

New Sponsors

We are looking for new sponsors both to help existing students who have lost their sponsor and to pick up new students once we have all the current students covered. Students are sponsored by Rotarians, friends and Rotary Clubs. If a long term commitment is not possible "one time" donations are also a great help.

Current Club Projects

- Becas Scholarship Program
- Community Education Program in the community of Volcanes which provides students additional classes in English, computers, reading and other subjects
- Feeding of the women and children in the area of the Puerto Vallarta garbage dump every Monday
- UNIVA Orchestra music program
- Medical assistance for poor families including our eye surgery program and the provision of prescription glasses to children
- Providing clean safe drinking water to communities around Puerto Vallarta through the "Filters for Families" program and the installation of larger water purification systems
- Pasitos de Luz - support for a facility looking after children with disabilities
- Support for Drug and Alcohol rehab centre for youth
- Financial support of families of Children with Cancer
- and many other community projects

If you are interested in sponsoring a student or would like more information please **contact club members** at the e-mail addresses on the front of this brochure.

Annual Becas Scholarship amounts:

Secundaria: \$250 USD
(Middle School)

Preparatoria: \$300 USD
(High School)

University: \$350 USD



The Rotary Club Puerto Vallarta Sur meets **every Thursday morning at 9:00 in the Marriott Puerto Vallarta Hotel** located in the Marina area of Puerto Vallarta.



PROGRAMA DE BECAS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



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Programa de Becas Scholarship Program



The purpose of **Programa de Becas** is to provide the children of very poor families in the Puerto Vallarta area with the chance of a good education thus enabling them to have a better standard of living than has been available to most of their families.

The program began in 1996 when members of Club Rotario Puerto Vallarta Sur noticed that many bright young students were dropping out of school at age 12 after completing grade 6. In Mexico, at that time, it was mandatory that children attend school up to age 12 and many of the poor families could not afford to have their children remain in school past that age. If the children were not in school they could be out earning a little bit of money to help support the family and, even if they could not earn money, the family was not burdened with the costs of having the children attend school.

The program started with 10 members of Club Rotario Puerto Vallarta Sur sponsoring 10 poor students going into Secundaria (grade 7) who would otherwise have had to drop out.



In 1997 it was suggested the Club approach visiting Rotarians and ask for assistance supporting students of the Programa de Becas and the results were overwhelming. Eighteen members of one Club in southern California offered to sponsor students and the program has just grown from there.

We now have more than 500 students sponsored by friends and Rotarians from Mexico, Canada, and the USA. Students are now sponsored through to the end of University.

To be eligible to receive a scholarship under the Programa de Becas, the student must remain in school full time and maintain a grade point average of a minimum of 8.5 out of 10. Student qualifications are assessed each year.

Due to the current economic climate we are running into a problem for the future of the program. Some of our sponsors have had to drop out of the program and we now have a number of students who have been in the program, but are now without sponsors. In addition, more students have been identified who qualify for the program, and there is a waiting list of approximately 150 students. As a result we are continually looking for new sponsors.

Funds are intended for the purchase of school uniforms and footwear, text books, school supplies and the payment of school related fees. The requested amounts do not cover all the student's expenses but, in most cases, it is enough to allow the family to keep the child in school. A number of sponsors do give their student extra money every year to assist with school related expenses.

When a sponsor joins the program, a specific student is assigned and the sponsor and student are "paired" for as long as they both remain in the program. The sponsor will receive a student profile with a photo, a brief account of the student's current situation and how he/she is doing in school, along with a Thank You letter written by the student to the sponsor.

The program has seen many students graduate University. Some of the University graduates would never have continued past grade 6 without financial assistance and, in some cases, encouragement provided by their sponsors. When a sponsor visits Puerto Vallarta every effort will be made by the Club to arrange a meeting between the sponsor and student. A number of close relationships have developed between sponsors and students in situations where Sponsors visit on a regular basis.