

2010: A YEAR OF COMPLETION



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From the Desk of the Executive Director:

Dear Friends,

2010 has been a year to be proud of at the Miguel Angel Asturias Academy! And that is largely thanks to you and your support and partnership. I am excited to share with you all that has taken place over this last year.

Here at the Academy, we are giving children the opportunity to learn and we are constantly seeking new and creative ways to enhance their education. This year, that has meant finishing the third floor, outfitting the school with a brand new library, as well as technical education spaces. Our students are from some of the most marginalized communities here in Quetzaltenango. But through the school, they have the opportunity to not only learn about their reality, but also to change it. It is a very empowering mission that we have, and we could only do it with your help!

Because of that, it is practically impossible to thank you for all your support! Many of you know that we rely heavily on financial support for our 300 students; their families often times don't have the financial ability to pay for their children to go to school at all, let alone to a private school like the Academy. But through your generosity, these children get just that opportunity. Not only do they get to go to school because of your support, but they now have access to a library, a clinic and technical education on site, which will allow them to add practical skills to their academic education.

So let me say for myself, the staff and all the students who are achieving the impossible through your support, THANK YOU!

Sincerely,

**Jorge Chojolán
Executive Director
Miguel Angel Asturias Academy**



15 Year Anniversary

This year, we at the school celebrated our 15th year of providing innovative education to our students. Every year, we have a celebration which includes a midnight bonfire, music, student events like talent shows, and lots of food! This has definitely become one of our favorite events, not only for all the fun, but also for all the great company that shows up. This year, tons of alums returned to celebrate this big anniversary with us, and as always, community members, parents and current students joined us.

Although we have this celebration every year, this year it was also a time of reflection. We started out renting space for our school; now we have a beautiful three story building. We now have the capacity to serve pre-kindergarten through high school students, in both academic and technical education. We have served countless kids, giving them the opportunity to study at a great school, when otherwise, they might never have made it through elementary school.

Thank you for making this not only a possibility, but also a reality. We are so pleased with the progress and success of the Academy, and are one step closer to our dream of having a network of transforming schools throughout Guatemala.



Completion of the Third Floor

We have been under construction for what seems like forever. It was 19 months. During that time, we built a completely new, third story to the Academy. What that floor means for our students is a brand new library, the first of its kind in the area, and a technical education floor. We were also able to move the volunteer office up to the third floor, and thus separate the clinic and volunteer office. Each now have their own offices and workers there are thrilled with their new space!

There were many challenges to the third floor. Not only was funding a huge challenge, but even when we thought we had it all done, there were still some kinks to work out. For example, we found out that the roof didn't drain very well. Fortunately, we discovered this *before* we put all our books into the library! Once it was waterproofed, we were able to move all the books in. We even had a day of library education for the teachers, during their two week yearly training.

Even though we have the place up and running, there are still some things we could use. We have the space for HUNDREDS more books, we're looking for chairs and tables to make the library a really workable spaces, and we'd love to have 3 computers for the students to use in the library.

The completion of the third floor signals the completion of the Miguel Angel Asturias Academy. As such, we definitely felt a sense of accomplishment as we looked at the complete, furnished rooms, and cannot wait to see students in them.



Visits, Partnerships and Delegations

The Miguel Angel Asturias Academy would not be the school it is without the friendships and support we receive from the international community. Each year, we are pleased to have many individuals and groups come to visit and work with us in person and 2010 was no exception. We had so much fun working with and learning from the people that came to visit us. The projects they helped us with ranged from construction of the third floor, to education and medical groups, and even an art school that made a beautiful mural for us. We call these groups EduTourism and they combine education and awareness with tourism fun for anywhere from a week to almost a month in Guatemala. If you or a group are interested in participating in such an adventure, please get in contact with our Director of Volunteers, Malea Hetrick, at maleahetrick@gmail.com for more information.



Financial Information

We have been blessed by the generosity of our international partners- individuals, groups and foundations. We were able to build a complete new floor to our school without accruing any debt. This coming year, we will be able to offer more scholarships than ever before, allowing exceptionally needy students to continue their education.

Due to the fiscal year of Guatemala, the financial report for 2010 will be available after February 1, 2011. If you are interested in receiving this report, please contact our Director of Volunteers, Malea Hetrick, at maleahetrick@gmail.com.

Plans and Opportunities for 2011

As always, our academic year begins in January. And as always, we're more than excited to continue working with our students! But we need your help! \$35 will support our computer lab for a month. \$60 will support a teacher's salary for a week. \$180 is a half-scholarship and \$360 provides a full scholarship for a needy student. Support is needed for tables and chairs in the library. \$1500 pays for a year's salary for our teacher turned librarian. Every dollar brings us closer to a Guatemala where all children have access to a quality education. How do you want to help us make that a reality? Contributions can be made at www.asturiasacademy.org OR mailed to the address below:

**FRIENDS OF THE MIGUEL ANGEL ASTURIAS ACADEMY
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