

February 2010

Dear Friends,

This year the Chiapas Education Program is celebrating 20 years of service to the community. Thanks to you these past years have produced not only over 125 indigenous college graduates, but also a definite change of mindset among the Mayan youth. 20 years ago it was nearly impossible to convince children and parents of the importance of even elementary level education. The children were needed to work to keep the family alive. Little by little, mainly through the example of the few brave ones who took the first step to finish high school and then go on to college, more and more indigenous began to see education as a way out of poverty. In the Mayan spirit of community, the students who graduated as agronomists, teachers, doctors, engineers and lawyers returned to help the whole village progress. It is great to see that over 90% of the graduates are back working in the area. They are also the ones who are in charge of the administration of the education program and of the young men's and young women's hostels. Because of the example of so many, the young people in the area now believe that they have the right to an education and they are determined to make it happen.

There is still so much to be done. Each year over 40 high school graduates turn in their request for a scholarship to college; currently, Mission Teaching Foundation is only able to help about 10 new students enter the university each year. Also, only half of the applications for scholarships to junior high and high school can be accepted. However, rather than be frustrated by our limitations, we can be thankful for our accomplishments. At the same time, we are determined to do even better in the future.

**Thank you for your loyal financial support and prayers! You continue to inspire us to work even harder to help the indigenous youth of Chiapas reach their goals and achieve their dreams.**

The volunteers of MTF



Due to the generosity of donors in response to our Christmas Newsletter, we were able to purchase a new coffee processor for the Ranch just in time for the harvest!