana Imelda Pérez Brito	25	Ixil	3 Mildre Mabeli De León Cano	25	Spanish
<b>Social work (5 years)</b>			4 Yuri Nicolasa Coché Pablo	22	Tzutujil
1 Consuelo Carrillo Sánchez	30	Ixil	5 Lesly Patricia Valle Hernández	23	Spanish
2 José Luis Ramiro Tay Morales	53	Kaqchikel	<b>Medicine (6 years)</b>		
3 Julia Nicolasa Santiago Pérez	28	Ixil	1 Carlos Hernández de la Cruz	22	Spanish
4 Karla Gabriela Sic García	21	Kaqchikel	2 Emerson David Vivar Valdéz	22	Spanish
5 Nora Verónica Sabán Car	22	Kaqchikel	3 Juan Pablo Tecún Bolon	24	Spanish
6 Yessenia Sales Morales	24	Mam	4 Yóscelin F. Hernández Delgado	25	Poptí
7 Magdalena Toma y Toma	29	Ixil			



<b>UNIVERSITY STUDENTS</b>					
<i>Major / Names</i>			<i>Age</i>	<i>Language</i>	
<b>Midwifery (3.5 years)</b>					
1	Apolonia Gómez López	25	Chuj		
2	Izabela Jacinta Ramos	29	Chuj		
3	Juana Gómez Gómez	25	Chuj		
4	María Baltazar Baltazar	24	Chuj		
<b>Systems engineering (5 years)</b>					
1	Elizabeth Guadalupe Ruiz Erazo	24	Spanish		
2	Henry Jiménez López	29	Mam		
3	Pedro Joel Bocel Queché	25	Kaqchikel		
<b>Audit (5 years)</b>					
1	Irma Elizabeth Tuyuc Salazar	24	Kaqchikel		
2	María Elisa Tziná Sapalú	21	Tz'utujil		
<b>Law (5 years)</b>					
1	Edgar Francisco Cop Santay	24	K'iche'		
2	Jhony Estuardo Otzoy Sajbochol	20	Kaqchikel		
<b>Civil engineering (5 years)</b>					
1	José Alejandro Pérez Tzaj	28	K'iche'		
<b>Zootechnics (5 years)</b>					
1	Adilene Analí Mérida González	25	Mam		
<b>Physical education (5 years)</b>					
1	Oswaldo Humler Choc	28	Q'eq'chi		
<b>Political sciences (5 years)</b>					
1	Osman Edgardo Alarcón Berganza	24	Spanish		
<b>Chemistry and pharmacy (5 years)</b>					
1	Kevyn Francisco Sánchez	27	Spanish		

<b>SECONDARY STUDENTS</b>					
<i>Major / Names</i>			<i>Age</i>	<i>Language</i>	
<b>Sociology (5 years)</b>					
1	Ana Lucrecia Popol Estrada	25	Kaqchikel		
<b>Technician in X-rays (3 years)</b>					
1	Laura María Pixcar Bonilla	20	Spanish		
<b>Arts (5 years)</b>					
1	Arnulfo Juan José Guillén Flores	24	Spanish		
<b>History</b>					
1	Santos Rodolfo Chan Chuc	29	K'iche'		
<b>Pre-primary teaching (3 years)</b>			<b>Age</b>	<b>Language</b>	
1	Alba Azucena Chitic Guarcas	21	Kaqchikel		
2	Glenda E. Patzan Vásquez	17	Kaqchikel		
3	Jonatan Estuardo Ico Cu	22	Q'eq'chi'		
4	Margarita Stephanye López García	20	Kaqchikel		
5	San Martín H. Joj Muz	20	K'iche'		
<b>Agriculture</b>					
1	Edgar Amilcar Chóc Morán	20	Poqomch'		
<b>Bookkeeping</b>					
1	Aura Gricelda Granados Jacobo	17	Kaqchikel		
<b>High school diploma</b>					
1	Jasmin Mishel López García	17	Kaqchikel		

- ▶ The program is supporting a total of 84 students this year. From this total, 76 (90%) are university students and only 8 (10%) study at the secondary level.
- ▶ Students with "Spanish" on their language mean that they don't speak any Mayan language neither identify themselves with any specific linguistic group.
- ▶ Not all of the ones who identified themselves as members of a linguistic group speak the language.

### **Many thanks to our faithful donors who make all this possible!**

Make your tax-deductible donation to **Redwood Forest Friends Meeting** and mail to:  
 Redwood Forest Friends Meeting Attn: Guatemala Scholarship Program  
 P.O. Box 1831. Santa Rosa, CA 95402

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