

Latin American Concerns Committee Report to Representative Committee 2019

SUMMARY

In 1997, PYM Annual Session established a standing Latin American Concerns Committee to gather and disseminate information to Pacific and other Yearly Meetings regarding Friends groups and service projects in Latin America with special attention to Casa de los Amigos in Mexico City, El Salvador Project and Guatemala Friends Scholarship Program (Progresa). The intention is to support rather than replace spirit-led projects already supported by Monthly Meetings, Worship Groups and individual Friends. In 2017, the Undocumented Student Scholarship Program of Sacramento Meeting became the fourth project in LACC.

Committee Work

LACC is requesting 2 Interest Groups for Annual Session 2019.

1. Latin American Immigration
2. El Salvador Project

Brief updates from LACC programs

1. **Casa de los Amigos.** The Casa has administered a United Nations Refugee program and other projects in Mexico City. Lately, they have experienced difficulties with staff/board issues. LACC supports PYM's assistance to the Casa to resolve issues.
2. **El Salvador Projects** of Palo Alto Meeting is supporting 24 university students through no interest loans. Six of these are new recipients in 2019. The program continues to run a coed student house in San Salvador where 22 students from Suchitoto attend four university programs. Program students continue to provide tutoring on Saturdays at a local K-12 school, support a bakery program and bring joy to elders in the community. Since 2017, our students are required to develop and implement community service projects. This program resulted from a visit to Progresa in Guatemala in 2016. Students develop projects related to their studies. These projects have directly benefitted hundreds in the Suchitoto area. We have also formed student former student associations.
3. **Guatemala Scholarship.** Progresa had 20 participants from North American paired with 20 students at ESL in Antigua this January. Eight teachers then participated in a Highlands tour. The next Teaching English tour is scheduled for Jan. 3-11, 2020 (see below). The program is currently supporting 90 students, mainly at the university level. Four mini-libraries for the preservation and teaching of Mayan language and culture have been established and more are being planned. An alumni organization is in its second year and growing.
4. **Undocumented Student Scholarship Project** is currently supporting eight students at Sacramento State. A dinner fundraiser is being planned for March 23 at Sacramento Meeting (see below). Their goal is to support 10 students in the coming school year.

Upcoming Events and Opportunities

Further information about the two planned events related to the projects above, namely

- the Undocumented Student Scholarship Project benefit dinner on March 23, 2019, and
- the Teaching English Experience in Guatemala from January 3-11, 2020,

can be found at <https://www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/2019/documents/pym-committee-reports/latin-american-concerns-committee/news-from-latin-american-programs>.

The Committee consists of Betty Guthrie, Nate Secrest, Margaret Bean, Burton Housman, Patricia Portillo, Hulda Muaka, Patricia Constantino, Linda Rowell (Co-clerk) and Donna Smith (Co-clerk)