

# Sister Communities of San Ramón Nicaragua



September 2017 Newsletter

PO Box 766, Durham NC 27702

[www.san-ramon.org](http://www.san-ramon.org)

## Dear friends of San Ramón,

This has been a great year for Sister Communities of San Ramón! We are finding new ways to reach out to deepen our 24 year-old relationship across cultures. Thanks to all of you who have been involved in one way or another in helping us reach our goals of peace and friendship across our two cultures. Your support has been essential for the important work described below.

**Working with an amazing group of women** from Yasica Sur, we provided ten families with much-needed latrines in the rural communities of Las Delicias and El Cuyus. In the words of a community leader from El Cuyus, *"We are really happy that Sister Communities is supporting our latrine project in our community, because we really felt abandoned, like no one would help us. Now Sister Communities is helping us make our community better, and we feel supported."*

**Working with a local facilitator**, we financed workshops called **School for Parents** in five rural schools where parents learned about their role in their children's education, and about food security, sanitation, and preparation. A total of 227 parents attended.

**We helped finance a local tourism project** where fifteen local businesses, including restaurants, host families, and eco-farms participated in a three-month course to learn how to better serve tourists and improve their businesses.

**Our Rural School Partnership program** has expanded to include 25 of the 78 rural schools! Most of these are simple cinder block buildings with a latrine out back, often without running water and electricity. Participation in the RSP program provides the opportunity for important improvements to the school and the children's educational experience. Hats off to our 25 RSP sponsors, which include congregations, schools, and individuals.

**Our ecotour program** hosted visitors from the University of Northern Iowa, Greensboro Day School, Chapel Hill High School, Appalachian State University, Greenfield School, and the Unitarian-Universalist congregations in Chapel Hill and Durham.

**Reservations are already coming in for our adult UU ecotour Feb. 4-11, 2018.**



Tour participants thanking their "host mother."

We continue to support **Los Pipitos**, a center for children with disabilities that provides free physical therapy and early-intervention education to children from San Ramón and beyond. To help Los Pipitos become more self-sufficient, we made a video for a Go Fund Me effort to help raise funds: <https://www.gofundme.com/los-pipitos-san-ramon>

**El Jinete** is one of the most remote communities in San Ramón, but their one-room schoolhouse was overflowing with over 100 students. **SCSRN** supported construction of two more classrooms this year, and the Ministry of Education assigned more teachers to meet the demand. In addition, we negotiated with a local landowner to provide water to the school and built them a gravitational system, so **now the children of El Jinete have clean running water at their school!**

As part of our **High School For All** campaign, SCSRN supported construction of two more high school classrooms to ensure that El Roblar can continue to accommodate the growing number of young people in San Ramón who want to continue their education after primary school. Enrollment this year in El Roblar reached 140, and more are expected in 2018!

Our model for construction of schools is that parents volunteer to help a contractor hired by SCSRN, the community donates the land, and the Ministry of Education provides the chairs and hires teachers. And you, dear friends, help to make this possible with your donations and purchases of Café San Ramón and tropical wildflower honey!



Students enjoying clean drinking water at El Jinete

In the community of Hilapo, we again **partnered with the South Granville Rotary Club** to construct a new pre-school classroom, a new kitchen with a secured bodega for food storage. and an improved wood stove. There is also a new electrical system for the entire school and a water system that provides water to the school and to 15 nearby homes.

As part of our commitment to support the local economy, SCSRN opened a **Tourism Information Office** in town. The goal is to help local businesses connect with visitors who are interested in rural community tourism and to instill pride and empowerment in San Ramon residents.

We have begun a cooperative venture with **Fundacion Denis Gonzalez Lopez**, a local organization that promotes sustainable agricultural practices and food security in rural areas. We are completing a **year-long reforestation program**, working with 40 families to reforest and to reduce firewood consumption. The project includes installation of 40 improved wood stoves, which reduce firewood consumption, smoke inhalation, and exposure to high temperatures.

*\*San Ramón is a "municipality" (comparable to our counties in the U.S.) with a population of approximately 45,000 inhabitants and an area of 164 square miles. San Ramón is also the name of the town that is the county seat with a population of some 5,000 people.*

Sister Communities of San Ramon, Nicaragua

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Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift to further peace and friendship with San Ramón!

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

Or give online at [www.san-ramon.org](http://www.san-ramon.org)