

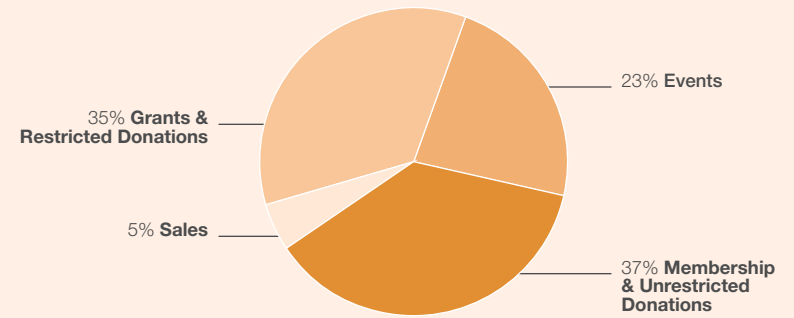


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SISTER CITY PROJECT

*The Norwalk/Nagarote Sister City Project
is a partnership for sustainable community
development between the people of Nagarote,
Nicaragua and the Greater Norwalk Area
in Connecticut.*

2013

**THIS YEAR NAGAROTE
CELEBRATED ITS
50TH ANNIVERSARY.
IT'S AMAZING TO THINK
THAT WE'VE BEEN PARTNERS
FOR MORE THAN HALF
THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY.**



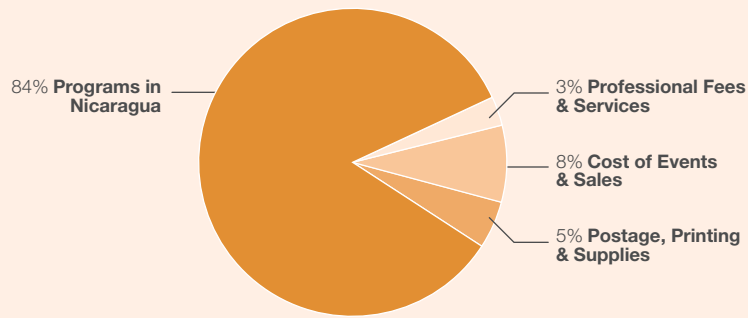
INCOME 2013

Highlights

-)) This year, Nagarote celebrated its 50th Anniversary. It's amazing to think that we've been partners for more than half the life of the community. It was an honor to have the city ask our art students to help paint a mural to commemorate the anniversary.
-)) The Minister of Education for Nagarote, Mario Aleman, visited us here in Norwalk to observe model preschools in the area and in New York City. Our board member, Joan Parris, Director of Early Childhood Education at Norwalk Community College, coordinated the visit and hosted a delicious dinner honoring Mario. He was so impressed and enthusiastic about what he saw that he agreed to help us make the Darling Preschool a model for Nagarote.
-)) Our wonderful Field Director, Ramon, left us in May as he bought a farm out of commuting distance from Nagarote. Our new Field Director, Miguel Salinas, is a Nicaraguan whose goal in life is to manage a program like ours — a round peg in a round hole. We've been remarkably lucky with Field Directors and Miguel should be with us for more than a few years.

Afterschool Project

-)) We added a class in theater with a theater teacher imported all the way from Managua. The class develops docudramas based on issues like child abuse, teen pregnancy and cooperation that are very popular with audiences in the community as well as with the project kids. In August, the Theater Program performed at an event at Nagarote's City Hall for children with disabilities. They also performed a docudrama on domestic violence at the Annual Fair, which was very well attended.
-)) Our annual trip to the VOSH eye clinic in San Juan del Sur allowed all 65 people (45 kids and 20 adults) to have eye exams, and 13 received prescription glasses. Everyone got sunglasses. We appreciate being included in this annual clinic coordinated by Audrey Blondin of Torrington, Conn. and her husband, Dr. Matthew Blondin.
-)) Thanks to a generous donation from Tom and Sandi Kretsch, we added a new afterschool program for 6- to 11-year-olds directed by four of our college student alumnae who are doing an incredible job. Fifty youngsters enjoy games, creative projects, science activities, homework help and tutoring.
-)) The karate team competed in Esteli, showing such remarkable sportsmanship by playing by the rules



EXPENSES 2013

that they received the loudest applause — even louder than the home team. Credit goes to our karate teacher, Josue, who not only fosters discipline but is also a wonderful role model in a culture dominated by “machismo.” He is both humble and gentle. Three of the karate students received green belts.

- » Two Nagarote college students volunteered as interns with the project. Fatima, who is studying social work, helped with workshops on key issues such as self-esteem and teen pregnancy. Carlos helped Miguel put together a grant request to the German Embassy. No word yet on whether it will be funded.
- » The Annual Fair was a huge success with attendance of 400. The theater class’s performance about domestic violence was a big hit, as was the delicious food prepared by the college students and the parents. The menu included fried plantains with cheese, rebochetas (tortillas with beans, cheese, cream and salad), chicken soup and juices made from the fruits from our farm.
- » We have three soccer leagues: girls, boys 12–14 and boys 15–17. Wearing their new uniforms that they raised the money for themselves, they marched proudly from the town square to the soccer field with all of the other teams.

Model Sustainable Farm and Tree Nursery

- » SosteNica has been using our farm as a demonstration site for the farmers they work with teaching them sustainable farming practices including bio-intensive farming. They donated 100 shade trees for the tree nursery.
- » Teens work on the farm on a regular basis with their class groups, keeping the weeds down and harvesting the fruits and vegetables.
- » Farm Day was celebrated by 80 kids and parents who visited the farm, pitched in with the work and took home some veggies. Among other activities, they covered the guava with paper bags to protect them from worms.
- » We tried to introduce eggplant into the Nica diet without much success although the eggplants produced abundantly. Next year, fewer eggplants will be planted.
- » We harvested a total of 202 papayas, 248 onions, 432 eggplants, 264 peppers, 682 passion fruit, 708 bananas, 84 cucumbers, 346 guavas, 9,560 ears of corn, 180 watermelons, 32 dragon fruit, 1,490 tomatoes, 38 pumpkins, 78 baby corn, 1,016 pole beans and 492 squash this year.





Scholarships

- » We have 82 scholarship students, 10 of whom are in college.
- » Two of our scholarship students were chosen to attend a special boarding school for kids with excellent academic performance. (Only four were selected from all of Nagarote.)
- » Our first six college scholarship students have graduated. They received scholarships from family and friends of Sandy and Kelly Banks who were in the Peace Corps in Nagarote six years ago. They look forward to rewarding careers and several already have jobs. Remarkably, of the seven students who received scholarships, six completed all five years of college and graduated.

Preschool

- » In May, thanks to the persistence of Jose David, the preschool coordinator, the municipality connected electricity and running water to the Darling Preschool for the first time ever. Needless to say, this was a huge improvement.
- » The preschool furniture and shelves donated through the Giving Tree at our May Fiesta were built in July and the art class decorated the desks and benches.

Partnerships

- » Our partnerships enable us to enhance our programs and accomplish even more.
- » Three Peace Corps volunteers work with us coaching sports and teaching English and entrepreneurship. With the help of project kids, one of them, Cynthia, built an eco-friendly stove that uses 50 percent less firewood than the stoves commonly used in the community. It's being used as a demonstration model.
- » Our partnership with SosteNica remains strong. They rented space in our community center while their eco-house/office was being built and also share our farm.
- » Katholieke Hogeschool Leuven University in Belgium sent us an intern, Nele, who is working with Miguel and Ana Isabel, our Program Coordinator, on a series of workshops for the kids on global warming, community service, and violence prevention, among others.
- » Three of our staff have been selected to receive training on response to natural disasters from Project Concern International over a six-month period.
- » The Albert Schweitzer Institute at Quinnipiac University arranged for students in their theater program to visit our theater class. We're hoping for more visits in 2014.



18 CHILDREN
GRADUATED FROM
THE DARLING PRESCHOOL,
WHICH WE SUPPORT,
AND ALL WILL RECEIVE
SCHOLARSHIPS FOR FIRST
GRADE IN PUBLIC SCHOOL.



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