

Dr. Ellen Coburn  
4303 West 10<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Vancouver, BC V6R 2H6

November 30, 2010

Dear friends,

As we approach a new year, I wanted to let you know about some exciting progress in the Mayan Health and Education Project. Our project, which began ten years ago as a vision by members of the Mayan Refugee Society of British Columbia, has achieved several important milestones in its efforts to improve the health and education standards of indigenous people in a remote part of Guatemala.

In 2005, we completed development of a bilingual junior high school in the Huixoc, giving the village's children—for the first time—the chance to advance their education beyond Grade 6. This year, a third group of students completed the basic curriculum and are ready to graduate from junior high school. Most of our graduates have continued their education. I have visited many of them in high schools from Huehuetenango to La Democracia.

Our project continues to work closely with the parents, teachers, and community elders on our shared goals, giving Huixoc's children a chance to escape the cycle of poverty and discrimination that has hampered the progress of Mayan people for generations. One future objective is to improve students' opportunities for computer skills training. During a trip to Guatemala earlier this year, I arranged for a computer expert to set up internet access at the school. The community planning committee now hopes to build a computer lab to secure the school's computers and possibly to open a youth-friendly internet café. This accomplishment would require purchase or lease of a piece of land.

We've also undertaken a change in the project's administration. For the past decade, financial accounting for the Mayan Health and Education Project has been managed by the West Point Grey United Church in Vancouver, enabling us to provide charitable tax receipts to donors. We will be ever grateful to the church for administrative assistance to the project since its humble beginnings, and to the church's members for their support.

As a result of our project's growth, as well as changes in Canadian government regulations for charitable organizations outside Canada, the Mayan Health and Education Project will now be managed under the umbrella of Rose Charities. This move broadens the potential scope of our project through affiliation with an

Mayan Health and Education Project  
Tel: (604) 224-1355 Fax: (604) 224-0179  
Email: [ellen@mayanproject.org](mailto:ellen@mayanproject.org)  
[www.mayanproject.org](http://www.mayanproject.org)

international organization with extensive experience supporting innovative, self-sustaining projects and partnerships in many countries.

Rose Charities does not charge an administration fee for donations. In exchange for administrative management, it requires member projects to reserve a small amount (approximately 3%) of their funding for financial emergencies of any of its projects. While use of this fund this has to date never been necessary, it provides a safety net for our Mayan Project as well as other Rose Charities partners.

I am excited about the opportunity to learn from Rose Charities projects in Africa and Asia that face many of the same challenges encountered in Guatemala. We will all benefit from each other's experience and wisdom.

I have learned a great deal from my many trips to Guatemala, working first on medical aid projects and then on efforts to expand options for education. The fate of the Mayan people there has become personally very important to me, and I appreciate your ongoing support and interest.

Tax deductible donations can be made on-line at  
[www.rosecanada.info/donate/](http://www.rosecanada.info/donate/)

Tax deductible donations by cheque must now be made out to Rose Charities, specifying the Mayan Project on the bottom line, and mailed to:

**Rose Charities**  
**1870 Ogden Ave.**  
**Vancouver, B.C., V6J 1B3**

I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have about the project. Please have a look at our website: [www.mayanproject.org](http://www.mayanproject.org) or feel free to contact me by email: [ellen@mayanproject.org](mailto:ellen@mayanproject.org)

We will be sending you information about a Mayan Cultural evening planned for early 2011. I hope to see you there!

With best wishes for the holiday season,

Ellen Coburn