

Dear Friends,

We at the Arlington-Teosinte Sister City Project are writing to you during our annual membership drive. The town council of Teosinte has established education as its number one priority and has asked Arlington for help in raising money for student scholarships. We hope that you will become a member of the Arlington-Teosinte Sister City Project today (see enclosed Amigo/Amiga form). Your tax-deductible donation will help young people in Teosinte to afford a high school or university education.

Arlington has maintained a partnership with Teosinte, El Salvador, since 1988, when the village was resettled by refugees of the Salvadoran Civil War. Currently, there are 19 high school students and 20 university students in Teosinte who are hoping to receive scholarships with Arlington's support. Teosinte, like most of El Salvador, is extremely poor, and most families simply cannot provide their children with the necessary funds without help.

"I am ready to pursue my career despite all of the obstacles I face. I want to become a person who can serve my community and my country. ...I have many dreams. ...You have contributed so much to my academic development, and I thank you from my heart."

- Omar Mejio Alas, Business Administration student and scholarship recipient

Children in Teosinte attend their village school for free through 9th grade. In order to obtain a high school degree, they must travel to a larger neighboring community. This incredible commitment to education requires a 30-minute commute each way over rutted dirt roads on the back of a pick-up truck, as well as money for transportation, tuition, books and school supplies. Many students wish to continue their studies at university in the capital city. They face similar challenges in finding the means to pay for tuition, books, supplies and living accommodations.

The reality for the youth of Teosinte today is that without at least a high school degree there is no chance of finding a job in their country. Because of extremely high unemployment and poverty, five hundred people a day leave El Salvador to seek work in the U.S. But there is hope. In 1988, the highest grade level achieved in Teosinte was 3rd grade. Last year, two of Teosinte's youths graduated from university, one as a lawyer and one as a nurse. They have returned to Teosinte to invest their time, energy and education back in their community. The people of Teosinte are extremely proud of them, and energized by their success.

It is only with the commitment of supporters like you that we are able to help Teosinte's young people follow this path. Consider these numbers:

- \$45 will pay for a high school student's supplies for one year.
- \$90 will pay for a university student's books for one year.
- \$400 will pay for a university student's shared housing for one year.

We appreciate your partnership in supporting the youth of our sister city and hope you will give them your generous support. Please return the enclosed form with your gift today.

Thank you,

The Arlington-Teosinte Sister City Project Planning Committee