

OCIMA

Overseas and Continental Independent Mercy Association

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www.ocimaya.org

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May 1, 1926 - March 29, 2009

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November 2019

Dear Friends of O.C.I.M.A.,

It has been 10 years since OCIMA's founder, Father Nicholas Hugo Amico ("Father Nick"), passed away. We celebrate Father Nick's life as we also remember his vision for OCIMA:

What is critical in any project we undertake is the progressive development of peoples who are trying to escape the ravages of hunger, poverty, endemic disease and ignorance, who are seeking a larger share in the benefits of civilization and a more active improvement of their human qualities, who are consciously striving for fuller growth.

Orphanage, 2002



Nutritional Center, 2005

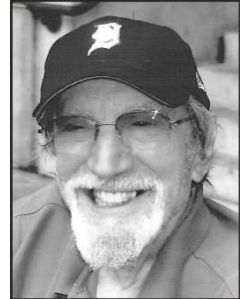


School for Children with Special Needs, 2006 (Teachers graduated from Santa Rosa)

Working in Ecuador and Guatemala, Father Nick formed strong alliances with a number of people and organizations. Today, OCIMA is fortunate to have these same trusted alliances with the Dominican Sisters who are located throughout Guatemala and people like José Tonello who helped build the now internationally renowned organization known as Grupo Social Fondo Equatoriano Populorum Progressio (GSFEPP) in Ecuador. Through your donations and these alliances, OCIMA is able to impact the lives of the disadvantaged in Guatemala and Ecuador in a positive and meaningful manner – particularly children who have the opportunity to improve their own situation and influence the future of their communities.

Each contribution of time and money is greatly appreciated and we wholeheartedly thank you for your generous support. We would also like to give special thanks to two volunteers who have devoted a number of years to OCIMA, and who are no longer able to donate their time:

- **Pete Meo** – A great friend of Father Nick's who has provided support to OCIMA by preparing its annual tax returns. Although Pete retired many years ago, he continued to offer his accounting services *gratis* to OCIMA. Pete, thank you for all the years you worked directly with Father Nick and for your continued support and friendship these last 10 years. We will miss your fastidiousness and your patience.
- **Grayson Smith** – Also a great friend of Father Nick's, Grayson served as a past president and OCIMA Board Member. Grayson's perspectives and insights have been thoughtful and compassionate. For health reasons, Grayson resigned a few years ago and he is sorely missed. Grayson, thank you for your partnership and continued friendship.



Always a Tiger Fan!



Standing Outside Clinic, Quito, 2003

This past year, OCIMA continued to provide the support necessary to maintain the programs in Guatemala and Ecuador that we have supported for the last 10 years. A summary of these programs is provided below.

Guatemala City and Santa Rosa

In Guatemala City and Santa Rosa, the Dominican Sisters' mission is education and this is very much in line with Father Nick's vision for OCIMA. Through your support last year, scholarship recipients completed another school year, improving their prospects for a better tomorrow. Your donations go toward food, clothing, healthcare, books, building maintenance, and other related expenses for these grateful scholarship recipients.



This Past Year's Graduates with Their Degrees

But we are sad to report that there is increased violence, resulting in more and more "vulnerable" situations (e.g., the two girls, sisters, raped by their stepfather, as reported in last year's newsletter). With the full support of the community, the Sisters plan to take in about 20 "vulnerable" girls in 2020 who will reside in the dormitories (built in the mid-1990's with OCIMA's help). Not only will this provide a safe environment for these young girls, they will receive an education at the school and will be supported by social workers, counselors, psychologists and lawyers who will participate in their healing process. The expectation is for the girls to be able to return to their families with the tools to cope and succeed in life. This will require additional funds to support the network of medical and legal professionals needed to make this program successful.



Typical Day in the Waiting Room at the Clinic, Santa Elena

Santa Elena and San Benito

Santa Elena is home to the Clinic and Orphanage. The Clinic is the only medical facility within hours for the people it serves. And the Clinic continues to rely on OCIMA to subsidize the cost of medicines and medical supplies. OCIMA also helps with the day-to-day operations for both the Clinic and the Orphanage.

Over the last 10 years, the Clinic has requested specific medical instruments/equipment. And as much as we would like to have helped, this has been out of OCIMA's reach and we have been exploring the possibility of

partnering with other organizations whose primary focus is to obtain and reallocate medical supplies and equipment to organizations, such as OCIMA, providing health care services to underserved populations. Finding a way to provide needed medical equipment/supplies has been a goal of OCIMA's since 2017, shortly after the Clinic expanded to include a surgical facility and birthing center (through a private donation). Please contact us through the website (<http://www.ocimaya.org/>) if you have contacts or information that can help us establish a strong new alliance to meet these ongoing needs.

About one block away is the Orphanage and a Distribution Center for food and clothes. Responding to the ever-increasing immigrant population in Guatemala, the Orphanage has had to make changes to provide temporary shelter for displaced minors.

In San Benito, only a few miles from the Clinic and Orphanage, the Pre-School, Day Care and Vocational Skills Training Center provides a safe place for parents to leave their children while they work. Adults have the opportunity to learn new skills, such as



Elvia Matilde's Feast, 2018

While at the Orphanage, Elvia Studied Regional Cooking She is of legal age and returned to her Home Country of Honduras in late 2018

Day Care Center, 2019



tailoring. Building maintenance is critical in Guatemala's humid climate and OCIMA's funds go primarily toward maintaining the facility. Due to increased concern for the safety of the Sisters at San Benito, OCIMA installed security bars on the windows at this facility earlier this year. During the night, people were trying to break into the buildings where the Sisters were sleeping.

Morales

Located in Morales, Guatemala is a Nutritional Center and Dispensary, serving the remotest of villages. Here, the Dominican Sisters and their many volunteers work with the outlying villages to monitor the health of the children and expectant mothers, distributing food, clothing and medical supplies to those in need and providing basic education about food handling and cleanliness. OCIMA's funds are used to purchase

prescription drugs for the dispensary and assist with difficult and sensitive medical situations. Malnutrition is a serious concern in this area and the food that we pack with your generous donations here in the States and ship to Guatemala are well-utilized in Morales (as well as in Santa Elena at the Food Distribution Center noted above). This specially-formulated food is reserved for the most severe cases of malnutrition. The Sisters appreciate having this food because of its nutritional value and it stores well in Guatemala's humid climate. It has been three years since our last food packing and we are overdue in sending food to this region. We obtain this specially-formulated food through the Kids Coalition Against Hunger. To pack approximately 100,000 meals, it requires \$27,000.



Nutritional Center, Morales, After Receiving Food Shipment

Ecuador

During 2019, a portion of OCIMA's support in Ecuador was used to provide health care to people of limited resources at Un Canto a la Vida Hospital in Southern Quito. With the remaining funds, OCIMA worked through GSFEP to teach marginalized populations in the Cotopaxi and Bolivar provinces (poor provinces with a large indigenous population) how to produce sustainable food sources for their families. Because OCIMA is working through GSFEP in this way, these populations will have a better opportunity for success due to GSFEP's continued involvement.

Closing

That is a tour of the facilities and people that your generous contributions help to support. Please be generous again this year to help OCIMA meet these evolving challenges. If you knew Father Nick, imagine his outrage at the increased violence in Guatemala and how it's impacting the good people there, especially the children, and consider giving a little extra in celebration of Father Nick's life and the positive impact he continues to make through all of us.

We're also looking for people who are interested in donating their time. We now have a pressing need for someone to help with tax preparation. If you would like to get involved as a volunteer, please contact us through our website (<http://www.ocimaya.org/>). You may also visit our website to stay informed of the activities and events that OCIMA will be sponsoring in the coming year.

Thank you for choosing to support OCIMA!

Larry Gatt
OCIMA Board of Directors &
& President

Marie C. Curreri
OCIMA Board of Directors &
Treasurer

Susan M. Hug
OCIMA Board of Directors

FINANCIAL REPORT — 2018

FUNDS AVAILABLE:

Donations:	\$ 95,351	¹
Raffle Proceeds:	27,274	²
2018 Endowment Fund Distribution:	6,994	
Carryover from 2017:	2	
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE:	\$ 129,621	

PROJECT DISBURSEMENTS:

1. GSFEP (Ecuador)	\$ 17,000	
2. School in Chapas, Santa Rosa	34,000	
3. Nutritional Center in Morales	24,000	
4. Clinic and Orphanage Santa Elena	43,500	
5. Day Care Center in San Benito	8,850	³
TOTAL PROJECT DISBURSEMENTS:	\$ 127,350	

EXPENSES:³

1. Envelopes, P.O. Box, bank/license fees, annual audit	\$ 1,795	
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$ 1,795	⁴
TOTAL EXPENSES & DISBURSEMENTS:	\$ 129,145	

CARRYFORWARD TO 2019:

\$ 476

¹ Excludes \$12,824 in donations made during 2018 raffle (i.e., no ticket purchases). Also excludes value of donated raffle prize.

² Includes \$12,824 in donations made during 2018 raffle, ticket sales of \$17,450, reduced by \$3,000 cash prize.

³ For security reasons, OCIMA funded a project at the Day Care Center to add security bars to the windows (\$3,850).

⁴ Total expenses were 1.38% of total funds available for 2018.