

LA MONTAÑA FUND

ANNUAL REPORT 2021





CHAIRPERSON'S STATEMENT

I'll preface this letter by expressing my gratitude and excitement about the reopening of La Escuela de la Montaña. Over the last two years, the board of La Montaña Fund has tried to support the communities and the school hoping for this announcement. Our donors, with the help of PLQ, have kept the building and the grounds in good condition by supporting the School Preservation Fund. It will be great to, finally, return to study with my teachers who have, over the years, become friends.

Our scholarship program has continued thanks, in no small part, to Carlos Sánchez, director of PLQ, who was willing to provide oversight during the worst parts of the pandemic. Last year we provided scholarships for 45 students from grade school through high school, who continued their studies through far less than ideal circumstances. Looking ahead, as things open up, this number is likely to grow significantly in 2022.

In 2021 we continued our speaker series with Rubén Escobar and community member María Cristina Pérez Carrillo, who discussed how they, with other members of the communities, were beginning several self-sustaining projects. These include raising pigs, growing vegetables and recycling. We support these efforts and intend to continue to be of service in ways that will help them thrive.

Several of the teachers are continuing to take on-line students, even as things open up. If you cannot get to Guatemala this year, please consider [enrolling](#).

Thanks, again, to our generous donors. I hope we will see you at the school soon.

DARRYL ROBBINS

President, La Montaña Fund

OUR MISSION

To support rural community development in the Department of Quetzaltenango, Guatemala through art, education, health, and literacy

A Look to the Future

We often mention “our friends in Guatemala,” which most often refers to the residents of Fátima and Nuevo San José, the villages closest to La Escuela de la Montaña. The families who host the students for meals live there. Abelino and Jorge, who work full-time at the school, live there. The women who clean the school and do the laundry live there. Ruben and Gustavo, night watchmen and handymen, live there. And two of the teachers have lived there.

There is little work nearby. The Mountain School is the major employer in the area. Except for seasonal work for a few at the fincas, or an odd job here and there, people need to go out to find work, perhaps even as far as Quetzaltenango, a two-hour bus ride away. Life is difficult. There are few governmental supports. With so little income, everything is expensive. Just feeding your family is a major struggle.

The Mountain School has always worked to improve the lives of our friends - through the scholarships, art and music classes, and the library. We will continue those important projects. And we hope to do more. The greatest needs are for food and income. As our friends develop ideas for sustaining themselves with gardening, raising animals to eat and sell, and perhaps training to develop local home industry, we will do whatever we can to launch them on their way. It’s what friends do.

Amelia Cutten and Candace Wilson
Former Coordinators of The Mountain School

Support Sustainability



2021 BOARD MEMBERS

Darryl Robbins, *President*
Edward Scott, *Secretary*
Michele Seipp, *Treasurer*
Amelia Cutten
Candace Wilson
Erin Papa

EMERGENCY FOOD PROJECT

Donors in 2020 made it possible to provide basic food items month after month for 450 people. This program concluded with a final delivery in January of 2021. Over \$50,000 was raised for this humanitarian aid to our friends and neighbors.



SCHOOL PRESERVATION

The Mountain School has been closed since shortly after the pandemic began. In 2020, La Montaña Fund partnered with PLQ to fund the maintenance of the grounds and buildings as well as continued security, and this has continued through 2021. This provides much-needed income for key staff as well as making sure the buildings are in good order for reopening the summer of 2022.



YOUNG LEADERS SCHOLARSHIPS / BECAS PROGRAM

Under the leadership of Carlos Sánchez at PLQ and the loyal members of the Becas Committee, the scholarship program has continued to support education for middle and high school students. Numbers are still lower than past years as families have needed teens to work and online education is not available to all. Forty-five students received scholarships in 2021.

SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS

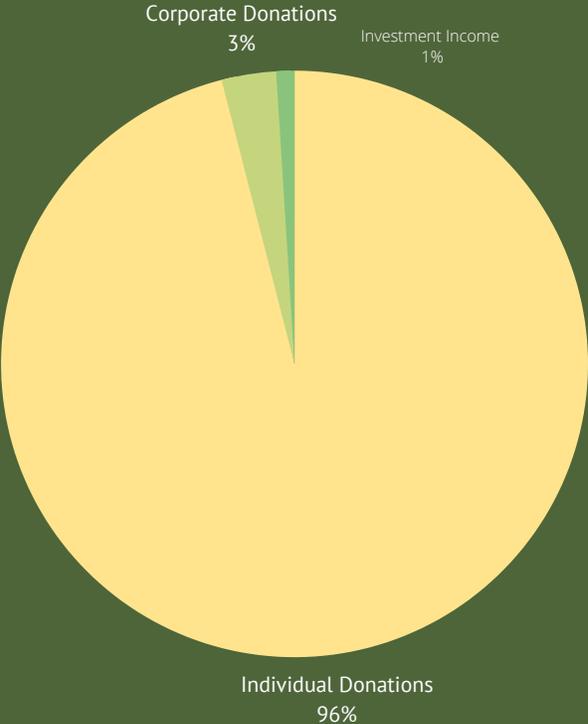
With a little support from La Montaña Fund, funded by you, our donors, community members are growing pigs and raising vegetables for food and to sell. We are interested in promoting self-sustaining projects initiated by community members and also in liaising between the communities and organizations that provide on the ground training and follow-up.

CHARLAS/SPEAKER SERIES

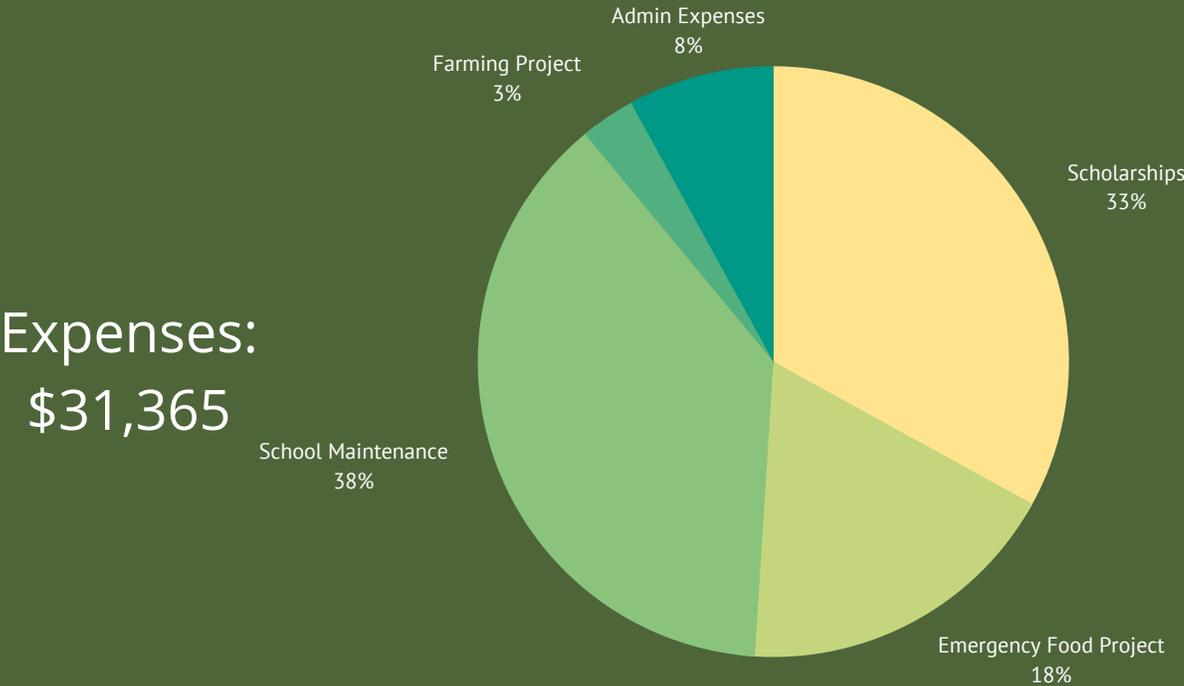
Two events were held in 2021 to help former students and supporters to stay connected to the school. In February, Mountain School teachers Rony Escobar and Maria José Rojas talked about conditions in Guatemala and answered questions. In December Ruben Escobar and Maria Cristina Pérez Carillo talked about sustainability projects in the communities of Fátima and Nuevo San José.



FINANCIAL STATEMENT



Income:
\$36,017



Expenses:
\$31,365