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help and healing must be done from compassion, suffering with the other" from love and mercy, in the style of Jesus.

Some projects have been created that I will be able to share at another time. The important thing is to help plant in our families a little happiness, hope and courage so that they, with the support of the different programs of our Center, can break the circles of poverty and violence.

Let's take advantage of this Christmas season in which we remember the birth of Jesus, that human and

A Divine Sign Transformed Their Lives Forever

At the age of 10, Viviana tells us she worked on a cacao plantation on the coast of Ecuador struggling to help their family of six. With her two older brothers also working in construction and not studying, the family often had to place survival before formal education. When Viviana's older brother passed away at the age of 14 in a construction accident, that's when her mom Lucia knew it was time to search for other opportunities in the mountains of Ecuador. She and her husband had heard that the pay was better there, and that their children could have the opportunity to go to school.

But life in Quito didn't prove to be the magic fix the family had hoped for. With both parents working long hours, Viviana shares with us that she and her brothers spent much of their time at home without family or supervision. For fear of the danger her children may be in alone, one day Lucia took a walk around the neighborhoods below their new home in the mountains to seek some solace.

Upon deep praying and begging of the Lord, Viviana recalls her mom lifted her head to see a huge sign along calle Piedras Negras: El Centro del Muchacho Trabajador. She read: free education, free meals on the sign, and decided to ask the gate guard about us. Our gate guard invited her in for a free lunch, where Lucia talked with other parents and staff about the WBC. Here, their children could exist in peace and receive education and formation while she

divine child, fragile, in need of warmth, care, love. He invites us to pause in our life, to enter into our interior and discover what is really essential. Christmas is a time to bring out the best in us, a time of solidarity, of giving ourselves, of meeting the other, with our family, but above all with those who are less favored in our society because of social injustice. I hope that as always, Jesus will be born not only in our hearts but let us be born in the homes of the 160 families of the WBC who wish to have a Christmas full of joy and hope. A blessed Christmas for all who contribute so that our WBC continues to flourish to improve the lives of our families.

could maintain her job. She and her husband could eat here with her children before and after work, and they would be at peace knowing that, through the WBC community, they would form a part of our family of families.



Now, the Cava Moreno family is in their fourth year at the WBC. Thanks to the free services the WBC provides, the family has been able to save on food costs, school costs, and utilities costs. Now, Viviana shares, the family plans to start a small business selling fish from the coast here in Quito. Thanks to the money the WBC has helped them save, the family has purchased a truck in anticipation for the great haul they'll bring back to Quito every weekend.

Aside from being an exemplar student, Viviana also sings and recently rapped in front of the school about the WBC. Since her hip hop showcase, we catch kids practicing in the hallways. Viviana's reason for rapping about a better future? We must dream of a better life together and give our stories a voice.

Here at the WBC, that's precisely what we do with your support. We give stories a voice and people a chance to make their dreams come true and change the course of their lives forever. We are so grateful the Vaca Moreno family did.

WBC NEWS

NEWS FROM THE WORKING BOYS' CENTER • QUITO, ECUADOR • CHRISTMAS 2018



Message from Padre Gustavo Calderón



Joy to the world!
The Lord has come!
Christmas is coming!
There are many feelings that crowd our hearts. This is the greatest gift that God has given us. His

Son becomes flesh for the world and enters into the history of humanity to show us the immense love that the Father has for each one of us.

It is time to share with family, to celebrate togetherness, but it is also time to examine and review how our life has been in the central part of the gospel message: to love one another as God has loved us. That is the teaching of Jesus, and every time we remember the birth of the Child God we have an invitation from heaven to renew our commitment to build peace and justice for humanity.

At the WBC, we have been working with enthusiasm for more than three months this new school year. The process of admitting new families was carried out with great care, since our mission is directed to the most vulnerable families among the vulnerable. Due to lack of economic resources, it was necessary to put a limit on the amount of new families accept. There were some families that we could not bring into our family of families this school year.

Many families arrive around 6 AM to shower and eat breakfast together as a family. Then the children go to classes and their parents go to work. We continue with our daily mass celebration. One of our

greatest achievements this year has been the implementation of our technical high school degree. There are 15 students in this specialty and 12 studying under the science high school degree track.

Extracurricular activities in the afternoon are organized to complement the training in multiple intelligences that students receive in the morning. Dinner is served at 5:30 PM for all families, and then there are the adult classes that are offered by Community Director Caitlin McGuire and the Year Long Volunteers for those families that need it. On Saturdays the families arrive for formation, the Eucharist and the olla solidaria, or solidarity pot. Each week, we close in gratitude. It is a small miracle of solidarity in Cotocollao every week.

In December we will receive the first groups of visitors this year. We are very happy that they come to share with us in the daily work, experience the minga, and helping them to reflect on how we live in this side of the world and the challenges we have. Welcome!

We are deeply grateful to all of you for your generous contribution so that we can fulfill our mission every day. We ask God to bless you and have a Christmas full of Jesus.

Merry Christmas!

Gustavo Calderón, S.J.

Provincial

Please mail contributions to

Center for Working Families.
12605 W. North Ave. #130
Brookfield, WI. 53005-4629

Caitlin McGuire Community Director:
e-mail: communityoutreach@c4wf.org

Olivia Young, Development Director
414-640-2826 development@c4wf.org

Jim Parks, Board President C4WF: boardpres@c4wf.org



Amber's Love Lives On



Amber and Sarah at 8 years old

Heart-n-Soul started as just another pipe-dream of business endeavors two "best cousins" came up with when they were 12 and 13 years old. While on vacation with their grandmothers, Amber & Sarah decided they were going to own a bed & breakfast and name it Heart-n-Soul.

In 1999, at the age of 16, Amber was tragically killed by a drunk driver. In 2012, Heart-n-Soul was the inspiration for Sarah to start a photography and design business, but almost immediately she knew that was not God's plan for her. Other business opportunities arose and she followed them, but always knew there was more and would one day figure out what was to become of Heart-n-Soul.

Around the same timeframe she got the inspiration, while at mass she heard a presentation on joining the church on a mission trip to the Working Boys' Center, but due to other circumstances was not able to at the time. It was in the plans for Sarah and her husband, Bryan, to travel with the church group, however dates never seemed to work out.

Finally, in 2018, it made sense. Heart-n-Soul was never supposed to be a business, but simply a way of life! A life of service to others with the same spirit, love, and dedication that they had in so many aspects of their childhood together. Everything had come full circle, Sarah knew that it would be the harder road, but that Heart-n-Soul's first mission was not to just join a church group on a mission trip, but with God and Amber's help, lead one.

Named after their high school mascot, the "Minga Crusaders", Heart-n-Soul's hopefully team of 12, will

Manos Abiertas

For those who have visited the Center and attended mass, you may recall an energetic hymn that goes, "¡Qué suerte es tener un corazón sin puertas! ¡Qué suerte es tener las manos siempre abiertas!" I believe this tune to be an ode dedicated to all the incredible people who make the Working Boys' Center – A Family of Families possible, because, when translated, the chorus reads, "How lucky it is to have a heart without doors! How lucky it is to have hands always open!"

One recent example of such unbridled kindness would be the St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception community in Los Gatos, California. For the past 10 years, the Partners in Mission in Ecuador group has planned and hosted an Ecuadorian Soup Supper, and

-written by Sarah Ruth Honza

be visiting the WBC July 2-9, 2019 for a minga building experience in loving memory of Amber, as it will be 20 years since she was laid to rest. Although the team is not complete yet, the current team of seven includes: Sarah, Bryan, their best friend, Amber's mother, Lanna, and her boyfriend, and Amber's uncle and aunt. Most of the team experienced Amber's energy and love for themselves. However, some know her only through stories and her love that lives on through the people that were touched so strongly in the 16 years she was here.



Part of the Heart N Soul Minga group and supporters and their bowling fundraiser

For Sarah and Lanna both, it has been a healing experience beyond their imagination. Heart-n-Soul has raised over \$12,000 to date for the WBC through word of mouth, and a bowling bash fundraising event. The journey has just begun, as this is to be one of many missions to spread God's love and carry on Amber's legacy. Heart-n-Soul is currently planning, Krafting 4 Kids, a day during Christmas break where children from a local shelter will be able to craft pillowcases and blankets for them to keep.

Sarah's pastor gave this quote on All Souls Day which she believes sums up her and Amber's continued relationship, "Love is stronger than death, it crosses lines to bring us all together."

-written by Olivia Young

this year was no exception. I was graciously invited to participate in the 11th annual fundraising event and I witnessed the aforementioned lyrics in action. With over 150 attendees and almost 50 volunteers, the event was an incredible success! The evening was filled with delicious food and a vibrant atmosphere created by live music as well as a glorious performance by a choir of 5th-8th graders singing none other than "Manos Abiertas" – two worlds uniting; a part of our "Family of Families" coming together with their families to contribute to our mission.

To further connect St. Mary's Parish and the WBC is

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The Ecuadorian soup supper participants of St. Mary's with their manos abiertas in generosity!

the fact that, in the Gospel earlier that day, we heard Jesus say that to love God is as important as loving our neighbors as ourselves. This trinity – God, neighbor, self – is what family and community are founded upon. For it is when we share God's love with those around us that we, in turn, receive it, which is illustrated in the first verse of this famous tune: (how lucky it is to have) open hands to give to a friend. Through the gifts of time, talent and treasure, the entire congregation, for over a decade, has continuously shown God's love to their neighbor, albeit a neighbor almost 4,000 miles away.

Christmas Brings Out the Best in Us -written by Lorena Perez

My name is Lorena Pérez though most people call me Lore, which I like because it creates closeness. I am a lay person trying to live in Ignatian spirituality. For 20 years, I have belonged to the Christian Life Community CVX in Spanish and CLC in English.

God, throughout these years I have been shaped to be where I am now, coordinating the Pastoral Department of the WBC – accompanying children, adolescents and their families. Since I entered CLC, my life changed, I began to identify with the person of Jesus and his way of life. It has not been easy because Jesus invites us to swim against the current: sometimes, family and friends at first do not understand it, but later when they see you happy, they respect your decisions and often accompany you.

I am convinced of the immense love that God has for us – God is Good and the truth I experience every day. He is always generous and gives us more than we can wish for.

Before entering the WBC I came from a mission experience for one year in the Amazon of Ecuador. When I returned I did not know what I was going to do, or where to work. Only one thing was clear – I asked God not to forget that precious experience that marked my life. I wanted to work in the concrete jungle "the city" with people in poverty, because I did not want to stop looking at the face of Jesus in them as I had done in that mission. Thus, three months after my return, there were providential circumstances that allowed me to be part of the WBC team.



Joyful noise in celebration with the St. Mary's community

We are eternally grateful for the generosity and support of St. Mary's Parish and all our donors. It is because of your open hearts and giving hands that the Working Boys' Center – A Family of Families continues to serve the most vulnerable in Quito.

Wishing you and yours a blessed holiday season and a joyous New Year,

Olivia Young



Lorena (left) in mass at the WBC

I have worked at the Center for a year – a mission that has had the wisdom to work with the impoverished of our city. It has been a time of listening and being with families and students and proposing some activities that can help children to have experiences of God.

I am convinced that spiritual accompaniment is a tool that contributes to the integral formation of students and families, I believe that in our current world with so much technology, there is a lot of loneliness in people and a desire to be heard and welcomed with their stories of life, and much more in our WBC families, who have very painful life histories.

Try to be like the good Samaritan as José Laguna says: "it is to feel sorry, to approach, to heal and bandage the wounded, to ride on the horse, to take him to the inn and take care of him. This process of

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Dear Friends,

As I contemplate the wonder of the Nativity, I thank God for all the blessings He has bestowed upon my life – family, faith, health, education and economic opportunity. I often think about the randomness of where we are born and how our starting point on this planet has such huge implications on our lives. I try to imagine what it would be like to be born in Quito into a family struggling to provide for basic needs such as food and shelter. How different my life could have been.

Thankfully, the Working Boys' Center – A Family of Families, as it has for 54 years, remains committed to supporting and serving the most vulnerable of families by providing WBC members with the tools and resources to break the cycle of spiritual, educational and economic poverty. The WBC provides its member families an opportunity for a more prosperous and resilient life.

Today, the WBC has the fortune of serving over 800 meals every day to 160 families comprised of 20 infants, 50 daycare and pre-kinder children, 350 children in the Basic Education program, 33 students in the Catechism program learning about their faith, 27 high school students in their first year of the newly accredited High School program which includes the Vocational Tech extension in Metal Structures/Metal Working, and 35 adults participating in Personal Development.

There are more families who seek to become members of the WBC and are on a waiting list. Although the Working Boys' Center – A Family of Families carefully manages to stretch its limited resources to accommodate as many as possible, the Center's service capacity depends heavily on the generous donations from the United States.

The leadership team at the WBC, under the direction of the Ecuadorian Jesuit Provincial, Padre Gustavo Calderón, is committed to carrying forth the transformational work built upon the core values that the Center's Founders, Padre John Halligan and Madre Miguel, established as the guiding principles behind the Center's mission and programming.

We and those in Quito are deeply appreciative of the blessings bestowed on the WBC by you, our generous donors who share the fruits of your own time, talent and treasure to support WBC programs, so that the lives of the most vulnerable can be permanently enriched and transformed.

Let us all renew our faith in the message of love and charity that the Nativity inspires and continue to pay forward our good fortune by helping the WBC, our Family of Families, to serve the marginalized of Quito.

On behalf of the WBC's staff and families and the C4WF Board, thank you for your continued support! May God bless you and yours this Christmas Season and always.

Sincerely,

Jim Parks, President

C4WF

THE CENTER FOR WORKING FAMILIES (C4WF)

Supporting *The Working Boys' Center – A Family of Families*, Quito, Ecuador

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