

# Crossing Borders – Microcredit Grows!

After success with microcredit programs through Los Niños in Tijuana and Mexicali, Mexico, Via International has expanded initiatives to the U.S. border region by collaborating with other organizations and expanding the relationship with University of San Diego's Center for Community Service-Learning.

## What is Microfinance?

**mi-cro-fi-nance** noun \ 'mī-krō-,fī-' nan(t)s  
"Microfinance is the practice of extending small loans to individual borrowers who have been traditionally denied access to credit." *As defined by University of San Diego, Community Service Learning Department and San Diego Microenterprise Project, www.sandiego.edu/csl/microfinance/index.php*

A popular anti-poverty strategy for building self-reliance, microfinance provides support for low-income individuals to start or grow small businesses.



San Diego Microcredit group members build their own businesses (Photo by University of San Diego and Center for Service Learning)

With small loans and a network of support, individuals can help their families by generating additional income. Common microenterprises include making or selling products such as clothing, jewelry, food, or crafts.

## The San Diego Microenterprise Coalition

Working with USD's Center for Community Service Learning, Via International and ACCESS, a job development organization, are supporting small loans to be disbursed through La Maestra, a community health organization. The coalition is collaborating to outreach to very low-income women who have no access to credit. The project was created to promote economic recovery, encourage experiential learning, and facilitate active community involvement. By supporting microcredit loan groups in the San Diego region, the program is designed to develop micro-entrepreneurs in order to address poverty in communities and populations hit hard by difficult economic times. The first loans were disbursed in the fall of 2009.

**Get Involved!** Help women with no access to credit start or grow small businesses. Contact us at 619-426-9110

- Become a microcredit donor
- Volunteer to share your business or marketing expertise
- Support Via International and the coalition's microcredit initiatives

## Microcredit Spotlight

"The money from the microfinance group is just the beginning. When we have our meetings, I get new ideas, receive important information, and create lasting relationships."  
– Dora, construction business founder and microfinance loan recipient.

"This model, which empowers people to become entrepreneurial and creates a network of support with other individuals in their communities, can really make a difference."

Carlos, MBA student and USD Microfinance Club member.



San Diego microcredit loan recipient with her handmade purses (Photo by University of San Diego and Center for Service Learning)

*"Having my own business gives me a sense of independence that I want to pass on to my daughters." -- Laticia, jewelry designer and microfinance loan recipient*

*Special thanks to the University of San Diego and the Community Service Learning Department for resources and program support including collaboration, research, development, documentation, interviews, and photos for this article. For more information visit: www.sandiego.edu/csl/microfinance/index.php or www.viainternational.org/microenterprise-microcredit.html*

# Via International's Partners in the Field



Tijuana microcredit participant opens her own store (Photo by Via International - Los Niños)

## Los Niños Microenterprise Program

It is considered very difficult to create viable microcredit programs in urban areas. Los Niños annually provides about 200 loans with nearly 100% repayment of principal and interest. Working with a group solidarity model, these urban microcredit programs have supported the development of mini-businesses in Tijuana and Mexicali, Mexico, including resale ventures, a bee cooperative, artisan development, and the selling of homemade products. Consumer loans have been provided for home improvement, school expenses and medical and dental emergencies.

[www.losninosinternational.org](http://www.losninosinternational.org)

## SHARE Guatemala Microenterprise Program

Recently SHARE received approval for lines of credit from formal banks in Guatemala to expand its successful microenterprise program. SHARE provides over 1000 loans annually. SHARE Guatemala is an integrated rural development program. Therefore the majority of the loans are provided for agricultural initiatives. Training in management of resources and finance is also provided. Activities focus on supporting families to grow enough beyond subsistence living to generate funds for other family needs such as health and education.

[www.shareguatemala.org](http://www.shareguatemala.org)

## Highlights from the Border Region

A new partnership has been formed with Enlace Comunitario in Baja California!

Born and raised in Mexicali, Mexico, Ana Gabriela Perez, a graduate of the University of San Diego, was inspired to establish a humanitarian community development organization thanks to her experience as a former Via service learning volunteer. Enlace Comunitario works to improve the environment of housing projects constructed by Urbi development company in Mexico. Via International - Los Niños is providing nutrition and ecology education for Enlace Comunitario in their housing



More than 200 Via International - Los Niños Community Outreach Workers gather in Mexico for Promotora Dialogue and Breakfast, July 2010. (Photo by Veronica Gonzalez, Instructor for Via International Promotora Program)

and community development projects.

In July, the Formation and Education of Promotoras Comunitarias (Community Outreach Workers) from Via International - Los Niños collaborated with the Iberoamericana University, Enlace Comunitario and Urbi to host a breakfast for graduates and participants in the program. More than 200 women participated in the alumni breakfast, shared updates on their current activities as graduates, and learned about the new sustainable city, Valle de San Pedro, being constructed east of Tijuana.

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# Exploring Culture, Honoring the Earth

## Via International Service Learning

### In Dinétah (Navajo Nation) and Northern New Mexico

*"I'm no longer looking: I am seeing. I am no longer hearing: I am listening with my heart, not just with my ears."*  
Service Learning trip participant

Since beginning this pilot project, more than 200 participants have worked on the new service learning programs in Northern New Mexico and Dinétah (Navajo Nation). Volunteers have assisted with water conservation and land restoration efforts, adobe and other natural building projects, indigenous permaculture initiatives, and organic planting, harvesting, and farming efforts.

More than just service, the experience has proven a valuable opportunity to explore the natural world while working with community youth and elders through programs designed to reconnect us with ourselves, with each other, and with the earth.

Rich in cross-cultural and international learning, yet within the borders of the continental United States, this region of the southwest shows the influence of early Spanish settlers and is home to more than 20 indigenous nations, including 18 pueblos as well as the Apache, Ute, and Diné nations.

*"TseDaak'aan community is in the Diné Nation, a sovereign nation, which has its own political jurisdiction and laws, language, history, and culture. The Diné Nation is situated within what the Diné call the Four Sacred Mountains or Dinétah."* Diné community educator

Service learning trips to Northern New Mexico and Navajo Nation provide important opportunities to examine environmental and sustainability issues while exploring culture and history. Introduction to indigenous lifeways and world views may also include local native teachings on mindfulness, self-directedness, kinship, and generosity. Special programs also offered include Hohan Dialogues, Family Camps, and Peace Camps.

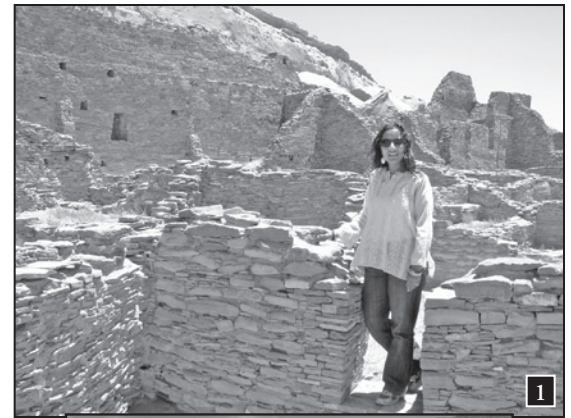
**Albuquerque... TseDaak'aan...  
Red Valley... Chinle... Canyon de Chelly... Tse Bit' Ai / Shiprock...  
Monument Valley... Cortez...  
Durango... Chaco Canyon... Jemez...  
Bernalillo... Santa Fe... Tesuque...  
Chimayo... Taos...**

*"When I got home, I realized something: I am more aware of my connection to the earth, and ultimately my connection to everyone and everything. I used to make decisions based only on my own betterment, but now I know better."* Student visitor

*"I am more aware and better informed of the world around me"* High School volunteer

*"I have begun to think differently about how I choose to live each day of my life."* Dialogue participant

Special Thanks to the New Mexico team and to all of the community supporters who have assisted in providing exceptional transformational learning experiences for students in the southwest!



Photos: Special Thanks to Steve Herrera, Deacon, San Jose Archdiocese

- 1) Chaco Canyon, New Mexico (Photo by P. Randhawa)
- 2) Corn planted by volunteers is growing! (Photo by J. Case)
- 3) Plastering mud walls (Photo by L. Emerson)
- 4) Student volunteers enjoy working together in TseDaak'aan (Photo by L. Emerson)
- 5) Student visitors greet the river with Pat McCabe (Photo by Steve Herrera)
- 6) Harvesting carrots is exciting! (Photo by Steve Herrera)



# Calling All Interns!



Via International/SHARE Guatemala longterm volunteer and intern Candace Facemyer lives and works in Guatemala. (Photo by E. Sabatini)

Do you like to travel or want to gain valuable experience in the community development field? Are you interested in building your resume' or developing leadership, administrative, or facilitation skills? Do you have a desire to serve, learn and experience the world?

Via International offers a variety of valuable internship opportunities including long-term, spring break, summer break, and short-term volunteer internships. Fly in to assist with a service-learning trip for a week or a weekend or stay a while by applying to join

our long-term volunteer internship program. Interns may help with administrative and field operations or assist with community development initiatives and voluntour projects in any of our locations including Mexico, Guatemala, New Mexico, and the San Diego border region.

To learn more, visit our website at [www.viainternational.org/get-involved.html](http://www.viainternational.org/get-involved.html) or contact Juan Carlos Rivas, Outreach and Education Director, at 619-316-9252 or [juancarlos@viainternational.org](mailto:juancarlos@viainternational.org)

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# Going to Guatemala!



La Antigua, Guatemala (Photo by JC Rivas)

Join us in celebrating the new Via International Voluntour service learning program in Guatemala!

Through Guatemala Voluntours,

visitors explore the natural beauty of the highlands of Guatemala while enjoying immersion in the local culture and working with Mayan villagers on community development projects facilitated by our local partner SHARE Guatemala, an integrated rural development organization working in more than 250 communities throughout Guatemala.

More than 400 volunteers from 20 schools groups have worked in Guatemala since this partnership began.

Via volunteers have helped villagers build community kitchens, gardens, playgrounds, and schools or assisted with irrigation and conservation efforts. Participants have enjoyed visiting a SHARE Guatemala medical center, a traditions tour in San Antonio Aguas Calientes, and participated in an educational community walk to meet with local residents in their homes. Presentations and community dialogues on important relevant topics including migration, the Civil War, sustainability, microenterprise, and more, have also proven to be highlights of learning and exchange.

Additional customized trip options may include a boat tour of Lake Atitlan, climbing Pacaya Volcano, lunch on a coffee plantation, horseback riding, a Mangrove tour, an afternoon at Monterrico beach, zip line adventures, or a visit to Ixchel cultural center, Mixco Viejo ruins, a turtle sanctuary, or the Popul Vu museum.



Children of San Martin Jiltopeque, Guatemala (Photo by JC Rivas)

*Special thanks to the Guatemala Voluntours Team and SHARE Guatemala staff including David Arrivillaga, Tobin Nelson, Ana Ajmac, Gerson Guitz, and Candace Facemyer, Via International/SHARE Guatemala long-term volunteer.*

# Guatemala... A Journey of Discovery...A Taste of Humanity

By Juan Carlos Rivas

I take pictures of every place I visit.

I love how photography can capture moments that reveal something about people. It also allows me to share with others not only my experience but also my feelings.



1

Captivated by color and texture, I snapped images of the ancient gorgeous handmade dresses worn by women in the marketplace and the magnificent architecture of La Antigua.

stereotypes is not only that they are often untrue but also that they are incomplete pictures of people, places and cultures.

Ultimately, I realized on this journey that my challenge went beyond snapping a good photo. The real challenge for me was to let go of my



2

I went to Guatemala for a week with a student group from the University of California. We served as volunteers in a community near by the rural town of San Martin Jilotepeque. We worked together with the community

to lay cement for a playground at a small elementary school in the village. The school had only two classrooms for all six grades.

However, as the week went on I realized how difficult it actually was to convey the incredible experience I had, immersed in a culture so rich and complex. I was left with questions. How do I take a photo that conveys the humble pride of Don Gabriel showing us his home and his water spring or introducing us to the 11 children he is raising? How do I capture the emotional experience of hearing Juan Osorio recount the ordeal of his 23-day journey with a migrant smuggler to the United States? How do I photograph the struggles, the bonds, and the determination of the community that hosted us?

We also visited La Antigua and enjoyed various presentations and discussions with community members on regional topics including migration, sustainability, development, and history.

So, there I was in Guatemala, a place I knew very little about. Yet, as I was taking my first photo, I was curious and imagining a sense of similarity with the culture where I grew up in Southern Mexico. Yet, I had no idea what was in store for me.



3

With every photograph I took, though, I found myself more and more fascinated. Lush forests, canyons, and waterfalls, as well as Mayan villages, ruins, and volcanos greeted me. Not only did the beauty of Guatemala's rich and diverse environment enchant me, but I was also inspired by the beauty, warmth and openness of the people.

I soon realized, as any visitor quickly discovers, Guatemala is a photographer's dream!

Sure, I took a picture of us carrying water up the hill for what seemed like forever. I did not, however, photograph 8-year-old Victor Manuel teaching me about personal responsibility by making many more trips up the hill every day to bring water to his family. Of course, I took a picture of the 20 community men who volunteered to build the playground with us, but what the picture doesn't say is that they gave up a day and a half of pay and sacrificed the ability to buy food for their families simply because

their sense of community comes first.

If a stereotype is a "mental picture or image that generalizes a group of people," I found myself breaking my stereotype of Guatemala with every picture I took. The problem with



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preconceived ideas and to let myself be embraced by a culture that didn't care if my pictures were good or not but cared rather for truly sharing with me the feeling of being connected and part of a community. It was a taste of humanity much deeper and larger than I had imagined before.

*Juan Carlos Rivas was born in Xalapa, Veracruz, Mexico, and has coordinated international travel and education programs with youth for more than 11 years. His passion for life and learning is contagious, and we are excited he has joined Via International as the new Outreach and Education Director.*

*To view more photos of our Guatemala Voluntours, visit our photo galleries online at [www.facebook.com/ViaInternational](http://www.facebook.com/ViaInternational)*

*To learn more about Via International service learning opportunities visit [www.viainternational.org](http://www.viainternational.org)*

*To share your stories or photos online from a Via International service trip, send an email to [juancarlos@viainternational.org](mailto:juancarlos@viainternational.org)*

*Photos by JC Rivas, Via International*

- 1) Victor Manuel and Juan Carlos Rivas during Guatemala Voluntour
- 2) Camera Shy? Local volunteers from Mayan village of La Cuchilla
- 3) Weaving cloth in La Antigua
- 4) Carrying water in the Guatemalan highlands
- 5) Local volunteers and University of California San Diego students mix cement for community work project



4



# Letter from the Board Chair

## Remembering William McLaughlin

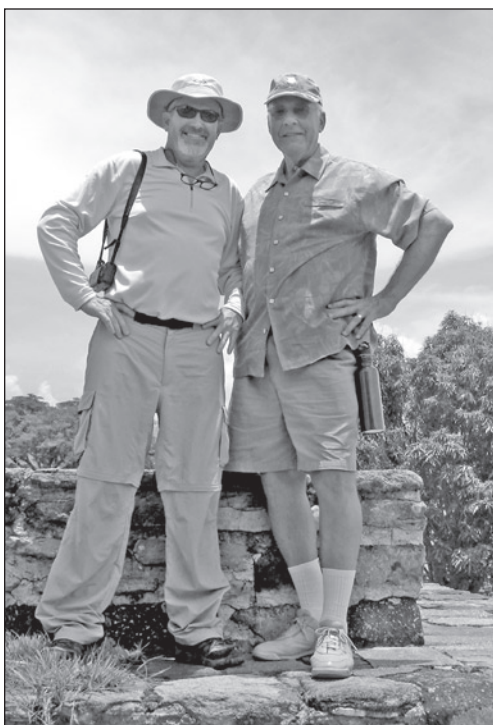
Losing a champion and a great friend is never easy. Bill McLaughlin was a wonderful blessing to Via International and to all who knew him. He gave to everyone and he gave with great generosity of time and talent. For more than three decades Bill was a driving spirit in our organization. He and his wife Marion supported Via through their generosity of resources and time,

and their annual letters to friends and colleagues generated interest and crucial financial support. He was always at the heart and soul of our efforts and successes. Those of us who had the opportunity to work with him over the years saw clear evidence of his unquenchable spirit and determination. Bill was a giver, an eternal optimist, and a wonderful friend.

We are pleased that Bill's spirit will continue through his son, Jim McLaughlin, who is a new Via International Board member. Jim brings his father's enthusiasm along with outstanding photography skills, adding to the McLaughlin legacy.

Phil Hadley  
Board Chair

## Via International Welcomes New Chair and New Board Members



New Via Board member Jim McLaughlin and Via Board Chair Dr. Phil Hadley visit Mayan pyramid, Mixco Viejo, in Chimaltenango during Guatemala Volontour summer 2010. (Photo by E. Sabatini)

returned to San Diego after Phil served 12 years as Headmaster of Virginia Episcopal School. Known there as a "Renaissance" man, Dr. Hadley brings a wealth of educational excellence and deep appreciation and knowledge of Latin America to Via's work.

Jeanette Leehr, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, will continue as Board President to give continuity and leadership to various programs underway including a growing emphasis on food security, global and regional dialogue projects, and development of border region initiatives.

William Bramley was named Board Chair Emeritus in honor of his many years as Chair and 25 years of service to the Board. He will also continue as legal counsel and an active member of the Board.

In February 2010, the annual Via International Board of Director's meeting was held in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Attending board members enjoyed visiting community sites and meeting some of the people and organizations collaborating with the new Via service learning program in New Mexico.

After many years of service to the board, Dr. Phillip Hadley was elected Board Chair. Dr. Hadley and his wife

Lynne have recently returned to San Diego after Phil served 12 years as Headmaster of Virginia Episcopal School. Known there as a "Renaissance" man, Dr. Hadley brings a wealth of educational excellence and deep appreciation and knowledge of Latin America to Via's work.

Joan Bryden and Sue Pinza, both with many years of commitment to the organization, will serve as Co-Vice Chairs of the board. Walter Ludlow continues in his role as Financial Officer.

*We are pleased to announce four new board members:*

Jim McLaughlin of Lake George, New York, is the son of former board member Bill McLaughlin, who served more than 30 years on the board. Jim brings new energy and talent to the board. As a professional photographer, he has already begun telling the organization's story through photos.

Connie Noterman is a resident of Minneapolis, Minnesota, but also lives part-time in Taos, New Mexico. With a history in development and fundraising work, she participated in both of the Via Global Dialogues this past year and will be further supporting our work with funding agencies.

Dr. Robert Kolesar is a professor at John Carroll University in Cleveland, Ohio, and a seasoned Via Voluntour student service learning trip coordinator.



Via International Board of Directors visits Agua Fria Community Farm in Santa Fe, New Mexico (Photo by Jim McLaughlin, McLaughlin Photography)

We are excited to announce that after spending a year in Tijuana on sabbatical, he has completed a written history of Los Niños. The book will be released by January 2011. To pre-order a copy please contact [elisa@viainternational.org](mailto:elisa@viainternational.org).

Marisela De La Concha lives in Bonita, California. Born and raised in Cuenavaca, Mexico, she has provided translation services for Via International and is working on developing new ways to market our micro-credit products.



# Special Thanks!

*Special Thanks to all of our collaborating organizations, allies, and volunteers!*

## **Global Dialogue collaborating organizations, allies, and volunteers:**

Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne, David Arrivillaga, Emily Barry, Robert Benson, Maria Bocanegra, Laura Boutwell, Brendan Brink-Halloran, Bhavana Dee, Leia Dunlap, Dr. Cheryl Getz, Jackie and Woody Crenshaw, Dr. Denise Dimon, Jim and Robin Dubinsky, Elaine Elliott, Dr. Larry Emerson, Marc Emerson, Dr. Ana Estrada, Hannah Evans, Deepu George, Dr. James Gerber, Breyn Hibbs, Dr. Anita Hunter, Dr. Carl Jubran, Barry Johnson, Kelsey Johnson, Kabir Kadre, Dr. Milburne Line, John Loggins, Lyusyena Kirakosyan, Arjuna Krishnaratne, Lauren and Susan Leach, Dr. Doreen Mattingly, Patricia McCabe, Cara McMahon, Katy Morikawa, Stefan Morikawa, Susan and Andy Morikawa, Dr. Mary Rose Mueller, Lisa Mulaney, Chris Nayve, Bob Nicholson, Dr. Jerzy Nowak, Patrick Oliveri, Dr. Gail Perez, Dr. Ramona Perez, Charles Pope, Sr. Barbara Quinn, Parminder Randhawa, Katie Rose, Celisse Ruiz, Elisa Sabatini, Mark Sabatini, Ruth Soberanes, Max Stevenson, Katie Teague, Vera Brown Tucker, Kathy and Javier Vargas, Dr. Denese Vlosky, and Dana Wilcox, plus the Community Foundation of the New River Valley, University of San Diego (including Center for Community Service Learning, Joan B. Croc Institute for Peace and Justice, TransBorder Institute, Ahler's School of International Business, International Studies Department, Ethnic Studies Department, School of Nursing, and School of Leadership and Education Sciences), Virginia Tech University (including the Center for Student Engagement and Community Partnerships, Center for Peace Studies and Violence Prevention, and the Institute for Policy and Governance), San Diego State University (including the Departments of Arts and Letters, Latin American Studies, Women's Studies, International Business Studies, and Native American Scholars Counseling Program), and the University of California San Diego (including the Center for Global Volunteer Services).

*"My husband and I were married in July and just moved to Los Angeles to start grad school at UCLA. I got into the Masters in Public Health program, thanks to a lot of practical experience including my time at Via International. Thank you so much for the opportunity!"*  
-- Rebekah Mark Dell

## **San Diego border region allies and volunteers:**

Ismael Avilez, Tommie Camarillo, Victor Clark, Catherine Corral, Elena Cruz, John Fanestil, Amy Gunderson, Juan Manuel Yi Echaury, Rosa Olga Navarro, Victor Ochoa, Lizeth Perla Padilla, Ana Gabriela Perez, Dr. Alberto Pulido, Ramon Chunky Sanchez, Dr. David Shirk, Carolyn Smyth, Mario Torero, and Arturo Torres.

## **San Diego/Mexico/Guatemala collaborating organizations:**

Access, American Friends Service Committee, Amigos Car Club, Border Angels, Casa Familiar, Centro Cultural de la Raza, Chicano Park Steering Committee, Christ Lutheran Church, City Heights Community Development Corporation, Enlace Comunitario, Francis Parker Peacemakers, Fundacion Comunitario Queretero, International Rescue Committee, Jacobs Family Foundation, Kilo de Ayuda, La Maestra, Milpa Organica, New Roots Community Farm, Nile Sisters, Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, Saint Charles Parish, San Diego Foundation 4 Change, San Diego Microfinance Alliance, San Diego State University, SHARE Guatemala, Simon Fraser University, Southwest Key Program, TranscendANCE Youth Arts Project, Universidad Iberoamericana, University of California San Diego, University of San Diego, and Urbi.

## **NEW New Mexico allies and volunteers:**

Marcy Andrews, Emigdio Ballon, Clayton Barker, Graham Beyale, Bertha Benally, Herbert Benally, Rebecca Belletto, Bailey and Madison Brown, Marcie Brown, Stephanie Brown, Larry and Margie Case, Erin Coffey, Sue Coffey, Clarise Cole, Colin Daly, Gloria Emerson, Larry Emerson, John Fastwolf, Sheri Foah, Sierra Frank-Ignacio, Rakushin Frankowski, Tony Goldtooth, Jessie Goodnough, Lydia Harutoonian, Amanda Hass, Louie Hena, Lynne Hendrick, Julie Jennerjahn, Forest Joe, Marie Joe, Randy John, Lyla June Johnston, Barbara Judy, Tina Leonard, Norbert Lino, Larry and Deborah Littlebird, Sean Lowe, Elayne and Art Lowe, Peter Mackeness, Carmen MacKenzie, Duane Manus, David Martinez, Paul Mayer, Pat McCabe, Dawn Mirabal, Allan Messinger, Jolene Montoya, Gailey Morgan, Chad Morse, Marcia Orlowski-Mancuso, Gerald Naylor, Nern, Carmen Pacheco, Eberth Reynolds, Mary Rose, Roberta Salazar, Soledad Santiago, Carolyn and John Stephenson, Wendy and Clinton Thunderchief, Jonathan Tremblay, Shirley Trujillo, Carol Weahkee, Peregrin Whitehurst, and Santana Yazzie.

## **NEW New Mexico collaborating organizations:**

Agua Fria Community Farm, Bandelier National Monument, Centro Comunidad, Hamaatsa, Miranda Canyon CSA, Mujeres Sin Fronteras, Red Willow Educational Center, Rivers and Birds, Shiprock Drop In Center, Saint James Episcopal Church, San Francisco de Assisi Church, Santa Fe Presbyterian Church, Saint Francis Cathedral, Santa Maria de la Paz Church, Taos Youth and Family Center, The Snow Mansion, Tesuque Farm, Tinas Burritas, and Upaya Monestary.

Special Thanks for assistance in production of this newsletter to Amy Heflinger of Aha Creative and Mike Rinna of San Diego Printers.

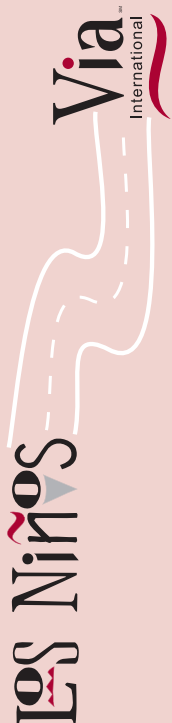
(Recycled paper used in the printing of this newsletter.)



Rebekah Mark Dell and Elisa Sabatini celebrate completion of archiving project at the Via headquarters in Chula Vista, California. (Photo by J. Case)



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## Executive Director, Elisa Sabatini

**Resilience** is defined as "an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change." (Miriam-Webster's online dictionary)

The communities here in the US/Mexico border region have had a lot to deal with the past couple of years. With drug violence in the news and a major earthquake this spring that left more than 25,000 families homeless in Mexicali, tourism has declined dramatically and devastated local economies. Add a global recession to the mix and we are now watching lay-offs, unemployment, and poverty-related issues skyrocket in the border region.

It is a critical time. And the needs are increasing.

Now more than ever, it is important to support initiatives that create self-reliant yet creative collective response to the challenges.

Via International with Los Niños de Baja serves more than 50 communities in the border region. We work through 50 outreach workers and collaborate with many other organizations to build a web of self-development programs that address family health and food security, microcredit, microenterprise, and community leadership and education.

Despite the challenges, we continue to serve and adapt.

This spring, we initiated promotora community outreach efforts in new communities through partnership with Enlace Comunitario. This summer, college students built hives to help our thriving bee cooperative project continue and grow. This month, we launch ecology and nutrition programs with hundreds of students and mothers in Mexico. This fall,

we will continue our microcredit initiative on the San Diego side of the border thanks to enthusiastic support from community partners and supporters combined with the diligence of the loan recipients and their commitment to each other and the project.

Even more exciting...

By teaming up with new communities, we are now offering to the public and to school groups we have worked with for decades, additional service learning trips to Guatemala, Northern New Mexico, and Dinétah (Navajo Nation).

These are exciting and inspiring new places for student groups to explore, serve, and learn!

Moreover, all of these communities offer much more than opportunities for service.

They offer a taste of simplicity, relation, and resiliency that may be a critical teacher for all of us in these turbulent times.

Bringing students together with community leaders and the organizations that they serve, we began a series of dialogues this past year to explore the issues of our times and the possibilities for individual and collective response-ability.

We invite your response and hope you will join us in building a sense of resiliency!

Contribute to the programs or join us for a service learning trip... organize a group of 14 and bring your friends, your family, your church, your school!

Engage with us!

Elisa Sabatini  
Executive Director

Los Niños

Via  
International

### Board of Directors

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Juan Carlos Rivas, Outreach and  
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Jennifer Case, Education and  
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MEXICO

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Col. Carbajal

Mexicali, Baja California

MEXICO