



E-Connections
March 20, 2009

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El Salvador Presidential Election Brings Hope for Change

On March 15, 2009, the country of El Salvador elected a new President, Mauricio Funes, a moderate, new-generation leader of the FMLN party. Prior to this election, the ARENA party has held power consistently for the 18 years since the civil war. The ARENA party's founder, the late Roberto D'Aubuisson, was responsible for the murder of Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero in 1980, and ARENA's continued occupation of the presidency has often been a stumbling block to peace and reconciliation. The election results were extremely close, with the FMLN receiving 51.3% of the vote, and ARENA receiving 48.7%. We offer our congratulations to the people of El Salvador for an electoral process of minimal violence or disturbance.

As Julieta Borja, long time IPM Staff Member in El Salvador, said in a letter to me: *"As you probably know at this point, on March 15, we—the Salvadoran people—wrote a new page in our history. My friends, companions, compatriots, and I are extremely happy for the victory in these elections; for many of us, this represents not just the changing of the government or the changing of the political party in power, this means that we have won the struggle for*

peace and justice in my country. There is truly a sense of hope and liberation among us. This is vindication for all of the martyrs of El Salvador: women, children, and men who disappeared and were massacred during the war."

Please join us in praying for a smooth transition of power over the coming weeks and months. As this election represents a significant shift in the El Salvador's politics, we hope that the effects of this election and the policies emerging from the new administration are based in justice for those most vulnerable in El Salvador, including our Project Partners and the people whom they serve.

As the country of El Salvador transitions, our commitment to our Project Partners is all the more important. I will be in El Salvador March 22-28th, expressing our solidarity with our Partners; joining in the Bishop Oscar Romero Commemorative events in Zaragoza on the 24th; and planning with our local Board member, Ana Greig, Advisory Council, and Staff for the future. As new things become possible for individuals and local communities under the new administration, our Project Partners will undoubtedly grow and develop in new and exciting ways. We are honored to accompany them in their journey. Please join us in our continued support to our Salvadoran Project Partners by going to www.ipmconnect.org and clicking "donate now", or join us on one of our upcoming Immersion Experiences to El Salvador.

Paz,

Joseph Cistone

March 20, 2009

Cleveland, Ohio, USA

Connect with Joe on Facebook by searching "Joseph F. Cistone" on www.facebook.com.

Find IPM on Facebook by searching "International Partners in Mission" on www.facebook.com.

To donate to IPM and support our Project Partners around the world, visit www.ipmconnect.org and click "donate now".

Join us on one of our upcoming Immersion Experiences!

Join us in 2009 on one of our upcoming Immersion Experience Programs, listed below, or consider organizing a group of your own! Contact Laurie Rodney at lrodney@ipmconnect.org or +1.216.702.2514 for more information.

KENYA: July 5-15

with IPM Executive Director, Joe Cistone, Maina Hellen Chepkorir, and Jared Odhiambo

EL SALVADOR "Educate the Educators": July 18-25

with Laurie Rodney and Julieta Borja

WYOMING: August 7-11

with IPM Board Members, Chris Henry and Caroline Mills

NICARAGUA " Holiday with a Conscience": October 10-17

with IPM Executive Director, Joe Cistone, and IPM Board Member, Zoraida Soza

INDIA: November 12-22

with IPM Executive Director, Joe Cistone, and Mahesh Updadhya

ITALY: December 28-January 5, 2010

with IPM Executive Director, Joe Cistone

Take a Journey of Self Discovery! Enneagram Workshop Series

Longtime friends of IPM, and participants in our November 2008 Immersion Experience to Kenya, Betty McMahon and Sue Stewart have organized a wonderful fundraising opportunity to benefit IPM's Project Partners. Join friends of IPM for this 3-workshop series on the Enneagram Personality Tool. The workshops will be presented by Cheryl Rose, HM, who has a Masters in Religious Studies from John Carroll University, and is certified in Enneagram theory and presentation. Over the course of the series, you will discover your personality type, gain insight into why you and others exhibit certain behaviors, and find what is essential for spiritual growth. The program cost is \$95, a portion of which will be a tax-deductible donation to IPM.

Dates of the workshops are: Tuesday, April 21; Wednesday, April 22; and Wednesday, April 29. All sessions include a light supper, and run from 5:30 p.m.- 9:00 p.m. They will be held at Magnificat High School, 20770 Hilliard Road, Rocky River, Ohio 44116

For more information, visit www.ipmconnect.org, under "Events," or contact Sue Stewart at 440.871.7638, or Betty McMahon at 440.892.9876.

To make a reservation, contact IPM at +1.216.932.4082.

2009 Donor Brunch honors Marjorie RichterKessing

On March 1, 2009, IPM celebrated our Annual Donor Brunch in St. Louis, Missouri, USA. We were pleased to present Marjorie Richter-Kessing with our 2009 Special Recognition Award. Marjorie's extraordinary commitment to the mission and vision of IPM over the years has been truly inspiring. Her love for IPM has been evident in her many years of devoted service.

The program also featured a presentation by participants of the 2009 St. Louis Churches Immersion Experience to St. Louis: Judy Conoyer, Kendra Nolde, Ella Rothgangel, and Grace Weber. The women shared photos and reflections from their time in El Salvador, highlighting insights into education, the role of women in the church, and the importance of personal reflection on an IPM Immersion Experience.

The Brunch was a great opportunity to provide IPM's supporters with an update on IPM's presence around the world. Carrie Nardi offered a brief update on the newest IPM Project Partner in St. Louis, the *Restorative Justice School Project*. Gloria Taylor of Community Women Against Hardship, which runs the *Youth Enrichment Program*, an IPM Project Partner, also shared a project update. Those gathered also heard about IPM's presence in Kenya, presented by Alyne Kemunto Cistone on behalf of Gladys Owuor, Project Coordinator of *Riete Agricultural Training* (Unyolo, KENYA), who was not able to attend.

Thanks to all those who were able to attend! IPM is honored to be able to celebrate the contributions of our dedicated St. Louis-based donors and volunteers.

Namaste! 2009 a Great Success!

On March 6, 2009, IPM celebrated our 7th Annual Namaste! Cultural Celebration, with over 240 attendees. The event featured delicious international food prepared by a dedicated group of IPM Staff and Volunteers, led by Mary LaPorte and Clark Pope. Live music featured Carlos Jones, the Cleveland School of the Arts Jazz Quartet, Ryann Guitar Anderson, Ngina Fayola, and Sogbety Diamande. Guests also had the opportunity to win two round trip tickets on Continental Airlines in a raffle, as well as many wonderful items in our silent auction.

The event was a great success, and we remain extremely grateful to all those who attended, and particularly to the many volunteers that made it possible. IPM would like to extend a special 'thanks' to the Namaste! committee members who made the event so successful. In particular, the event would not have been what it was without the efforts of our Namaste! Co-Chairs, Diana Greenberg, Clark Pope, and Sarah Shick. Thanks also to our wonderful sponsors, including Continental Airlines, Trader Joes-East, Cleveland State University's Women's Comprehensive Program, and Lakewood Phoenix Coffee.

To view more pictures from this year's Namaste! visit us on Facebook at:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/International-Partners-in-Mission/15162862167>

IPM Chicago Visit

We are excited to continue to expand the reach of IPM, and did just that with a recent visit to Chicago, Illinois, USA. Joe Cistone and Mary LaPorte spent several days earlier this month with both old and new friends in the Greater Chicago area including longtime friend of IPM, Jody Kretzman, as well as Hal Baron, Patrick Eccles, Maureen Kelly, George Terrell, and others. Joe and Mary also met with a group of supporters at the Mercury Café, a gathering organized by Caitlin McCarthy. They also spent time with Pastor Bruce Modahl, and members of Grace Lutheran Church in River Forest, Illinois. We are thrilled to continue to develop IPM's presence throughout the USA, and look forward to continued growth in Chicago!

Student Groups Return from El Salvador Immersion Experiences

This February, IPM welcomed two high school groups on Immersion Experiences in El Salvador: Hathaway Brown School (Shaker Heights, Ohio, USA), and Catholic Memorial School (West Roxbury, Massachusetts, USA). Both groups had a wonderful experience, and had the opportunity to understand first hand the history of El Salvador, as well as interact with our Project Partners.

Joe McGonegal, Director of Communications at Catholic Memorial School, and coordinator of all of the school's immersion programs, said, *"CM kids love IPM's immersion programs. For the past five years, IPM's El Salvador program has broadened our classroom walls to include the villages of Morazon and the streets of La Libertad and San Salvador. Our students come away from these trips with a more profound understanding of the way things work in the world and the way we hope for things to work."*

Patrick Murray, a teacher at Catholic Memorial, and the faculty member who accompanied the group on the trip explained, *"This trip was a great experience for all participants, myself included. It was truly eye opening, and many of the boys know already that their time in El Salvador will stay with them for the rest of their lives. Spending time in a place like El Salvador puts things in perspective, and everyone came back with a true sense of how fortunate they are to have simple things like clean tap water and a (relatively) peaceful and safe environment to grow up in, which often are taken for granted. At some point in their lives, everyone should see the things we saw, and feel what we felt during our time in El Salvador."*

Stephanie Hiedemann, Hathaway Brown Upper School Service Learning Coordinator, and IPM Board Member, wrote about the experience her the group in El Salvador: *"The trip was incredibly meaningful and inspiring. We alternated between visiting IPM project partners and learning about the history and contemporary challenges that El Salvador faces. The visit to El Mozote was especially moving as we learned about the atrocities inflicted against the women and children while seeing the rays of hope in the children's memorial. We were all awed and inspired by the wonderful educational programs at Lidia Coggiola! The most fascinating aspect of this trip was the backdrop of the historic election on March 15. The country was abuzz in election fever and we all became invested in hearing the results."*

"Upon our return to the US, the HB delegation wanted to continue its connection to IPM. Our first opportunity was Namaste! at which 8 of the students volunteered. Throughout the evening, they enthusiastically shared their experiences in El Salvador with the various guests at Namaste! Many thanks to IPM for providing us with this wonderful and life changing opportunity!"

Congratulations to Julieta Borja, IPM Consultant in Latin America & the Caribbean!

Special congratulations go to Julieta Borja, IPM Consultant in Latin America & the Caribbean, for the completion of a graduate diploma in Participative Sustainable Management of Community Development Programs at the Universidad Centroamericana (UCA). Julieta completed her thesis on "Female Empowerment as a Strategy for Local Development" focusing on the work of *Mujer y Comunidad* (Zaragoza, EL SALVADOR), which won a special prize at graduation as the second best thesis in her class. Julieta has worked with IPM for several years, and continues to lead Immersion Experiences. All of us at IPM are extremely proud of Julieta's success, and we are confident that she will continue to promote positive change in the Region.

Special Project Highlight: *Sister School*, EL SALVADOR

The Sister School Project offers educational opportunities to youths in El Salvador's poor communities and guides them to create development projects in their hometowns. Next year, the Project will support eight students to continue their studies. As part of their scholarship agreement, students create community development projects such as informal schools for illiterate children or reforestation programs in the areas where they live. The Sister School Project gives these teens alternatives to life in a gang by financing their education and providing them opportunities to attain prestige and become leaders through building their communities.

This year, the Project will require around \$2,500 of additional funding to provide a classroom for a school in Loma Linda, El Salvador that serves five hundred students with four classrooms made from sheet metal. This funding would also be sufficient to continue supporting the education of eight university and high school students who have become leaders exemplifying love and service in their communities.

Donate to IPM through Network for Good:

http://partners.guidestar.org/controller/searchResults.gs?action_donateReport=1&partner=networkforgood&ein=43-1487311

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Support IPM by searching online with www.goodsearch.com.

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