

# HELP SEND CHILDREN FROM INDIAN CHURCH VILLAGE, BELIZE, TO HIGH SCHOOL

June 2009

THE BELIZE GOVERNMENT PAYS FOR ONLY A PORTION OF THE EXPENSES OF A HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION. FOR THE CHILDREN OF RURAL VILLAGES IN BELIZE, THERE IS THE ADDITIONAL EXPENSE OF BOARDING WHILE THE STUDENTS ATTEND HIGH SCHOOL

## INDIAN CHURCH VILLAGE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS WHO WILL BE ATTENDING HIGH SCHOOL IN THE 2009/2010 SCHOOL YEAR

STUDENT	BIRTHDATE	HIGH SCHOOL	YEAR
Orbelina Corado	10/6/92	Bishop Martin High School	4 <sup>th</sup> Form
Glendy Regalado	11/10/90	Belize High School of Agriculture	4 <sup>th</sup> Form
Yolanda Vasquez	12/17/93	Belize High School of Agriculture	3 <sup>rd</sup> Form
Daisy Corado	1/30/94	Belize High School of Agriculture	3 <sup>rd</sup> Form
Janine Puc	2/19/94	Bishop Martin High School	2 <sup>nd</sup> Form
Florineri (Flori) Cau	5/26/95	Kings College	2 <sup>nd</sup> Form
Maria Zepeda	5/16/93	Belize High School of Agriculture	2 <sup>nd</sup> Form
Brandon Alvarez	7/28/94	Bishop Martin High School	1 <sup>st</sup> Form (repeat)
Edwin Ramos		New Hope High School	1 <sup>st</sup> Form

### SAN CARLOS STUDENTS:

Myra Vasques	10/18/93	Muffles College	3 <sup>rd</sup> Form
Martha Hernandez	3/12/92	New Hope High School	3 <sup>rd</sup> Form
Lucio Perez	8/14/93	New Hope High School	2 <sup>nd</sup> Form
Brenda Hernandez		Belize High School of Agriculture	1 <sup>st</sup> Form

### 2007 & 2008 ICV GRADUATES ATTENDING 6<sup>TH</sup> FORM (approx. \$1,500USD per year for tuition and books alone)

Jorge Eduardo Ruano	1/17/90	Sacred Heart Jr. College	Year 3 (double major)
Brenda Johanna Arevalo	5/8/91	Muffles Junior College	Year 2
Elizabeth Regalado	1/31/91	University of Belize	Year 2
Arelí Ramos		Escuela de Mexico (Corozal)	Year 2

### CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEW INDIAN CHURCH 6<sup>TH</sup> FORM GRADUATES:

Karen Elena Gonzalez	5/1/89	Muffles Junior College
Myra Lopez		Muffles Junior College
Marvin Ruano	6/21/90	Muffles Junior College
Rutilia Useda	6/29/89	Corozol Junior College

**IT COSTS APPROXIMATELY \$1,500.00US to \$2,000.00US PER YEAR (DEPENDING ON THE SCHOOL AND SELECTED HOUSING ARRANGEMENTS) TO SEND A CHILD TO A BELIZE HIGH SCHOOL (Bz\$2=US\$1). PARENTS ARE EXPECTED TO HELP WITH SOME OF THE EXPENSES.**

Registration and School fees: ranges from \$365Bz to \$700Bz

Books: ranges from \$175Bz to \$600Bz per year

School supplies: approximately \$200Bz

Uniforms, shoes and PE clothes: approximately \$200-\$300Bz

Computer and Internet Use and printing: approximately \$1,250Bz

Bus Fare: approximately \$800Bz/year

School lunches: approximately \$1,000Bz/year

Room and Board @ approximately \$125.00Bz per month x 10 months = \$1,250.00Bz (This is for Monday-Friday with breakfast and dinner--some students pay up to \$200Bz/month)

**BACKGROUND:** The village of Indian Church is named for the ruins of two 16<sup>th</sup> Century Spanish churches at the Maya site of Lamanai, formerly called Indian Church before the Maya name for the ancient city, Lama'an/ayin, was found in Spanish documents. The village population is approximately 250 people. It is an outlying rural community situated on the edge of a lagoon and adjacent to the Lamanai Archaeological & Nature Reserve. Lamanai is an ancient Maya site that is now visited by large numbers of tourists. From 1974 - 1986 the Royal Ontario Museum ran a large excavation project at Lamanai, headed by archaeologist David Pendergast. The Lamanai Archaeological Project (LAP) began in the summer of 1996, headed by archaeologist Dr. Liz Graham. Since that time LAP has run field schools and other investigations. In 2001-2004 the government of Belize executed the Tourism Development Project (TDP) at Lamanai to excavate and consolidate selected structures and add new facilities to service the increasing tourism at the site.

The village does not have electricity and water is pumped daily (by Lamanai Outpost Lodge) from a well into the village water tower. The village can only be accessed by bus 2 days per week (M & F), or by the New River (very expensive) from Orange Walk, the closest city, which is an over an hour away. Telephone communication in the village is erratic—there is one village phone. Many people came

to this village as refugees from Guatemala in the mid-1980's. They were mostly milpa farmers at that time. Some villagers now work for the archaeology projects, the Lamanai Outpost Lodge, local Mennonite agriculture & lumber mills, the Indian Church Artisans' Center and the local restaurants in the village. Several villagers are teachers for the Indian Church and San Carlos village primary schools. Most of the available work is seasonal, part-time or day-labor at substandard wages (around \$10-15US/per day is typical, with the upper reaches being about \$25US per day). There is an inferior-quality primary school in the village and many residents of Indian Church have only completed primary school, if they have been formally educated at all. On average the older adults in the village have a 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade education and about half are illiterate. Although English is the official language of Belize, many of the adult residents of the village only speak Spanish. English is taught in the primary school, but rarely spoken in the village, so the children's English language skills are basic. Economically speaking, the village is quite poor. The nearby village of San Carlos shares a similar history.

**For more on the area, check the following web sites:** [www.karenpierce.com](http://www.karenpierce.com); [www.beyondtouring.com](http://www.beyondtouring.com); [www.lamanai.com](http://www.lamanai.com); [www.belizecubadigs.com](http://www.belizecubadigs.com); [www.people.uncw.edu/simmonss](http://www.people.uncw.edu/simmonss); [www.travelbelize.org](http://www.travelbelize.org); [www.belize.net](http://www.belize.net)

#### **BELIZE SCHOOL SYSTEM:**

Free public school in Belize only goes through primary school, Standard 6 (equal to our 6<sup>th</sup> grade), or about age 12-14. If one chooses to continue their education beyond that, they must pay to attend high school (or college, as they often call it in Belize). It is a 4-year program and the closest high school to Indian Church Village is Belize High School of Agriculture in Trinidad, a 1½ hour ride from Indian Church Village. There are 4 other high schools in Orange Walk (approximately a 2-hour bus ride)—Bishop Martin High School, New Hope High School, Muffles High School and Technical High School.

It would be such a shame if these kids from Indian Church Village did not have the opportunity to go to high school. Although the cost of tuition/fees, books and uniforms is not cheap, one of the biggest expenses is paying for room & board and for bus transportation. All of the students have to find lodging with a family in Orange Walk, Trinidad, or another village near their school, as they can not get to and from the schools daily from Indian Church Village since the bus only goes to Indian Church Village on Monday and Friday. The schools do not have dormitories.

A Canadian organization called S.H.A.R.E. ([www.shareagfoundation.org](http://www.shareagfoundation.org)) is providing ten tuition scholarships at \$300US each for students in Indian Church and neighboring San Carlos villages, for the 2009/10 school year. However, these scholarships will only cover the cost of school fees, which are paid directly to the school by an accounting firm in Belize. The students will still have to pay for some of their books/book rental, uniforms, PE clothes, shoes, incidental school fees, room & board and bus transportation. Most of these children's families can not afford to pay tuition/fees, let alone the additional expenses involved with their child's education. The scholarship program pays the balance of school fees, pays for textbooks, and provides a monthly "allowance" for each student to help with these additional expenses.

In 2004 we set up a program to re-use the school textbooks. All books are inventoried, labeled, and kept by the ICV librarian, Sonia Arevalo, who coordinates their re-distribution to the students each year. We currently have over 150 school books in "Inventory", but every year the schools change a few of the books, so new books are always needed.

**Educating the children of Indian Church Village beyond the primary school level remains a big challenge!**

**Your contribution to the Indian Church Scholarship Fund is welcomed!**

**For additional information contact:**

**Karen Pierce** [karen@karenpierce.com](mailto:karen@karenpierce.com) or **Laura Howard** [laurahoward@bellsouth.net](mailto:laurahoward@bellsouth.net)

**Donations to the Indian Church Scholarship Fund are tax deductible in the USA and Canada.** Please send your checks to either Karen Pierce in the USA, or to S.H.A.R.E. in Canada.

**In the USA make your check out to:** The Foundation for Academic Innovation (It is a 501c3, Number 20-3517525).

#### **Mail your check to:**

Karen Pierce  
PO BOX 3241  
Evergreen, CO 80437-3241 USA  
Phone: 303 674-2104; Website: [www.karenpierce.com](http://www.karenpierce.com)

**In Canada make your check out to:** S.H.A.R.E. Scholarship Fund, and indicate it is for **Indian Church scholarships.**

#### **Mail your check to:**

S.H.A.R.E. Agricultural Foundation  
c/o Les Frayne  
R. R. # 3 Fergus, Ontario CANADA N1M 2W4  
Website: [www.shareagfoundation.org](http://www.shareagfoundation.org).