

A Gentle Giant Dearly Missed

I first witnessed Matthew's heart for missions when he dropped by my history class. A student, whose family had recently returned from an orphanage in Haiti, was discerning whether or not she was capable of organizing teams to return. Matthew spontaneously aided confirmation by giving her the first donation. Since then, she has brought many to serve there.

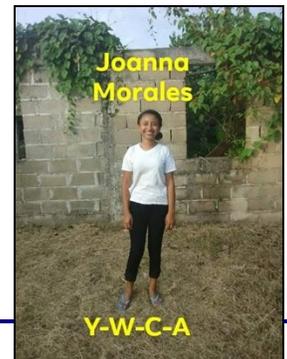
In the early days of IHF, Matthew joined up with a rough and ready bunch to spend March break in the Belizean jungle putting in the foundations of our main building. Their primitive accommodations were hammocks strung up in a dirt floor cabaña with no protective walls. The bathroom was a palm branch lean-to with a rickety bench straddled over a pit. When the team first arrived in the dead of night, scorpions rained down from the thatch. Undaunted, they chopped them up with machetes and continued with setting up camp.

One of my fondest memories was watching him playfully horsing around with a young boy at an orphanage. When leaving, he held onto Matthew refusing to let him go. It revealed how wonderfully the Lord knitted together this gentle giant.

Tragically, at the young age of 23, Matthew passed away from Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy leaving family, friends, and co-workers devastated. November sixth was the third anniversary of his parting. His dear mother reflects: "I had the privilege of being his parent. I hope in life you realize how 'genuine' Matthew was. He truly loved life and realized what he had in life." She shares two of his favorite songs (In Christ Alone / You Raise Me Up) played at his emotionally, packed funeral.

In loving memory, his parents blessed IHF with an education scholarship. The first recipient is Joanna, a promising young girl from our village who is now able to afford taking courses at the YWCA Education Center to earn certification in tourism.

Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Walker, for making her wildest dreams a firm reality.



Maximizing to Full Potential!

Surrounded by pristine jungle covered Maya Mountains, all would agree that Loforna is a precious gift from God. Besides natural beauty, it serves well in accommodating guests, teaching trade skills, hosting youth retreats, community workshops, and harvesting produce.

That said, to realize even greater potential, we face two major infrastructure costs.

Charging Up

Belize Hydro recently installed power lines down our stretch of the Hummingbird Highway giving opportunity for reliable and abundant power to replace limited solar power caused by overcast skies and aging equipment. By hooking up, new trade skills programs requiring more power plus enhancing base security would become possible. Capital Cost: \$5,000 CDN (plans/permits, meter box, laneway telephone poles and wire, building upgrades)

Spring Forth

At present, our water is collected by roof and stored in large tanks. Shortages due to extended dry seasons necessitates increased trucking it up from rivers. After three futile attempts at digging wells, our only option is drilling to deeper depths.

Capital Cost: \$4,000 CDN (drilling, pipes, pump, building hook up)

When considering year-end donations, we would so appreciate your support in completing these necessary upgrades.

Cheque: In His Footprints IHF, 49 Marvin Avenue, Brantford, Ontario N3S 3C3
 Online: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/> (In His Footprints Ministries)

(All CDN donations will be issued charitable receipts for tax purposes.)



Dreams Do Come True!

In March 2018, In His Footprints initiated a new outreach that God has greatly blessed. Twelve youth from our village have received scholarships to continue with post elementary education. Ten are enrolled in Belmopan high schools, one at the YWCA Education Centre, and another at the Cayo Education Training Centre. Due to insufficient government funding, post elementary education is well beyond their families affordability.

This opportunity is a natural fit for what we are endeavoring to do. All recipients are graduates of our trade skills programs. While attending, our Belize board selectively chose those that demonstrated a strong learning desire, respect for authority, faithful attendance, Christian maturity and their family's financial situation.

Let us introduce you to one of them:

Carlos is a fine, Christian Mayan youth who is the eldest of eight children They live in a board sided, thatched roof house in the back reaches of the village where there are no roads, electricity or running water. His father labors hard as a subsistent farmer growing corn and beans on a cleared patch in the surrounding jungle.

Showing great potential in grade school, the vice principal highly recommended him for our trade skills programs. He has taken welding, carpentry and small engine repairs and now volunteers as a teaching assistant.

At age seventeen, he has just begun his first year of high school. Besides making new friends, he thoroughly enjoys all classes and loves his teachers. Having recently completed his mid term exams with high marks, he is off to an excellent start in fulfilling his lifelong dream of starting his own business.

Through a generous donor, he is the very first in his ancestral line to ever receive such a blessed opportunity.



Welcome to Our Neighborhood!

Four images remain from when I first passed through Armenia on a warm evening in 2007...a fiery pastor preaching up a storm under the stars; women and children watching a small television under a thatched cabaña; young people socializing along the sides of the road; a well lit soccer fields bursting with life. It was love at first sight.

In the early 1990's, a few hundred Guatemalan, El Salvadorian, and Honduran refugees escaping the ravages of civil war in their homelands began clearing jungle along the Hummingbird Highway. Mopan and K'ekchi Mayans also moved to the area from southern Belize looking for work.



Seeking orderly growth, the government set aside one thousand acres with strict orders not to exceed its boundaries. This was ignored as new arrivals continue pushing further back into the hills to build homes.

With population nearing three thousand, Armenia now has twelve churches, five small grocery stores, a community centre, an understaffed clinic and police station, and an exploding grade school. Severely lacking secure jobs, many are subsistent farmers, seasonal fruit pickers and tour guides, or simply without work. Due to a lack of government funding, post elementary education is unaffordable resulting in premature marriages and families.

That said, the people love their village because, compared to what they fled, it is has a good community spirit and is peaceful and safe. Being the only ministry with bricks and mortar in the ground, we are so thankful that God has made Armenia our home to take steps of faith in Him to inspire hope for our village youth.

We thank you all for your prayers and support in making that possible.



Taking Steps of Hope to Inspire Faith!