



# GLOBAL SHORE

## O P P O R T U N I T I E S

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TRANSFORMING GUATEMALA THROUGH CHRIST-CENTERED EDUCATION

Our mission is to transform Guatemala through Christ-centred education, but this mission is only possible if we have quality teachers. Without staff who believe in our vision, we can't influence our students. Alex Calí is one of our staff members who lives out this vision, transforming student lives at our school. But when Alex first came to our high school as a student in Grade 10, he was in a very different place.

"When Alex first walked into the office for his interview, our first reaction was: 'This is going to be a great story.'" Julianna Konrad de Pelaez, our Executive Director in Guatemala, remembers when Alex came to our school. "He had dropped out of his other school after middle school and worked for a year. You could tell he needed Christ, and that he wanted to go deeper. But the adjustment was really hard for him."

Alex remembered lots of highs and lots of lows from middle school. "As soon as I got there, all my friends would come over to me, because I was the life of the party... but there wasn't a day that I wasn't in the principal's office. I failed lots of classes and moved schools a lot."

"Before I came to CCAF, I stopped studying for a full year. I didn't know what to do with my life. I didn't study, and I didn't have any hope that I would go back to school, either."

But after his interview, Alex joined the brand-new high school program in January 2016. "My first day was a radical experience. I saw all those kids running

to get to class and I had the same feeling. I wanted to run in too."

Alex knew that he had a second chance at CCAF, but it wasn't easy. "I was always in the office here, too," Alex remembered. He missed handing in homework, or got in trouble with the teacher, repeating what had happened in middle school. But Alex managed to finish high school, and soon afterwards, the seeds that were planted in his heart started to grow.





“Shortly after graduation, Alex got married,” Julianna remembers. “Something happened at his wedding. He sat there, weeping, and we knew that the Lord was doing something. Something shifted in him.”

It was when Alex’s bride walked into their wedding ceremony that something powerful happened. “That moment is etched into my memory,” Alex told us. “The sun lit her up and I thought: ‘Am I really here? Or is this a dream?’ Tears started to flow and I didn’t know if I should kneel, give thanks to God, or ask forgiveness for everything I’d ever done. It was a blessing so undeserved that I knew that God is good. That day I was sure of the love that He has for me.”

Alex experienced a transformation that day, and the change was evident in his life — such that when our ministry was looking for a PE teacher the next year, it was obvious who they should hire.

“We saw him doing all these things,” Julianna said. “He was working with kids in his community, and he wanted them to know Christ. That was it. He had what we wanted our staff to have. And we knew that he was going to engage his students because he’d been a student here. He’d walked that path. He’d succeeded here and had lots of difficulties here, and he knows what it’s like to come out on the other side.”

Alex was nervous about returning to his school as a teacher. How should he address his former teachers? Would the students respect him? Would they listen? Quickly, he found his fears unfounded.

“I had been here two weeks and the kids would throw themselves at me, hugging me,” Alex said. “The middle school students respected me too, calling me ‘Teacher.’ It was something really special: the affection, this sensation.... You can’t explain it, but it’s the best thing you can feel.”

Not only did Alex win the affection of his students, but with support in his first year, he quickly became a skilled teacher in the vision of our school. “One of my favourite things to do is walk out to the soccer field and see him sitting with his class,” Julianna shared. “He sits them down and speaks to them about the Lord before they start class. He really takes that time to pour into their lives with whatever it is that the Lord puts on his heart.”



“He knows what they’re going through, and he’s right on board with the vision. He’s pouring into students’ lives the way he was poured into.”

“Being able to gain their confidence, to be able to help them so they could get out of a bad situation... that’s my purpose here.”

Alex went from the student being sent to the office to the teacher students can confide in. The work that God did in Alex’s life is the same work he’s doing in students’ lives every day at our school — and that’s what we believe is going to transform Guatemala.



Watch the video, **Alex’s Journey**, at: [globalshore.org](http://globalshore.org)

# The gift that multiplies

BY CATHY PENELTON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GSO CANADA

2020 has been a didn't-see-THAT-coming kind of year. Like many of you, we had to make big changes in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our student instruction moved online. Our graduation was performed one student at a time. Fundraising events moved online, and our sponsors gave generously to a grocery relief program that sent 75 grocery gift cards to families in need. This year was so different from what we expected, **but through your generosity, we continued to see God's hand at work**, transforming lives through Christ-centred education in Guatemala.



*Parents were allowed to join our graduates for their special moment.*

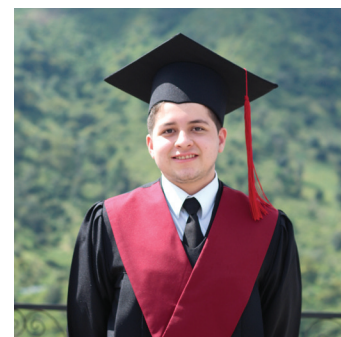
Alex's story reminds me that NOTHING is impossible with God. His transforming power is at work, even when things seem impossible. This has happened time and again at CCAF, and **we believe it's happening again right now**. In these strange times, God is in the process of answering our prayers: **we are just a couple weeks away from government approval to open a new high school Pre-Primary Education stream!** It's been our dream since the very beginning that students who receive a transformative education here could go on to teach in that vision of Christ-centred education. As we leave the tumult of 2020, we're praying this approval would come — and come quickly — so we can start multiplying our influence through training new teachers.

**There is no better time to give to our vision of a transformed Guatemala.** Teachers like Alex are transforming the lives of our students, and we believe that soon we will see more and more teachers trained and sent out from our school. We're seeking \$65,000 in year-end gifts — and matching donors who believe in this ministry have committed \$30,000 towards this goal! **When you give this holiday season, your gift will be doubled** through matching donations — and that gift will multiply through the impact of our graduates in their communities throughout Guatemala.

**WOULD YOU GIVE A GIFT THAT MULTIPLIES  
TO TRANSFORM GUATEMALA?**



*Graduates came individually to the school to receive their diplomas.*







# GLOBALSHORE

OPPORTUNITIES

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