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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

BY TITO COLEMAN

It is my pleasure to share news of recent Fondo Quisqueya initiatives that build upon our more than 30-year tradition of supporting individual and community development through educational grants and scholarships. Fondo Quisqueya has had an exciting year with program expansion in several areas, and now has four active partnerships underway with three Dominican organizations in addition to our traditional support for Peace Corps DR activities.

We are pleased to continue our legacy support for small vocational training to individuals, as well as opportune support for Peace Corps initiated group trainings. This year we have a renewed interest and level of activity from the Peace Corps staff and volunteers, with a range of individual and group trainings supported, and look forward to working alongside the ongoing country program.

With the first year of our vocational grants administered by our partner, the Instituto Dominicano de Desarrollo Integral (IDDI), the board has identified several ways to make the program more efficient and strategic, including establishing a quarterly deadline in order to evaluate the applications together, and improving the delivery of funds through electronic banking options where possible. The demand for this program is likely to increase in the coming year, and we welcome donations to help us meet this demand!

For the past two years, Fondo Q has sponsored transportation scholarships for 23 Instituto Técnico Superior Comunitario (ITSC) students, with excellent results. This year we are increasing the level of support to 30 students based on the solid administration and reporting from ITSC and the well-documented 3.4 GPA average among our grantees. The program clearly addresses a continuing need, and there is room to grow as funds are available.

We have also launched two new university scholarships to provide support for students who have shown extraordinary community leadership and high potential for successful university-level career development: the *BJ Warren University Scholarship* and the *Lou Ferrand Memorial University Scholarship*. (See information about the first recipients of these new scholarships in this newsletter.) We are excited about these new program areas, which complement and expand our traditional commitment to support educational activities that will improve the quality of life and community development in the Dominican Republic.

In closing, this year has been exciting for FQ, and we look forward to hearing from those of you with an ongoing interest in the Dominican Republic. While we are aware of increased challenges to the quality of life in the DR, with or without hurricanes, we know that there are many very positive developments in the country through Peace Corps and our other new partners, and we look forward to expanding our grant and scholarship programs as appropriate. We are proud to continue our programs as efficient and strategic responses to emerging challenges, and we welcome your participation in these efforts.



“Heidi de Dios de Dios has been selected as the first recipient of the BJ Warren University Scholarship. Heidi graduated high school in the top 1% of the country and is currently pursuing university studies in modern languages at the Universidad Abierta Para Adultos (UAPA).”

REPORT FROM FONDO Q’S ANNUAL MEETING

BY JANET KERLEY

Fondo Quisqueya’s annual meeting was held on June 25 at Tom and Sue Gittins’ home in Falls Church, VA. Tom has become famous for treating us to his delicious brats and barbecued chicken, and we certainly enjoyed his cooking again this year.

The highlight of the meeting was the election of board members and new officers. Five people were re-elected to the board: Minor Anderson, Tom Gittins, Rik Laird, David & Kathy Padilla (two people, one vote), and Bob Tafelski. Two new board members were also elected: Brendan Fields and Bruno Estrada, who both recently served as PCVs in the DR. (See more information about our new board members in this newsletter.)

Following the selection of the board members, the new officers were elected. They are: Tito Coleman (President), Janet Kerley (Vice President), Bill Threlkeld (Treasurer), and Minor Anderson (Secretary).

In addition, the board agreed to elect a second Vice-President in the DR. The purpose of the position is to represent Fondo Quisqueya to groups in the DR. Kaley Marino was elected to this position.

In-coming President, Tito Coleman, thanked Tom for his leadership over the last two years, for taking us through turbulent times, and having come out with new partners and ways of doing business. (See tribute to Tom in this newsletter.)

Another highlight of the meeting was a first-hand report from former FQ board member, Jennifer McGowan, who is now the Deputy Director of PC/DR. (See report from Jennifer in this newsletter.)

ANNOUNCING THE FIRST *BJ WARREN UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP* RECIPIENT

BY TITO COLEMAN AND JOANNA MAUER

In 2016, Fondo Q established a partnership with the Instituto Dominicano de Desarrollo Integral (IDDI) to administer our PCV generated grants, in response to new guidelines at Peace Corps which prohibit PCVs from directly handling outside funding. As a result of this relationship and an FQ board visit to IDDI’s flagship community development program in Bonao, FQ has established an annual university scholarship program to support an exceptional graduate of the Cigar Family Center for Integral Development. The center/school is a joint venture between IDDI and the cigar family enterprises in the Bonao region and serves about 450 students from poor families with education and life skill development.

Heidi de Dios de Dios has been selected as the first recipient of the *BJ Warren University Scholarship*. Heidi graduated high school in the top 1% of the country and is currently pursuing university studies in modern languages at the Universidad Abierta Para Adultos (UAPA). She is also taking an English immersion course at the Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo (UASD).



First *BJ Warren University Scholarship* Recipient: Heidi de Dios de Dios

We look forward to seeing what Heidi accomplishes in the coming years in her university studies!

FONDO Q SELECTS INAUGURAL RECIPIENTS OF LOU FERRAND MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

BY MICHAEL MCCABE AND JOANNA MAUER

In 2016, the Fondo Quisqueya board decided to expand its menu of support to Dominicans by creating the *Lou Ferrand Memorial University Scholarship* program. The purpose of the scholarships is to support young community leaders who have a track record of community engagement; a vision for their university education and a financial need; and a commitment to becoming a community or national leader in development.

Fondo Quisqueya has partnered with Alianza ONG, the national NGO network, to launch and manage the scholarships and connect the recipients with mentors throughout the scholarship period. Based on the initial promotion through Alianza ONG, Fondo Quisqueya, and Peace Corps, 170 young people submitted applications and recommendation letters. A selection committee from Fondo Q and Alianza ONG scored applicants and interviewed finalists.

This year's scholarship recipients are Alicia Alcantra, Miguel Angel Smera, and Oscar Pablo Sánchez. Fondo Quisqueya will support the recipients with up to \$1,500 per year for their university costs along with mentors throughout their university studies.

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Alicia Alcantra is from El Batey Chiquita, San Juan de la Maguana. She plans to study advising at the Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo (UASD) in San Juan.

Alicia wrote: *“Estoy solicitando una beca porque quiero estudiar. Siempre lo anhelé y aun lo sigo anhelando, pero mis posibilidades de hacerlo se limitan totalmente por razones económicas. Vivo en un campo de la provincia San Juan y el transporte es muy costoso y no tengo un dentro de dinero que me permita hacerlo. Yo quiero ser orientadora. La orientación y la psicología van de la mano y me gusta mucho la psicología. Entonces, siendo orientadora o psicóloga yo podría ayudar a las personas que tienen problemas de resolver como falta de confianza y falta de conocimiento. También quise integrarme en instituciones que tuvieran visiones de cambiar la realidad de los jóvenes para disminuir lo que es la droga adicción y el embarazo adolescente ya que limita nuestro potencial y ese deseo que cada persona tiene de superación.”*

Miguel Angel Smera is from Monte Coca. He plans to study social sciences at the Universidad Nacional Evangélica (UNEV).

Miguel wrote: *“Estoy solicitando una beca porque provengo de una familia de escasos recursos económicos, pero que cree en la superación a través de los estudios. Provengo de una familia de siete hermanos en la que yo ocupó el lugar número cuatro y quiero que a través de mi superación profesional inspirarlos a ellos y mi comunidad a que puedan realizar sus sueños. En mi comunidad soy uno de los líderes juveniles más influyentes dentro y fuera de mi comunidad, con la cual he podido motivar a cientos de jóvenes a continuar con sus estudios primarios y secundarios. Al finalizar los estudios seguiré contribuyendo al desarrollo y empoderamiento de los jóvenes y al fortalecimiento de los grupos juveniles y asociaciones comunitarias.”*

Oscar Pablo Sánchez is from El Factor, María Trinidad Sánchez. He plans to study architecture at the Universidad Católica Ordestana (UCNE).



“Estoy solicitando una beca porque provengo de una familia de escasos recursos económicos, pero que cree en la superación a través de los estudios. Al finalizar los estudios seguiré contribuyendo al desarrollo y empoderamiento de los jóvenes y al fortalecimiento de los grupos juveniles y asociaciones comunitarias.”



(Continued from page 3)

Oscar wrote: "Estoy solicitando una beca porque quiero ser un gran arquitecto para ayudar a mi familia y construir sueños aportando al desarrollo de mi pueblo ya que vengo de una familia humilde con muchas limitaciones y pocas oportunidades, creo que es una carrera que me brindará la oportunidad de crecer por mis destrezas y habilidades y su poca matrícula estudiantil teniendo mayor demanda por el crecimiento de trabajo y desarrollo mundial, pudiendo así lograr mis metas de superación y servicio comunitario."

"Una vez seleccionados, los estudiantes fueron convocados y se les informó sobre el otorgamiento de la beca y de los beneficios de la misma, en donde estos se comprometieron y expresaron alegría por el otorgamiento de la beca."

UPDATE ON ITSC STUDENTS RECEIVING TRANSPORTATION SCHOLARSHIPS

BY JOANNA MAUER

Fondo Q is providing funding to the Instituto Técnico Superior Comunitario (ITSC), the only community college in the Dominican Republic, to cover the transportation costs of a select group of low-income students who have to travel long distances and take several buses/public cars to reach the college. Fondo Q is currently supporting about 30 students.



Five new ITSC scholarship recipients

Four of the scholarship recipients recently completed their studies at ITSC, graduating with an average GPA of 3.51:

Recipient

Yanna Jesenia Díaz Rodríguez
Gissell Virginia Del Orbe Núñez
Ineli Nicolle Santana Lockward
Isaac Taveras Germán

Field of Study

Medical imaging
Medical imaging
Tourist lodging
Nursing

The scholarship committee at ITSC has selected five new students who will begin receiving transportation grants. The five new scholarship recipients, who were selected based on need and academic performance, are:

Recipient

Marianely Javier Moreno
Mateo Logan Antonio
Teresa Castillo
Helen Scarlet González Hernández
Karla Cornelia Santana

Field of Study

Medical imaging
Automotive mechanics
Nursing
Medical imaging
Interior design

In its report to the Fondo Q board, ITSC said about the new scholarship recipients: "Una vez seleccionados, los estudiantes fueron convocados y se les informó sobre el otorgamiento de la beca y de los beneficios de la misma, en donde estos se comprometieron y expresaron alegría por el otorgamiento de la beca."

PEACE CORPS DR UPDATE

BY JENNIFER MCGOWAN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, PC/DR

Since 1962, approximately 4,550 Volunteers have provided development assistance to the people of the Dominican Republic. There are currently 120 active Volunteers and 40 Trainees in country. PC/DR has Volunteers serving in four technical project areas: Community Economic Development, Youth Development, Education, and Health. Health is currently being phased out as a sector. However, Volunteer numbers will remain the same and health initiatives such as reproductive and sexual health, and physical education and nutrition will still be areas of focus but under the Youth Development program. All Volunteers are assigned to local institutions and work with projects that align with the DR government's development goals.

PC/DR's program strategy is to provide assistance to the poorest communities in the DR. As such, 75% of our Volunteers are assigned to the 13 provinces with the lowest Human Development Index (HDI) (Azua, Barahona, Pedernales, Independencia, Baoruco, San Juan, Elias Piña, Dajabón, Monte Cristi, Santiago Rodríguez, Monte Plata, Hato Mayor, and El Seibo). The other 25% of our Volunteers serve in communities where at least 50% of the local population is below the poverty line (as defined by the DR Mapa de la Pobreza).

THANK YOU TOM GITTINS!

BY RICK LAIRD AND TITO COLEMAN

FQ has a legacy of strong and visionary leadership that goes back to the beginning of Peace Corps in the Dominican Republic, and we want to take a moment to recognize recent President Tom Gittins as embodying this legacy. FQ has enjoyed an ever-revolving table of officers and leaders, but few have contributed in so many roles as Tom has.

Tom served as PC/DR staff in its earliest days. He was part of the small group of "bandeirantes" who founded FQ 36 years ago, and he has served in many roles since then, as a board member, officer, and recently as Vice President and President. During the past three years Tom led the way in identifying new and dynamic programs for FQ to support, including most notably our new partnerships with the ITSC and IDDI. These new partnerships open the door to new ways of supporting FQ's overall mission, while responding to new realities and needs as the DR continues to evolve. When Peace Corps changed its guidelines regarding PCVs' direct handling of FQ grant funds, Tom quickly engaged PC/DR leadership teams on how to continue to support PCV counterparts actively, and this led to one of the roles of the new IDDI partnership.

Tom and Sue Gittins have always been generous with both their time and personal financial contributions, as well as hosting the many annual FQ meetings, which served as inspiring demonstrations of Tom's grilling prowess. Tom has, in short, provided the glue that has held FQ together through both the best and worst periods of FQ history with his energy and commitment to the mission of FQ in the DR along with his Dominican contacts and Peace Corps knowledge.

Thank you, Tom (and Sue!), and we look forward to many more chapters of Fondo Quisqueya with you.



"Tom served as PC/DR staff in its earliest days. He was part of the small group of "bandeirantes" who founded FQ 36 years ago, and he has served in many roles since then, as a board member, officer, and recently as Vice President and President."



“We welcome three new board members, who all recently served as Peace Corps Volunteers in the DR: Bruno Estrada, Brendan Fields, and Christina Houtz.”

NEW FQ BOARD MEMBERS

We welcome three new board members, who all recently served as Peace Corps Volunteers in the DR: Bruno Estrada, Brendan Fields, and Christina Houtz.

Bruno Estrada is a New York City/Queens native with Latino roots. He earned a B.A. in Economics from the State University of New York at Purchase College in 2012. After graduating, he worked with the YMCA of Greater New York as a Program Manager focusing on supporting at-risk youth as a case manager. In 2014, Bruno arrived in the Dominican Republic to be sworn in as a Healthy Communities (HC) Extensionist Volunteer. He served in Comendador, a small urban community in Elias Piña along the Dominican-Haitian border. The primary focus of his work was to train and strengthen the network of health promoters in the municipality, ultimately contributing to improving the overall health and well-being of families in the community and region. After completing his service, he stayed on the island to support a small NGO based out of Atlanta called World Water Relief. Bruno was hired at the beginning of 2017 as the Installation and Maintenance Manager and is currently the interim Country Director. He has recently returned to the US in hopes of continuing his education in Sustainable Development.

Brendan Fields is originally from Annandale, Virginia. He studied history at the College of William & Mary, and soon after graduating spent three years as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Dominican Republic. In Baní and el Distrito Nacional, he worked in the education sector on programs to promote childhood literacy, improve teaching practices, and increase community engagement in schooling. He ate a lot of mangoes and organized about as many Escojo Enseñar teacher training conferences. After Peace Corps, Brendan earned an MA in Latin American & Caribbean Studies at NYU and swiftly returned to the island to work on the Haitian-Dominican border. Brendan is currently the Field Operations Manager at the Foundation for International Medical Relief of Children, where he leads projects in health education and access to clinical services.

Christina Houtz is originally from Dayton, Ohio and currently resides in Washington, D.C. She is attending American University for an MPA, with a specialization in nonprofit and international management. Christina served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Dominican Republic from 2014-17 in the province of Dajabón in the childhood literacy program. During the first two years, she focused on integrating resources and classroom libraries at a small rural school and also led teacher training conferences (Escojo Enseñar). In her third-year extension, she piloted a position working with the district office of education and administrators, consequently strengthening PC education project alignment with initiatives led by the Ministry of Education. Christina is also serving on the board of Friends of the DR.

TREASURER'S REPORT

BY BILL THRELKELD

Reading the papers in mid-October, scanning through newsfeeds, or catching something on the morning broadcast news, it seems that everywhere I turn there is an overwhelming amount of bad news to digest. Folks dealing with natural disasters, mass killings, and political turmoil both here and abroad—where can you turn for a bit of good news? Even the refuge of watching professional sports seems to be embroiled in controversy at the moment, and my beloved Washington Nationals, as of this writing, are one game away from playoff elimination!

Fondo Quisqueya to the rescue! Yes, we have good news to report! Many of you stepped up to make your first donation to FQ, or increased your giving. As a result, by my estimates, we are halfway to a balanced budget for this year. We received an additional \$5,020 in funding since April's board meeting, for a year-to-date total of \$11,270. That means we are about halfway to our goal for the year. Our year-end donations are always powerful to watch, with so many folks giving generously (and getting those last-minute tax deductions lined up)! Over the last six years, contributions in the fourth quarter have been, on average, more than \$10,000. If we

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can put it above \$11,000 this year, that will give us plenty to celebrate!

So please digest this newsletter fully—there is a lot going on with your generous contributions! And we love to hear from our readers—send a note with your contribution or contact us through our website (fondoq.org). Until the spring newsletter, enjoy your holidays and stay safe!



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(REFLECTING DONATIONS JANUARY 1— SEPTEMBER, 2017)

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FONDO Q

In addition to making tax deductible donations to Fondo Q by check, you can make them through **PayPal**, **justgive.org**, and by using the **Network for Good Giving System (NGGS)**. To donate online, follow the links at the bottom of FQ's "Ways to Contribute" page at www.fondoq.org/contribute.

MILA BROOKS FUND- WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

If you wish to focus your FQ giving on low-income women in the Dominican Republic, please send your tax deductible donations to: FQ for the Mila Brooks Fund, c/o Fondo Quisqueya, P.O. Box 6628, Falls Church, VA 22040-6628.

FRIENDS OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Our sister organization, FDR, like FQ, is a 501(c) (3) organization. FDR focuses on helping bring together the community of DR Returned PC Volunteers and staff in the US. It also raises money for two projects: a Program Development Fund, which supports Volunteers and PC programs with donations such as equipment and software, and a Community Challenge Fund, which provides grants for small-scale community infrastructure projects in poor communities. For more information, go to www.fotdr.org. Contributions are tax deductible and may be sent to John Evans, FDR Treasurer, 4512 Park Road, Alexandria, VA 22312.

Contribute!!!!



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**The Dominican Republic and
Peace Corps benefit from your
continued support.**

When making your estate plans, please remember Fondo Quisqueya.