

Guate



News

Annual Report for 2009

Though 2009 was a difficult year for many people in the world, CasaSito has been lucky to be an exception. By anticipating the challenges, we and our partners were able to obtain encouraging results and we are determined to keep our momentum in 2010!

Now, with a bigger team--Alice, Sisi, Amanda, and Greg as permanent staff, Jackie as water project coordinator, and Salvador as office assistant--we can organize our work in a more structured and productive way. Plus we have the valuable contribution of our board of directors: Silke, Willi, Christoph, Carlos, Renate and Gary, and all our devoted supporters. With their support and encouragement, CasaSito continues to grow, not so much in size, as in QUALITY.



CasaSito Board of Directors

In order to give a clear idea of work direction and to be more focused towards our goal, we have refined our Mission and Vision for 2010:

Working Mission Statement

CasaSito increases educational opportunities in rural areas of Guatemala so that indigenous people living in poverty can attend school, receive quality instruction, and obtain the skills they need to improve their lives.

CasaSito has two approaches for addressing educational needs, depending on location. In the Department of Sacatepéquez, we offer scholarships and work closely with local learning centers to provide in-depth and extensive support for students and families. In more remote areas, we work with community leaders to provide support for more short-term projects, such as school construction, education material grants, and training workshops.

Vision

Those who receive our support will become leaders in their families, communities and beyond. They will value education, health, and personal relationships. They will strive to reach their potential and lift themselves and their families out of poverty. They will also value service and continue helping others throughout their lives.

Here we present you a short summary of our budget and work 2009, and our plans for 2010.

2009 Expenditures (CasaSito USA and CasaSito Guatemala)

Education	F. &Inf.	Emergency	Admin	Total
Q309,280	Q134,154	Q17,844	Q129,960	Q591,238
\$38,660	\$16,769	\$2,231	\$16,245	\$73,905
52.50%	22.50%	3%	22%	100%

Scholarship Program

In 2009, we provided in total 38 junior high school and high school scholarships, and 7 sponsorships.

The end-of-the-year evaluation took place in October and part of November. During this time, we also started the application process for the Scholarship Program 2010.

Unfortunately, some of the students lost their scholarship. But CasaSito did not close its doors to them, and they have been given another chance. If they can improve their grades by the middle of 2010, their case will be re-analyzed. Among all the difficulties during the evaluation process, the most complicated was the fact that some institutions didn't give the final exams result till the end of November, and because of that, the process was delayed.

In 2010, we received 45 new applications and 31 among them received our scholarship. We welcome them to program.



55 scholars from the Santiago Zamora, San Mateo, Sacatepéquez and Quiche areas
(32 junior high school and 23 high school students, 5 of them will graduate this year!)
23 students for the Sponsorship Program and 4 others for the Art Scholarship Program

Festivals

In 2009, CasaSito began to hold extracurricular festivals that celebrate the Arts. In August, the Yale Alumni Chorus Foundation sponsored CasaSito's first Music Festival in the small village of Santiago Zamora. Almost 600 people came to hear the choruses of 5 small Guatemalan-led education projects and a special performance by the Yale Alumni Chorus. Although only five associations participated the day of the festival, eight choruses were created for the event and all eight continue to practice in hopes of making the finals next year!



After the Music Festival, CasaSito hosted both an Art Festival and a Debate Tournament in December. Ten associations participated in the Art Festival with different works of art and interactive art activities. Three student-artists received Saturday art school scholarships for 2010 for having the best artwork in the Art Exhibition.



CasaSito's first Debate Tournament was also a success. Ten of CasaSito's Scholarship Students participated in debate class on Saturdays for four months in preparation for the tournament. They learned to research, develop arguments and evaluate sources. They debated topics such as, "The government should develop harsher punishments for people found with illegal weapons" and "The Guatemalan government should eradicate poverty." CasaSito plans to teach debate to other projects in 2010 so that there can be an Antigua Debate Tournament in the future.



CasaSito hopes to sponsor all these festivals again in 2010, along with a Sports Festival. We hope that you can attend!

Water Program

2009 was a year of significant progress towards our ongoing goal of improving the quality and delivery of water to households in the Momostenango area. Egg-shaped tanks were built for seven families, and plastic tanks were donated to two other families. All families also received a clay Eco-Filter for their use.



The successful development of the program in 2009 was due primarily to 3 distinct efforts:

- Those of our first water program coordinator, Rory Healy, who joined us from Ireland for 7 months on a volunteer basis.
- The continued participation of “Engineers Without Borders”, UCLA.
- The support of ViaVenture Foundation in sponsoring Eco-Filters for each one of our families (and the bakery project).

We continue to be encouraged by the utility of the tanks as well.

Despite 2009 being a well-below-average rainfall year, the tanks were full by the end of the rainy season and the families were pumping out water throughout. Now in the dry season, the families have started cleverly rationing their use of the water, making it last as far into the dry season as possible when other sources of water are scarcest.

The program remains flexible and adaptable. The concrete tanks offer the most utility and durability, but we are not married to one solution. In 2009 we had one deserving family that did not have a large enough flat area, and we had another family with a tap in the home but very inconsistent water supply. For both families we decided that a smaller, cheaper, plastic storage tank would improve their situation substantially. We also have other lower-cost ideas for water storage that may be of use to some families in the future.

In 2010 we hope to build on the success of 2009. The first step was to find a replacement for Rory, which took a while but finally she found us. Jackie Powell from Virginia began her training in February. We are excited to have her and hope to keep her busy. We have seen interest in the program from a few volunteer-tour agencies and look forward to the resources such groups could bring. The CasaSito Water Program may only be a drop in the Guatemala bucket of water problems, but for nine families in the Momostenango area, 2009 was a good year.



Volunteers



Volunteers played a crucial role in the success of CasaSito in 2009. This year, we had volunteers from the US, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Taiwan, Australia, Hong Kong, Guatemala, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland and Sweden. The individual volunteers who work with our partner projects leave a lasting impact as art teachers, English teachers, mentors, fundraisers and friends. Their work is greatly appreciated and invaluable to the associations with which they work.

Volunteer groups also made CasaSito's community infrastructure projects a success. The donations and labor that we receive from volunteer groups allow us to build water tanks, continue the construction of the training center for Mujb'ab'l Yol and develop many other projects such as painting schools, developing herb gardens, running medical clinics, and many more.



We also wish to thank the dedicated volunteers who helped in the organization of the Music Festival and Art Festival. The CasaSito Festivals would not be possible without their hard work and support.

Thank you so very much to all of our generous volunteers in 2009! We hope to welcome you back again in 2010!

Partner Projects

- **Asociacion en Benefico de Mujeres Indigenas** in Chocantariy had a difficult year. Their bakery was robbed early in 2009 and they struggled to get back on their feet. This project probably will be the biggest challenge of CasaSito for the coming year and we need more support than ever to revive the project.
- **Comite de La Primavera in Quiche** participated in CasaSito's Scholarship Program in 2009. They also accepted volunteer groups from CasaSito to help them develop their medical clinic and an herb garden. In 2010, they will be organizing their own Diversificado – an important step for such a rural community.
- **Comite de Samox** in Alta Verapaz continued developing their Telesecundaria in 2009. They are also working with Health in Action from the University of Michigan to promote community activism. This year, with the donation of SKG, a new Telesecundaria school will be built to offer a better study environment to the students.
- **EducArte** in Ciudad Vieja had a very successful year in their activities. Their library and computer lab project became very popular in the community and they also led a march to protest violence against women in Ciudad Vieja. However, they are still in great need for stable funds and volunteers for 2010.
- **El Plan Infinito** in Santiago Zamora won first place during the chorus competition at CasaSito's first Music Festival. Almost every child in Santiago Zamora participates in the art, music, swimming, English and computer classes that are offered by this project. The program will continue to evolve and expand in 2010. And we hope the new center will be built this year to offer a permanent place for the project.

- **Las Conchas Diversificado** in Alta Verapaz continued receiving support for their weekend food program in 2009. The students who receive food from the food program would not be able to attend school without these resources. CasaSito will continue this support in 2010.
- **Mujb'ab'1 Yol** in Xela had a very exciting year. They made great progress on the construction of their training center. They also began a powerful lobbying movement (with the help of Cultural Survival) to legalize community radio stations in Guatemala.
- **Santiaguito** in Santiago Zamora had a successful year. They hosted many tour groups at their women's weaving cooperative. They built a new roof of the tour center thanks to generous donations from Eltham College in Australia.
- **Semilla de Esperanza y Amor** in San Mateo Milpas Altas enjoyed their second year of existence. They are expanding quickly and will be constructing a new building for the day care center in 2010 thanks to the donations of Fundacion Los Ninos and individuals from Belgium.

CasaSito estimated budget for 2010

Scholarships	Education Fund	Construction*	Admin	Total
Q250,000	Q250,000	Q365,000	Q195,000	Q1,060,000
\$31,250	\$31,250	\$45,625	\$24,375	\$135,000
23%	23%	36%	18%	100%

*construction – Telesecundaria school in Samox, training center in Xela and water tanks

Thanks for your support and your trust!

CasaSito Team



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