

## OUR TWO SCHOOLS ARE FULL OF EXCITED STUDENTS!



The directors of Give Kids a Chance Foundation returned to Guatemala for 2 ½ months this winter to celebrate the opening of the new secondary school and the return of hundreds of students to the primary school. It was one of the busiest but most productive visits we have ever experienced.

The primary students were excited to be back in school. We spent a number of weeks repairing and equipping the school to accommodate more students than we have ever had. Pictures are of the opening days.





The secondary school, named The Belle Levman Centre of Opportunity, was designed in a modern, open-concept layout. True to the culture in Guatemala, it is full of colour and incorporates the outdoors with the interior. It took an international team to build it and thanks to our loyal donors, Give Kids A Chance was able to fund a large portion of the construction.

The first few months at the new school were somewhat difficult. These students had received almost no education for the last 3 years as all public schools were shut in Guatemala as a response to COVID. Many students are adversely affected by the violence in their homes and on the streets, the lack of financial resources in their families and mental and physical health issues and abuses.

We are addressing their needs with our psychologist and three interning psychologists, as well as a special needs teacher who is giving private attention to the most troubled. After 3 months, we have been able to see positive results. We are also offering a lot of practical education, designed to provide students with the type of skills employers are looking for--- like our new barista course which makes the students expert in everything to do with Guatemala's very rich coffee culture.

Christian is an example of our work. He and his brother lost both parents at a very young age. Our primary school cook, Letty, took both into her home and cared for them despite her limited resources as a single mother with her own children.

Christian grew up in our school, to the right is a picture of him when he was young with our director.



Christian carrying a disabled student on a school hike up the mountain. Despite the difficulty, he would not leave him behind. Through our school programs, despite his own personal difficulties, Christian is a caring, compassionate teacher who demonstrates through his actions every day that recovery and change are possible.



Upon graduation Christian was qualified to be a physical education teacher and he now teaches in our primary school. He is one of our best teachers, active, involved and very caring with the students.

The picture to the right shows him and his mother, Letty in our school kitchen.

