

# HORIZONS OF FRIENDSHIP Horizons NEWSLETTER

Fall 2022

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS TO END POVERTY IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND MEXICO

## Reaching Out to More Migrant Workers



Juan Carlos and 60 other migrant workers took part in Horizons' Migrant Worker Appreciation BBQ, which was held in partnership with the Northumberland Federation of Agriculture in July.

**For two decades,** Horizons of Friendship has been providing critical support to migrant workers in Northumberland County. This summer, we had the opportunity to extend that support on a temporary basis to migrant workers in a neighbouring region, thanks to an innovative partnership with KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives.

Over 35,000 migrant workers come to Canada every year through the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program, mostly working on fruit and vegetable farms across the country. It's a mutually beneficial arrangement: the migrant workers earn wages to support their families back home while filling a shortage in farmhand labour in Canada.

But navigating life in Canada can be challenging, both emotionally and practically. Although their relocation is temporary, migrant workers often feel homesick for the family and friends they've left behind. Because they are Spanish speaking with few English language skills, it's harder to fit into the community, acquire Canadian friends, access vital services, and find what they need.

Since Horizons launched its Migrant Workers Program in 2002, we have been providing services that address these issues, including:

- helping migrant workers access services, such as healthcare and legal clinics, with the support of community partners;
- answering questions, in Spanish, to fill knowledge gaps;
- providing transportation;
- providing care packages with familiar foods, like rice, beans and pasta, sanitation supplies and access to personal protective equipment like masks and sanitizing products;
- and, welcoming migrants into the community through social activities and picnics. "Many friendships have blossomed," says Daniel Quesada, Horizons' community outreach officer.

"We know from the feedback and thanks we've received from migrant workers in Northumberland over the last 20 years just how much the services we provide ease and enhance their lives," says Daniel. "So when an opportunity arrived this summer to help another group of migrant workers, we were eager to participate."

In partnership with KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives, and funded by Employment and Social Development Canada, Horizons launched a new pilot project in the neighbouring Prince Edward County and Quinte regions.

KAIROS' support came through its "Empowering Temporary Foreign Workers during COVID-19 project, which utilizes a community coordinated approach to support temporary foreign workers in the Maritimes and Ontario. Approximately 40,000 workers have been aided by this project.

Between July and September, Horizons staff met with over 200 migrant workers living and working in the Prince Edward County and Quinte regions. We identified local allies and service organizations to find strategies and opportunities to advance the health, legal, and social status of these workers.

This grassroots approach works to foster a sense of community and cultivating relationships where migrant workers feel safe and empowered to seek the support they need.



"Hello, my name is Carlos Vasquez. I'm a migrant worker from Guanajuato, Mexico and I've come to Prince Edward County

to work at a local vineyard. Migrant workers like myself rely on Horizons of Friendship for access to health, legal, and social services, for care packages, and more. Thank you for taking the time to support us. Thank you for caring about us."



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**PLUS! 2021-2022 Annual Report**

# Safe Haven Project Helping Girls Heal

**At The Safe Haven Project** in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, work is well underway to support young survivors of sexual violence and trafficking, ages 9-17, and help them achieve a life without violence.

Launched earlier this year by Horizons and our Guatemalan partner PIES de Occidente, the Safe Haven Project is being carried out within a government-run shelter. These shelters are in place to protect survivors with nowhere to live after court orders deem their family homes unsafe, or after they have been rescued from sex trafficking.

Young girls often arrive with complex traumas, pregnant, with children, and/or with gynecological issues that need medical attention. Having survived truly terrible crimes, their recovery depends on specialized, warm, trauma-informed care, building back their self-esteem, and learning about their human, sexual, and reproductive rights.

Safe Haven provides care geared to the needs of each survivor, supports their healing, and helps them create a life plan



Girls participate in self-esteem building workshops as part of the Safe Haven Project.

to guide them in reintegrating back into society when they come of age and leave the shelter. The project is also working to change societal attitudes that promote violence against women and girls. (See sidebar.)

To fulfill these objectives, the Safe Haven Project is educating all those who support our survivors – staff, the healthcare and social services community, and families and community members – about what gender-based violence is, the rights and protections for women and girls, how to report violence to the authorities, and more.

## Changing Attitudes

Violence against women, girls, and children is high in many parts of the world, including in Guatemala. This includes sexual assault, violence, and femicides, and increasing rates of pregnancies as a result of sexual violence, particularly among young girls. Patriarchal cultures and prevailing attitudes towards women and girls make this challenging to address.

During the training they received as part of the Safe Haven Project, medical, social work and psychology students offered a glimpse of some of the attitudes:

*“Some men tell their wives they are worthless!”*

*“Women often can’t attend training opportunities because their husbands do not give them permission.”*

*“In some communities, women are not worthy of sitting at the table because they are only there to serve.”*

*“Women are afraid to raise their heads because their husbands say that looking at them shows a lack of respect.”*

While entrenched attitudes are very difficult to change, Horizons and PIES de Occidente believe that building awareness is the key. That is, teaching girls, adolescents and their families, medical personnel, and the local authorities about existing laws that protect survivors of violence, and how to support survivors seeking justice and health services.

## PANAMA: Keeping Remote Villages Safe from COVID



Living in small, widely dispersed and remote communities high in the central Panamanian mountain range,

the Ngäbe-Buglé Indigenous peoples of Panama had almost no access to critical information on COVID-related safety. That’s when our partner ACUN (Ngäbe Cultural Action) stepped in.

ACUN was able to team up with Indigenous youth to ensure up-to-date safety information reached the traditional spiritual leaders and healers living within these communities. Information was conveyed electronically and in print in Spanish and Ngäbere, the traditional language of the Ngäbe peoples. Posters were displayed in prominent local areas.

Training was also provided on up-to-date health and safety protocols to keep communities and families safe, including how to make reusable fabric masks and use traditional medicines to ease the respiratory symptoms of the virus, and more.

Blas Quintero, Executive Director

of ACUN, describes other measures used to prevent COVID among the Indigenous tribes: “We observed there are cultural patterns, such as not touching each other when greeting each other, which we have fostered and enhanced. We encouraged social distancing and mask wearing, and to ensure we didn’t spread the disease, we took a COVID test wherever we went.”

As a result of these efforts, “100% of the population of the participating communities has remained healthy from COVID-19,” he reports.

Supporting Indigenous peoples is a priority for Horizons. In this instance, partnering with ACUN, an Indigenous-led organization, enabled us to reach Indigenous leaders and tap into the knowledge of Indigenous youth, to make meaningful change.

# Community Centre Gets Makeover

In rural, underserved areas in the South, a community centre is often the only place community members can access services and education and get together for a variety of community events.

That was the case for seven villages in Puntarenas Province, Costa Rica, until the local community centre fell into disrepair. Being unable to connect easily with each other and outside services had a huge impact on villagers.

In 2021, Horizons and our partner, ADI Punta Mala (Integral Community Development Association) began a project to revitalize the aging community centre. This involved repairs, an upgrade to the kitchen, and the addition of indoor washrooms to give the facility new life and expand its use.

**“This community centre is very nice; our community band will be able to hold rehearsals there for our Independence Day presentation.”**

*Julio Cesar Hernandez Mora*

The work is now complete, creating the only space within the seven villages that is large enough to accommodate inter-community meetings and events.



A revitalized community centre has become the hub of activity for seven villages in Costa Rica.

Plans are underway for education and training workshops, community development events, and cultural meetings.

The community centre can now also act as an emergency shelter for those displaced during extreme weather events, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, floods and tsunamis, which are becoming more frequent with climate change. “The revitalized facility will provide many years of use for these villages,” says ADI Punta Mala.

The revitalization of the community centre is the third in a series of projects Horizons has undertaken with our Costa Rican partners in these rural villages. The

first project, completed in 2020, supplied school classrooms with books, computers, and sports uniforms. Every student now has their own textbook.

In 2021, we completed our second project, the construction of a new children’s park that is being used by children and adults from the seven villages. It includes sanitary facilities and drinking water access to support efforts to maintain COVID-19 safety.

Thanks to your support, Horizons is able to make small and strategic investments in infrastructure that can make a big impact on a community’s access to services and education.



**Chronic water security issues leave households in Mesoamerica without access to water for many hours each day in the dry season (summer). Other available potable water supplies must be found to meet their needs. The job of walking or driving to a water truck or spring to collect water each day is most often the role of women.**

In addition to being a heavy burden, this severely limits a woman’s ability

## New Pipe To Provide Water 24/7

to carry out other essential activities, such as raising chickens or crops to feed her family or taking skills training in order to get a job outside the home.

Horizons and our Costa Rican partner ASADA San Buenas Coronado (San Buenas Aqueduct Administration Association) are working to address this problem for 625 families in rural villages. We are installing a new water pipe that connects the existing aqueduct to a clean and untapped water source. This will give families access to water 24/7, even in the dry season.

To be completed this year, the aqueduct installation will be supported by an educational campaign to improve awareness among school kids and adults about the basics of water conservation. This will help to ensure the new water source will be protected well into the future.

### Water is Life



“The aqueduct project is very important to us, the residents of Vergel las Margaritas and other communities, since the water in our houses represents life,” says Floribeth Mora Mora. She notes that the wait for the aqueduct has been long and stressful, and she’s happy it’s over.

“I want to thank Horizons of Friendship and their supporters in Canada for undertaking this project with ASADA for the sake of our community.”

# FOUNDERS AWARD

## Celebrating Volunteerism & Leadership



Kim McArthur-Jackson is one of two Canadian winners of the 2022 Founders Award.

When David and Christine Stewart and Father Tim Coughlin founded Horizons of Friendship in 1973, they embodied the spirit of volunteerism and leadership. As volunteers, they set out to support women, children, and families across Central America and Mexico. And that very mission continues almost 50 years later. In honour of the founders, Horizons commemorates the spirit of volunteerism and leadership through the annual Founders Award. This year, two Canadians and two Southern partners were selected to receive the award. The winners receive a commemorative medal, specially crafted by renowned Northumberland artist Frances Gage, and a Certificate of Recognition.

### Winners in the North

**Kim McArthur-Jackson** has lived in the Northumberland County area since 1990. In recent years, she has been co-chair of the Northumberland Coalition for Social

provincial office to try and enact change on a larger scale.

For over 30 years, **Tina Hoekstra** was an active and dedicated volunteer at the Horizons of Friendship Thrift and Treasure Shop. Kind, generous and well-loved, Tina, who has recently retired, played an important role in helping Horizons fund projects in the South through Thrift Shop sales. Tina arrived in Canada in the 1940s from Holland with little in the way of material goods. As a result, she understands the importance of giving to the less fortunate and always being available to give a helping hand.

### Winners in the South

Recipients of the 2022 Founders Award in the South are:

- our El Salvadoran partner **Acudesbal** for their work in addressing challenges related to poverty and insecurity, particularly in light of the pandemic,

Justice, an organization that works to address issues such as poverty, equality, and human rights.

She co-founded the Cobourg Queer Collective, which carried out the 1st and 2nd annual Cobourg PRIDE events. Now living in Campbellford, Kim is on the Board of Directors of Trent Hills Pride. She has also run for both federal and

recurring floods, and gang violence in their community.

- Horizons's Guatemalan partner **PIES de Occidente** in recognition of their work on The Safe Haven Project: Supporting survivors of sex trafficking and sexual violence (ages 9-17). which seeks to promote an end to violence against children in Guatemala.

Congratulations to the recipients of the 2022 Founders Award. The world is a better place thanks to all of your contributions.

## Watch for Survey!

Horizons will be reaching out to donors in the coming months to ask you how you would prefer that we communicate with you going forward. It has been a while since we checked in with you on this question and a lot has changed since that time.

For instance, do you prefer to receive printed copies of our newsletters and annual reports in the mail? Or perhaps some of you are more comfortable with receiving our communications via email. Maybe you have gone fully digital and prefer to read your news directly from our website.

Understanding your preferences will better help us to meet your needs. Please stay tuned for our survey.



I want to help Horizons empower people in Central America and Mexico.

## Gift Payment Options

- I'd like to make monthly gifts
  - \$50  \$100  \$150  \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- I'd prefer to make a one-time gift
  - \$50  \$100  \$150  \$ \_\_\_\_\_
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- I've enclosed a cheque made out to Horizons of Friendship for a one-time gift

To make an online donation, go to [www.horizons.ca](http://www.horizons.ca)

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