



Kiwanis®
PALO ALTO



Dear Members,

This month's charity is the Calpulli Center of Oaxaca, Mexico, our sister city. We were connected through Neighbors Abroad and the Oaxaca Sister City Committee. The Calpulli Center is a pre-school and after-school homework center serving a poor barrio in Oaxaca. It has become that barrio's community center.

The Calpulli Center serves a barrio in our sister city, Oaxaca

The Calpulli Center is a combination pre-school, after-school homework center, library, computer center, a breakfast room and folk-dance theater that serves a poor neighborhood in our sister city, Oaxaca, Mexico. It was founded in 1993 by Felipe Sánchez Rodríguez and his then wife, Swantje Burmester. Mr. Sánchez was educated in Munich, Germany and returned to Oaxaca to found the school with initial support from some of his German college friends. There is still a strong Germany-Oaxaca connection with two German college students interning at Calpulli and about 60 interning in the state of Oaxaca.

Calpulli's motto is "No blows that hurt nor words that injure, we educate with tenderness." Their goal is to maintain a quality academic level that includes new technology services and adequate basic infrastructure, such as their cistern, library and computer center. They address the problems facing children, including fighting malnutrition with daily mid-morning meals and confronting other challenges of poverty. Calpulli leads a conversation on children's rights which has started to influence local and national public policies.

Our donations pay for the salaries of the librarian and computer instructor. The librarian maintains the collection and the lending library. She helps children read and has enlisted local mothers to read to local elementary school classes. Over 200 children from several local schools use Calpulli library resources. The computer lab has laptops that run Microsoft Windows and Office applications. It has a wired internet connection and a router connecting to the laptops. The instructor teaches students and parents in these skills. Both have been instrumental in the distance learning necessitated by the COVID pandemic. The librarian generates most of the content while the computer instructor provides the tech service needed to distribute it.

Next Month: more on how the Calpulli Center implements distance learning in the barrio, with the help of Kiwanis and Neighbors Abroad

Right: Studying in the Calpulli library

