

Jardín de Gracia



2 seventh graders cleaning the classroom before recess

2019 was AMAZING!

2019 was so so cool. It was incredible to see the seventh graders start in the new building and to open the second classroom, finish the office and begin the work on the second level was like watching our dreams & prayers come to life in front of us.

Seventh grade began with 17 students and we will have 16 going into 8th grade for 2020. Teacher Rony and our principal Sarai did a great job managing a bunch of pre-teens this year. It was WAY out of our normal comfort zone & we didn't know what to expect, but we are prepared and excited to see eighth grade walk up the steps in February. Miss Glenia will be joining Rony in the South

Cmapus & they will split the classes with Rony teaching Math & Science & Glenia teaching Language Arts. We expect greatness with these teachers and this group of students seem motivated and excited.

This new construction means that our student population is growing. We haven't had an increase in kids since 2013 when we started kindergarten. In 2020, our projected enrollment is 194 students! It's a big step to get so close to 200 students. As our student population grows, so does our impact in the community. If you want to partner with us personally or as a child sponsor, we would love to welcome you aboard. Please send us a message!



Angi will begin kindergarten 2020 at Jardín de Gracia. Following her mother's footsteps

Kindergarten selection is done & our new incoming class of kindergarteners will be one of our biggest in recent years. 2 sets of twins bumped us up to 25 students. One of those sets of twins belongs to a Jardín de Gracia graduate. Cesia graduated in the first 6th grade class and she works in the factories in Siguatepeque to support her children. When she came in for her interview, she sat down across from me at the desk and I asked the same questions I ask every potential candidate. Since we only have 24(ish) spots, and 40-60 families apply, we are very careful to pay close attention to the answers. I asked Cesia "Why do you want your children to come to Jardín?" Most parents say: the instruction is better than the public school, or: because it's a Christian school. Cesia said "Jardín de Gracia taught me more than just how to be a good student. I remember every teacher I had here and when I have had hard times in my life, I look back on my time at Jardín as a sweet, affirming time. I learned more about the love of Jesus at Jardín than I ever have anywhere else. I want my children to experience the same." We hope that same thing for every child and new family that enters this year. That they will feel more love than they ever have before.

The Dirt on the South Campus

The construction at the South Campus is coming along well. Two classrooms have been completed and tested. Seventh grade started the year in the first classroom and moved to the second to facilitate construction on the dental office wiring above the first one. Things began to slow down about mid-September. We had used all the money that teams had brought for their projects and donations had stopped. We basically had \$400 to work with. We cut back to a skeleton crew to install materials that we had already purchased. I had a talk with the contractor of the project and explained he would more than likely need to cut back even more. I would be going on furlough to find more money to continue the project. Then in mid-October, we had an interesting couple of days...

I talked with a guy we went to church with back in the states. He said he and several of his coworkers would like to donate to the building fund and then follow up with a work team in 2020. He thought they would donate somewhere in the range of \$25k. I thought "I'll believe it when I see it". A few days later, I was contacted by an anonymous donor who said he would like to help the school's building project by donating some money and would like us to use it as an incentive to get others to donate. He said he would match up to \$25000 of money donated till the end of the year. B and I began to work out the best way to promote this and made an appointment with the gentleman who made a video for the school earlier this year. Then as we were waiting for this conference call to talk about ideas and the things we would need to promote this on social media, I received a call from another individual. He said he had come into some money and would like to send \$25000 for the new school.

So far over \$50k has been donated and we have begun to funnel it through the necessary channels to turn it into a school here in Honduras. This money will complete Phase 1, which is the current structure. When we get the matching \$25,000 it will start the second phase which will be a structure that connects to the current building. This next Phase will be four classrooms. One of the new rooms will be a computer lab and the other a science lab. The remaining two rooms will be auxiliary classrooms which will be utilized for whatever we need (music, art, science lab...).

As we are preparing to return on furlough, I have speaking engagements at several different churches. Some on Sunday morning and others will be in a much more relaxed environment. Having money to complete Phase 1 and begin Phase 2 will free us up to search for new sponsors, which is the biggest and reoccurring need. Thanks for everything you do and your continued support.



The South Campus looking out towards the primary school in late November.

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Website: www.jardindegracia.com - follow us on Facebook too!

Thank you!



Kindergarten graduation 2019

The end of the school year happens in November in Honduras. After graduation, approximately 90% of our students will join their parents in picking coffee in the fields around the village. They work alongside their neighbors and extended family plucking the little red coffee berries off of the shrubby bushes. Most families in our community use the money that they make picking coffee to last all year. Thankfully, the 100 families that we serve don't have to worry about their children's education.

Jardin de Gracia is a free school. The families pay nothing for their child's education, but the parents do have the responsibility of volunteering at the school a few times a year. The parents and community believe in what we are doing and they each play an important part. If we didn't have parent help, we wouldn't be nearly as successful. The donations that you give make up all the rest. We know it is a sacrifice. We are very aware that there are so many other organizations vying for your money and prayers. Thank you for believing in what is happening at Jardin de Gracia and choosing to be a part of God's plan for these children. We hope you like what you see happening at the school.

December 2019, Jardín de Gracia