



Turimiquire Foundation

Annual Report 2006

A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION SUPPORTING HUMAN SERVICE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS IN THE TURIMIQUIRE WATERSHED OF NORTHEASTERN VENEZUELA, WITH AN EMPHASIS ON FAMILY PLANNING AND EDUCATION.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our Foundation has experienced strong growth in this past year, a testament to the effectiveness of our programs and our ability to make a modest budget go a long way. It has also been "surprising" in that we've always conceived of ourselves as grassroots and community-based (small and local is beautiful). Now we find that some of our health services are extending over several counties, and even reach into other states of Venezuela as well. Although we never planned to grow as much as we already have, it is hard to argue with this kind of success. The increasing demand for our services becomes a responsibility and a challenge to serve people who have little or no other recourse. We are honored to find ourselves in this position. Please help us continue to serve those who truly need the basic services that we offer. We deeply appreciate all of your support!



Dance, a local tradition, is one of our most popular motivational student activities at the Casa Barrancas Community Center. The performers and audience here are all *campesinas*, many of whom have walked over two hours down the river valley to come to this event. With our help, these students are now becoming the first educated members of their families.

University Study of Chagas Disease in our Rural Population

Chagas disease is caused by multiple exposures to the parasite flagellate *Trypanosoma cruzi* carried by the locally named *chipo* insect. It is estimated that more than 16-18 million people are infected in tropical Latin America. Chronic heart and gastro-intestinal complications typically develop 10-20 years after initial infection if no treatment is provided. Different studies in the last decade have suggested a re-emergence of this disease in Venezuela. Six million rural Venezuelans are at risk. Our epidemiological study in this rural community—conducted with the help of the Foundation using new lab techniques—revealed 11% of seropositive patients in only sixty-six individuals. This high detection rate suggests a clear lack of adequate control of Chagas disease in this region of Venezuela. We are now following up with medical review and treatment of the infected patients.



T. cruzi infection commonly follows skin exposure to the feces of a carrier bug.

Professor Mariolga Berrizbeitia
Department of Pharmacology
University of the Oriente
Cumaná, Venezuela



Prof. Berrizbeitia (center right in blue) and her field staff at the Casa Barrancas Community Center where this study was conducted. Foundation President Steven Bloomstein is to the left, with Dr. Rodolfo Carballo. Special thanks to Board Member Dr. Lesley Alpert, on the far right, for initiating this project.

The effective delivery of basic human services in Education, Health and Sustainable Development can change people's lives ...

Our Foundation has a vital, fast-growing role in the delivery of family planning services in the public health systems of two contiguous counties — including the largest city, Cumaná — in our State of Sucre. We are proud to be trusted with this responsibility, and our only wish is that we could do more to meet the very real needs of the low-income urban and rural populations that we serve.

Family Planning

In 2006, we expanded our family planning program in neighboring Montes County, which is where we originally started in 1997. We are delivering birth control pills, monthly injections, and IUDs for modest sliding scale fees through the private sector, and free through the public health system to the out-lying rural population. We also offer financial support to the regional public hospital to activate their surgery program in response to the waiting list of mature *campesina* women requesting tubal sterilizations as their first choice in family planning.



With our support, the Cumanacoa Hospital recently got a face lift!

Reproductive Health Education

In 2006, we focused on delivering responsible sexuality workshops in rural areas where young people simply do not have adequate access to information, nor to material support, regarding their reproductive health. Although we delivered a lesser number of workshops in these more distant places, we were warmly welcomed, and invariably invited to return to other nearby villages.



Dr. Maria Eugenia (in blue), our Reproductive Health Program Director, poses with a high school class following a sexuality workshop high in the mountains overlooking the Caribbean sea.

Focus on Adolescents

Working with the State Department of Public Health, in 2006 we trained 90 high school students to become **Pana a Pana** (buddy to buddy) peer communicators about safe sex and reproductive health. In 2007, the State Government is coordinating support to expand this program and help us provide access to critical follow-up family planning services.



The red-capped graduating class of the **Pana a Pana** Program proudly attends the concluding event.

Laparoscopic Surgery

Sterilization is the most popular method of contraception for mature women with established families. We have served more than 2,000 low-income women with this service since 1997. We have also offered laparoscopic sterilizations since June, 2005, the only such service in our rural state. Families now come from afar, and everyone contributes what they can on a sliding scale. No one is ever turned away.



Surgeons Gustavo Bernasconi and Luis Felipe Siso performing a laparoscopy at the UTOC clinic.

Did you know?

- ◆ Teenagers give birth to 21.4% of all babies in Venezuela every year, one of the highest rates in Latin America and the Caribbean, already areas of high teenage fertility.
- ◆ It is estimated that 6.4% of Venezuelan adolescents have had an illegal abortion.
- ◆ Approximately 16% of maternal mortality in Venezuela is attributed to abortion.
- ◆ In Latin America and the Caribbean, there are 4,000,000 clandestine abortions annually, and 6,000 related deaths from complications.

RESPONSIBLE FAMILY PLANNING CAN SAVE MANY OF THESE LIVES!

Sources: www.plafam.org; *El Nacional*, Día de la Mujer, Caracas, Venezuela, 8 Marzo, 2007

The effective delivery of basic human services in Education, Health and Sustainable Development can change people's lives ...

Casa Barrancas Community Center

American Jewish World Service volunteer **Lindsey Bloom** saw her vision and hard work become reality in 2006, as the Foundation completed its first full year operating our rural Community Center. We offer a wide variety of educational and cultural programs for young people, which the State Government is now supporting.



At the Casa Barrancas Community Center, **Lindsey (standing, right)** presents a training workshop to our local school teachers. **Iliana Ortiz, left**, is the coordinator of our rural education and scholarship program.



Brian, right, is directing trainee **Daniel Rodriguez** in cutting our locally harvested wood.

Lindsey's colleague **Brian Delay**, a skilled jack of all trades, was instrumental in refurbishing this old schoolhouse bought by a Foundation Board Member. Brian also offered carpentry workshops using ecologically harvested local fallen wood, with which we constructed the Community Center's furniture.

THE BRITO COMMUNITY THANKS LINDSEY AND BRIAN FOR DOING SO MUCH TO MAKE OUR COMMUNITY CENTER A REALITY!

More 2006 Highlights:

- ◆ In June, our sister foundation, *Fundación ServYr*, joined with the local *Fundación Centro Cultural San Juan* in purchasing a fully-equipped pottery workshop for the rural community of San Juan.
- ◆ Over the course of a year, community members compiled the first real census of the 440+ people that live in our river valley. Volunteer Dan Lesh then created an Excel spreadsheet with which we can better analyze and serve the needs of our community, and share with local students, activists, and social workers.
- ◆ On Feb. 10, working with the State Ministry of Agriculture, we vaccinated 67 burros and other farm animals against paralytic rabies and equine encephalitis, and presented a morning workshop on animal care.
- ◆ On March 25, the State of Sucre Children's Foundation attended to the dental needs of more than 70 children at our Casa Barrancas Community Center.
- ◆ In November, we delivered our first donation of used baseball equipment to the youth of the Casa Barrancas Community Center.

Isabel goes to Casa Mexico

"My name is Isabel. I am a young working member of our Foundation, and I had the opportunity to represent us with the *Foundation CASA MEXICO* in San Miguel D'Allende in August, the first time I have traveled outside of Venezuela. My experience was so totally new and different, both culturally and learning. I could compare the organization of CASA with our own. I received much generous attention. I participated a little in all of the programs, especially the service in the countryside, and I lived with, and got to know, the work of the midwives. With everything that I have learned, I can continue to help our own Foundation here in Cumaná."



Isabel, rear right, with CASA staff and women.

Brito Journal by Bob Albert

In classic Turimiquire Foundation style, running water came to be installed in all homes in the Brito valley. First we experimented and figured out how to install gravity-fed water inexpensively at our own farms. Then neighbors began requesting similar set-ups. Several households were watered, costs split between the families and the Foundation. From this experience, a proposal was taken to a number of government offices. The Community Council took up the project and won a sizeable grant (\$12,000 USD). Through our solar energy friend in Cumaná, we connected to an old-timer who found us excellent wholesale prices for the more than 15 kilometers of black hose that we ended up purchasing. The government grant was for 42 households. We managed to extend the resources to install running water to more than 100 homes, even paying modest wages to the local people who worked installing the water systems. The Foundation is now covering the maintenance and continuing services of the water system.



Bob with water hose at Casa Barrancas.

Our Administrative Report

Acknowledgements:

The Foundation counts on the material donations and in-kind support offered by various organizations and individuals with which we work. **Thank You** to our fine network of partners!

- ♦ **FUNDASALUD, Cumaná and Cumanacoa** (clinic space and medical support)
- ♦ **PROSALUD and PLAFAM, Caracas** (educational materials and contraceptives)
- ♦ **Direct Relief International** (medical supplies)
- ♦ **Health Partners International of Canada** (medical supplies)
- ♦ **American Jewish World Service** (program support)
- ♦ **Fundación del Niño, Cumaná** (project collaboration)
- ♦ **Fundación Centro Cultural San Juan** (project collaboration)
- ♦ **CASA MEXICO, San Miguel D'Allende** (inspiration)
- ♦ **American Airlines** (transportation)
- ♦ **Avior Airlines** (transportation)

Thank You to volunteer **Carolyn Little**, who filmed twelve DVDs worth of documentary footage of our work in February and March, including life in one of the rural communities where we serve, and featuring interviews with some of the many rural women who have inspired and helped us! Carolyn has left an enduring record of our work and life here, which we hope to condense into a short presentation soon.

A very big **THANK YOU** to **Ranny Bledsoe**, who served on our Board from our beginning in 1996 until 2006. This Foundation would not have been the same without her! We also want to wish Ranny all the best in her new challenge as the Principal of Boston's Charlestown High School.

2006 FINANCES

Expenses		%	Income	
Administration:		4.9%	Donors \$5,000 and higher	\$ 25,000
Office and Administration	\$ 2,326	2.7%	Andrew Tobias and Charles Nolan	\$ 12,000
Fund Raising	\$ 1,905	2.2%	Charles Merrill	\$ 6,000
Programs:		95.1%	American Jewish World Service	\$ 5,667
Staff	\$ 3,873	4.5%	Merrill Family Charitable Trust	\$ 3,000
Casa ServYr	\$ 1,251	1.4%	Organizations	\$ 2,000
Family Planning	\$ 51,014	58.6%	Assorted Donations up to \$4,999	\$ 25,846
Reproductive Health Education	\$ 3,144	3.6%	Interest Income	\$ 2,374
Rural Education	\$ 9,054	10.4%	Total	\$81,887
Casa Barrancas	\$ 4,838	5.6%	In 2006, we spent more than we brought in. Please help us cover this growth! The Turimiquire Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All contributions are tax deductible.	
Assistance, Loans, and Micro-Enterprise	\$ 988	1.1%		
Rural Development	\$ 8,586	9.9%		
Total	\$ 86,978	100%		

Medical Records: Another Big Year Delivering Family Planning Services!

Years	Number of New Women Served	Number of Patient Visits	Monthly Cycles of Birth Control Pills	IUDs Placed	Average Age	Average # of Children
1997-2004	8459	20684	14475	2753	24.2	2.1
2005	2958	11296	9465	786	24.2	2.0
2006	3182	14642	13424	847	22.4	2.0
Totals:	14599	46622	37364	4386	23.6	2.0
Tubal Sterilizations	Years	Patients	Average Age	Average # of Children		
	1997-2005	1916	28.6	3.5		
	2006	225	28.8	3.5		
	Totals:	2141	28.6	3.5		

Our sister Venezuelan Foundation *Fundación ServYr* also received **\$4,669** in patient co-pays and in-country material support in 2006.



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