

Project Honduras

Once a year, in late January, 6 Rotarians from District 5080 travel to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, at their own expense, to visit "the kids" in the Market Children Program. They take pictures of the children, which then are included on the Certificates of Appreciation, which are given to the sponsoring Rotarians in District 5080, 5060, 5040, 5050, 5020 and 5010.

Lourdes is one of "the kids".

Name: Lourdes Zulema Sosa Palma
Age: 11 year
Grade: 4th
Time in the Program: 5 years



When we first met Lourdes, she visited with us while we were taking photos. She spent many hours hanging around, sitting on our knees, playing with our hair (not brown; a novelty) and getting hugs and lots of attention. She worked her way into our hearts.

As we visited the program over five years, we saw Lourdes grow and develop each year. This year she wrote us a letter so now we know why she wants those hugs and attention.



2005

Lourdes comes from a large family of which she is the second youngest of 10 children. Her family includes, Juan Carlos, 13; Jony, 9; Zulema, 22; Ismael, 16, Carlos, 15; Araceli, 25; Rosibel, 24; Jenny, 22.

Eighteen people live in her house which is made of wood and has a concrete floor. In the house there are 5 beds and she must share her bed with two sisters. She has very good relations with her mother and her stepfather. Her mother works in the market, and her stepfather has a heart condition that does not allow him to work. Lourdes is prohibited from talking to her grandmother, and does not know her birthfather.

Lourdes has participated in "The Program" since she was small, and likes to talk to the teachers. She has learned many things, including washing her hands before she has her afternoon snack. When she turned 10, she learned about the rights of children, the importance of family and the changes that an adolescent faces. They are also taught the importance of "The Program", and she hopes she can be in it for many years and thanks God for the help and opportunity. She would also like to see all the children from the market in the program.



2007

Her dream is be a teacher, to move to another neighborhood, own her own house, live peacefully, and become a youth leader.

Lourdes is just one of many children in the market with huge dreams and aspirations. Thanks to the Market Children Program, most of the children will be able to obtain their dreams.

The Program offers education to children from Kindergarten through University. The school system in Honduras is free, including public university, but without the financial means to purchase uniforms, shoes, and the necessary school supplies, the children wouldn't be able to attend school, without the support provided by the Program.



Costs vary, depending on many circumstances but sponsorship for market children has been set at \$80 for Primary School, \$220 for secondary school and \$350 for technical school and University.

The program is run by a Rotary controlled NGO called Alternativas Y Oportunidades (AYO), who with funding from other sources, operates a free medical clinic, provides counselling for the children, parenting clases, sporting and artistic

opportunities.

The Market Children Program is like a Family with 1900 children, their parents and siblings.

2008

It is making a difference in Tegucigalpa.

