



Project Chacocente USA, Inc.
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Dear Friends of Chacocente:

On June 11th we informed you by email that the Nicaraguan government had abruptly closed Project Chacocente. We are just one of many hundreds of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that the Ortega regime has shuttered for obscure though apparently self-serving reasons. The latest round of closures, announced last week, encompassed 101 NGOs, among them Missionaries of Charity, founded by Mother Teresa.

Not only has Chacocente Christian School been closed and made off limits, but the Nicaraguan government has confiscated all Chacocente's tangible assets: land, buildings, equipment, supplies, and our precious well. There is no appeal or recourse. The news has devastated the families, staff, and students, the Board of Directors and, we know, Chacocente's faithful, generous supporters here in the United States. Thankfully, because the families hold the deeds to their individual tracts of land, their homes are not in jeopardy.

We are proceeding deliberately and as quickly as possible to meet the demands imposed on all of the hundreds of NGOs being shut down in Nicaragua. The process is complicated and must be done legally, safely and with the utmost transparency.

A committee of Chacocente family members is in talks with the government to restore electrical power to the well, although we on the Board are unfortunately not able to facilitate that process. The Board's priority at this juncture is to provide each of our Nicaraguan employees with his or her severance, a sum of money that varies according to length of employment, ranging up to 5 month's salary for those who have served Chacocente for six or more years. Thanks to all of you, we have those funds in hand, but the summary closure of Chacocente's bank account in Nicaragua (no funds were confiscated) has slowed the transfer process.

Meanwhile, however, although June 10th was the last day Chacocente Christian School was open, we paid all employees their regular salary through the end of June, and we will continue to pay several key employees, including Omar, Norlan Ruiz (our attorney and scholarship administrator) and Edgard Barberena (our accountant and a vital liaison with the government) at least through the end of July, longer if need be. Finally, although the campus property is no longer ours, we have retained our security guards for the moment to protect the campus from vandalism pending the assumption of security responsibilities by the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education.

On an encouraging note that we hope may herald a promising evolution for Project Chacocente, we continue to support our Chacocente Scholars – university students, most of whom graduated from Chacocente Christian School, who are now pursuing higher education in fields that include Medicine, Nursing, Computer Engineering, Business Administration, Physical Education, English and English Education. With Norlan's help we are seeking now to set up a transparent, government-approvable structure to channel and track monthly scholarship funding. This undertaking is entirely consistent with our mission of the past two decades: to "accompany the people of the Chacocente community in Nicaragua from material poverty toward well-being, self-sufficiency and the full conviction of their God-given dignity, ... foster [their] educational achievement ... and help them realize their dreams."

We provided tuition and transportation funds for each Chacocente Scholar for the month of July, and we intend to maintain this support until each current student graduates with their degree. By God's grace we hope even to add additional qualified scholars along the way!

We are committed to remaining in relationship with the people of Chacocente in every possible constructive way, and we ask that you consider supporting that effort. Project Chacocente USA remains a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit in the United States. All contributions are tax-deductible.

We ask for your patience and prayers. We will continue to share this ever-remarkable story with you as it unfolds.

With prayer, and gratitude,

The Board of Directors

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:4-7