



## Primary Colours:

The community sees education in a new light

"It was really interesting to talk about creativity and learn how to encourage my children to imagine, express themselves and be creative. I hope that I can help my children to be creative, fearless and spontaneous." (Jaime Gutierrez, father of a grade 1 student)

Now in the final year of the Primary Colours project, Pueblito is happy to report that the project has produced many unexpected and exciting impacts. Through teacher training and accompaniment in the classroom, as well as consistent workshops with parents and officials from the Ministry of Education, Primary Colours has significantly improved the classroom atmosphere and teaching practices for all grade 1 and 2 students in Estelí, Nicaragua.

"I've noticed that my students understand the lesson better through drawing and painting than through writing. They express their emotions and their interest in nature has been sparked." (Martha Patricia Centeno, teacher). **Continued on page 3 »**

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

# Pueblito's Partnership Model

Over the years, Pueblito has supported the work of local partners with programs that favour children and youth in many countries in Latin America. For example, in many of the countries in which we have worked, the governments were dedicated to doing the best they could with very limited resources while in others, it was best to distance ourselves from the local authorities frequently because they had no credibility with our local partners.

How does Pueblito maximize the impact of our work regardless of the nature of the local government? Simply put, Pueblito rarely works with governments. For the most part we work with local community based non-governmental partners. While it is always easier for our partners to work where stability and competence characterize the government of the day, Pueblito and its partners largely by-pass governments and deliver our programs directly at the community level. When we choose to collaborate with local governments, it is because our partners see an opportunity that is in the best interests of the communities in which they work.

By way of example, we are encouraged by the efforts of the current government in Nicaragua. Having a government dedicated to doing the best it can with limited resources creates an environment that makes life easier for local community organizations whose mission is to work to eradicate the root causes of poverty. FUNARTE, our longest standing partnership in Nicaragua, can now deliver the educational program which Pueblito funds in publicly funded schools. If, however, the government were to change and such access were denied, or unacceptable conditions were imposed, FUNARTE could easily return to doing what it also does so well – teaching children self-reliance and self-respect through art in after school programs offered in local community centres.

Pueblito does not believe that non government organizations should relieve government from the responsibility of providing basic services. However, so long as there is a gap between what governments in poor countries can provide and the basic needs of the population, there is an important role for organizations such as those with which we collaborate in Central America. Until such time that the local authorities are able to assume this responsibility, Pueblito, through the generosity of our supporters, will continue to support the work of dedicated community based organizations like FUNARTE which, in addition to providing educational services, are generating hope for a better tomorrow despite huge challenges today.



Michael O'Sullivan  
President, Pueblito Canada

# FUNARTE Makes Semi-finals

## OAS contest "Preparing for Peace"

The Organization of American States (OAS), in conjunction with the Trust for the Americas Foundation, has recently completed the semi-final round of a Project called "Building a Culture of Peace in Central America with Youth: Social dialogue, art and the media."

Youth from Panamá, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala were invited to present projects that would educate and mobilize other young people to work toward creating a culture of peace in their communities.

The first round of the contest saw 100 young people from each participating country present proposals for projects that encourage young people to resolve conflicts and problems in a peaceful way and to educate their peers about the effects of violence.

Of these 400 youth, 6 contestants from each country were chosen to participate in a regional conference to refine their proposals and be considered for OAS funding. Among the 6 contestants chosen in Nicaragua, 2 were members of the FUNARTE community. Erika Triminio, pictured here, developed the project "With my Voice I can Educate others" which would provide training to young women in the rural community of La Montañita, Nicaragua to create radio dramas that promote peaceful conflict resolution.

At only 13 years old, Sommer Joao Detourniel Altamirano has proposed to use break dancing, an increasingly popular art form in Nicaragua, to communicate peaceful messages to his peers. Both contestants feel their projects and the others presented at the last round of



will make a big difference in the lives of young people and work toward changing the difficult situation of insecurity and impunity in Central America.

At Pueblito we are proud to work with FUNARTE, an organization that has proven that they emphasize skills-building for even the youngest members of their communities. The success of these two contestants is a testament to the nurturing and empowering environment that FUNARTE and Pueblito seek to build in the communities where we work.

### « Continued from cover »

Teachers are consistently implementing art-based techniques in their lesson plans across all subjects, including math and science. Corporal punishment in grades 1 and 2 has decreased significantly and even disappeared in many schools. This new approach has improved student interest and engagement in the classroom. Many of the students who previously suffered from behavioural problems have shown improved relations with their teachers and classmates. Students are better retaining lessons and their self-esteem, confidence, and creativity have all increased.



academic success and their attendance has improved. The children come to class more enthusiastic every day." (Ermelinda Chavarria, principal at Rodolfo Ruiz Primary School)

"The children have learned to work together, they have improved their discipline, their

With so many impressive impacts, Pueblito and FUNARTE are committed to the sustainability of Primary Colours. Throughout the project we have provided special support to school counsellors to reproduce the workshops with teachers from grades 3-6 so that the whole school community can work together toward a transformative, holistic education model. School counsellors have committed to encouraging their colleagues to continue to grow as teachers and implement innovative methods in the classroom.



Pueblito Program Director Katie Daly and Rev. Bruce McLeod

# Learning from the Past, Looking to the Future

June 20th was an important day for the Pueblito Board and staff when we had the great pleasure of bringing together a number of the founding Pueblito members and the current Board and staff. This small gathering gave old friends the chance to share stories and to catch up but it also gave the current Board and staff the chance to hear stories, important history and to share our current dreams and plans.



Most importantly we were able to acknowledge the important work that Rev. Bruce McLeod has done for Pueblito over the years. We were all inspired by his speech where he reminded us of the importance of knowing our history but also the importance of responding to the demands of the future guided always by a clear, shared set of guiding principles.

The guests all left energized by Bruce's commitment, creativity and vision and grateful to have such an inspiring presence among Pueblito's supporters as we move forward.



**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12**

Lula Lounge in Toronto  
8:00 - 10:30 pm  
Tickets are \$20 advance,  
\$25 at the door

Fancy yourself a Latin dancing King or Queen!? Or maybe you've just always wanted to learn how on earth to get your hips to move like that? Pueblito's Salsa Extravaganza has a little something for every Latin music lover. Pueblito is giving you a chance to move your body for a good cause. There will be music, dancing, salsa lessons for beginners, and a silent auction with many great items! If you can't join us on October 12th you can still show your support by visiting the website and making a donation. We hope to see you all on the dance floor!

# el puente

el Puente/The Bridge is the newsletter of Pueblito Canada.

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For information on how to donate or volunteer, please contact alison@pueblito.org



# pueblito

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