

empowerment JOURNAL

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since 2003

GRANADA NICARAGUA



An international annual day of compassionate giving Successful Giving Tuesday

Giving Tuesday happened December 3rd. The excitement surrounding this event, the prospects for awareness raising, and importantly, fundraising created by this international event was off the chart at the Learning Center of Empowerment International this year.

All of the staff, volunteers and children were involved in highlighting the work of Empowerment International through livestreaming videos in Facebook and messaging through social media, about our project, the work, and the need.

In the end after a very full, and emotionally exhausting day of active promotion, Empowerment International was very gratified to have benefited with donations in excess of 12,000 US dollars. Thank you to all who participated and made it such a special day of giving and thanks.

A special note of thanks to those who ran their own fundraising campaigns for our kids (Rob and Nuay Winter, and Aida Farrell), and to those on the west coast who rose at 5AM in hope of gaining the added benefit of the Facebook matching funds, which were commencing with a US East Coast start time (8AM). We have been advised by Facebook that their Giving Tuesday 7 million dollars pledged in matching donations was unsurprisingly met very early in the day. We will not know until later in the spring the full accounting of our complement of those donations.

We learned a lot about the Giving Tuesday event this year, and everyone is excited to be ready to go next year with new ideas to share our opportunity for making a difference in the world through active support.



December 3 from the Learning Center of Empowerment International for the Giving Tuesday fundraising benefit. Huge thanks to all on the ground here, and around the world who pledged to care.

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from the barrio to the classroom

Photography by
Olga Gutierrez

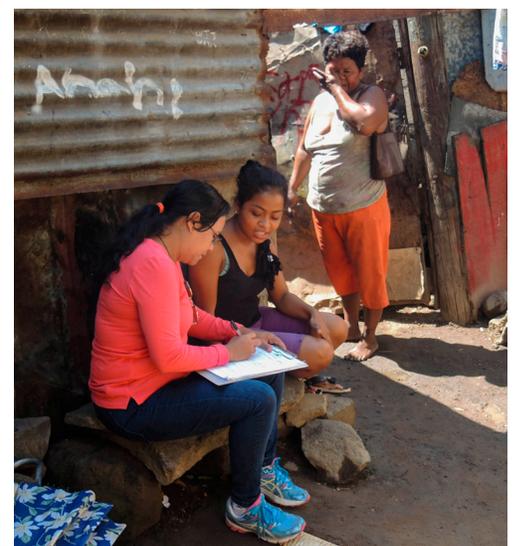
a child centred success in family

Each child that attends the EI Education and Activity Center has a much larger world affecting them daily. This is the reason behind our Home Visits, which is an integral part of our program, and a large part of our success.

Auxiliadora Robleto, EI's Home Visit and Health Coordinator, leads the team that connects community, family, and child back to the EI Education and Activity Center. "I believe that visits to families allow us to know the living conditions of the families, the difficulties they are facing. Together we find solutions and answers, as much as possible, without taking away the power that each family has to find its own solutions.

The main objective of the visits is to make families aware of the importance and the right of children and young people to attend school and to break the cycle of extreme poverty. In the visits they are motivated to do their homework, attend tutorials at the activity center to strengthen their school skills."

It's this approach to supporting and understanding the families that has helped to earn Empowerment International a 98% retention rate in school of the EI Education and Activity Center's attendees.



With all of the enthusiasm of youth, toward an education

With you in their corner, they will succeed



Cristina Ninoska is 8 years old, and in the 2nd grade. She enjoys going to school, participating in sports, watching educational videos, and learning with the educational tools and activities offered at EI. When she grows up she would like to be a veterinarian so she can take care of her pets. Her favorite animal is the cat.



Carlos Steven is 11 years old, and is in the 5th grade. His favorite color is red. His favorite sport is soccer, and he likes to play with his cousins and with his neighborhood friends. He enjoys math. When he grows up he would like to be a soccer player, and work as an accountant in a bank.



Ashley Fabiola is 8 years old, and in the 4th grade. Her favorite color is red. She likes to play hide and seek. She is a very hard-working girl and helps her mother with the housework. She enjoys singing Christian songs and likes to practice art.

You can sponsor Cristina, Carlos, Ashley, or **any of the many** children, and help them to succeed in school, on their path to success.

SPONSOR A CHILD

DONATE TODAY

*“Sometimes people question why I would support multiple rescues or “competing” organizations, which I find personally absurd to question. There can be more than one organization fighting the good fight and helping make the world a better place! But as far as supporting kids, **Empowerment International gets my dollars, and effort. They are a great organization changing the future of so many children, and families in Nicaragua, and have grown and flourished over the years!***

Nicaragua is a country in turmoil, and EI has not only kept moving forward but, added much needed “special” classes in things like first-aid, that really support the families and their community.

*So remember to **give to those doing good no matter where they are** because we only have one life to live and one world to leave as a legacy.”*

Diana Simplair,
CHILD SPONSOR, *since 2012*

Empowering parents to entrepreneurial opportunities of Soaps and Scents

Improving the home economics of the families from which the children of Empowerment International come, is a complementary aspect of our primary education work. These communities where we work had few opportunities for employment and the situation worsened during the political crisis, with gained knowledge and desire, an entrepreneurial spirit can turn an idea to opportunity, and introduce a product or service to the community.

Auxiliadora Robleto, who is responsible for EIs home visits and health watch program, saw such an opportunity with Lorna Torrez, offering a course in the making of perfumes, and household cleaning products through EI, to several mothers of children enrolled in our program. With visiting technician, Lorna Torrez of Managua, each Thursday for five weeks, in 3 hour sessions,

Lorna instructed the mothers in the basics of making several commercial products.

During each session, the mothers were instructed in the theory of the manufacture, followed by a hands-on session in the correct and safe production of the products. They studied together, and prepared liquid soaps for the body, detergents for laundry, household disinfectant cleansers, as well as skin care creams, perfume fragrances, deodorant, and hair shampoos.

Beyond the fundamentals of product manufacture they also learned entrepreneurial business concepts such as production costs, sales and markup, profitability, and marketing.

More than 20 mothers initially enrolled in this program, with 14 mothers able to commit in full to the course. Participants in the program like Martha Tellez had previous inde-

pendent business experience selling food basics from her home to supplement their family income.

Scarleth Alvarado, another participant, regularly made buñuelos and rice milk, (popular local desserts) weekly to sell.

Jessenia Alvarado retails plantains,

Now, with their newly acquired knowledge and experiences, we're expectant that they will continue advancing the marketing, and sales of their product lines within the community, and beyond.

and also prepares enchiladas in her kitchen, to sell door-to-door, supplementing her income earned cleaning homes, and offering laundry service. Nora Calderon's family business experience also centered on retailing cold drinks, fresh made tortillas, elotes (roasted cobcorn), and voltamals (a popular corn-based streetfood) which her children sold in the street.

Together, the mothers have shared an experience, acquired knowledge, and gained confidence, the essence of empowerment. Next comes the difficult work of entering the marketplace with their products. These are the challenges the mothers welcome. Empowerment International is there for them, to support, encourage and guide them towards a measure of self-sufficiency during an uncertain and challenging time.

***Photography by
Olga Gutierrez***



On a hot Granada morning under the shade of ficus trees, Lorna Torrez instructs the mothers enrolled in the business program about the methods of manufacture on an artisanal scale.

continued...

of Soaps and Scents



In seminar with Lorna Torrez, chemist/instructor from Managua



In seminar with Auxiliadora Robleto of Empowerment International



Graduation from the program

Photography by Olga Gutierrez



EMPOWERMENT INTERNATIONAL

***Empowerment International** has been working in Nicaragua since 2003 and has maintained an annual school retention rate of over 98% in both of our communities since 2008.*

As of 2015, we now have over 300 students participating in our program.

*Over **87% of all school age children** are now attending school in **EI's** first community, up from **55% when we began in 2003!***

***Sponsoring** a child starts at \$30/month or \$360/year.*

*Contact our office to be a **partner in the success** of the children.*

***EI** provides mandatory uniforms, shoes, and school supplies, tuition, medical care, parenting programs (how to be more effective and supportive parents), home visits, enrichment activities, and counselling both individually, and in groups.*

SPONSOR A CHILD

DONATE TODAY

*To find out more about sponsoring a child's education in Nicaragua individually, as a family, group, or business, see what we do, with your support, visit **EMPOWERMENT INTERNATIONAL** today.*

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Empowerment International is a US 501(c)3 organization. All donations are tax deductible in the USA.