



# GLOBALSHORE

OPPORTUNITIES

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TRANSFORMING GUATEMALA THROUGH CHRIST-CENTERED EDUCATION

## TAKING PASTORAL CARE INTO HOMES

As the months have passed in Guatemala, students are still at home. Teachers come to the school each week to film videos, make worksheets, host Zoom classes and connect with parents. Coronavirus numbers in Guatemala continue to fluctuate, and it's unclear when something will change.

Through the year, our school pastor, Jervin Ruano, has found new ways to connect with and encourage our students. One or two families at a time, Pastor Jervin has visited about half of our students "We've visited families that have had COVID," he shared. "Families where they've lost someone to COVID."

A recent Thursday in April, Pastor Jervin went to visit a family in Jocotenango, bringing along the students' teachers. After finding parking, they asked for directions to *Helados Juanitas* ("Juanita's Ice Cream"). Like many doors on the street in Guatemala, the door to *Helados Juanitas* opens up to a long alleyway with parked motorcycles, two stories of apartments and the entrance to *Helados Juanitas*, next to a non-functioning deep freeze.

Halfway down the alley, Pastor Jervin found the Vásquez family's apartment. Inside was Anderson (Grade 1), Jesarela (Grade 9), their father Bryan and grandmother. Anderson's face lit up when he saw Pastor Jervin, and the school staff (still masked) were seated in the living room and offered juice.

After dozens of these visits, Jervin now has a comfortable routine. Following small talk about the family (both Jesarela and Anderson have grown since they were last at the school, their mother is working and couldn't be there), Jervin invited the students to pull out their Bibles and asked if he could share something with them. "We came to encourage you and to pray for you, too," he said.

"God put on my heart the importance of deactivating discouragement. This new way of living, with isolation and new habits, can be discouraging. I was really discouraged when the pandemic started. And at the start of this year, we thought school would open up to in-person classes. When that didn't happen, I became really discouraged. Our children had school uniforms that fit, and now they don't fit anymore."

"The enemy is always ready to discourage you, to keep you from trusting in the Lord. But be encouraged, in the name of the Lord."

*(continued on page 3)*



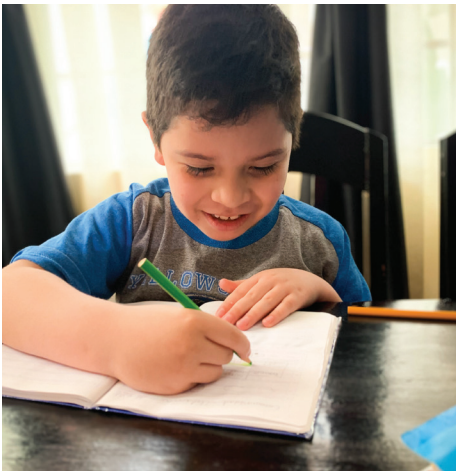
*The alleyway entrance to the Vásquez family apartment*



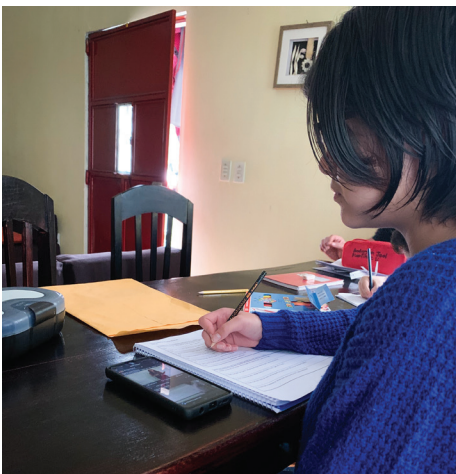
VISION  
NIGHT 2021  
**ONE HOPE**

MINISTRY UPDATES  
TESTIMONIES OF GOD'S WORK  
JUNE 10 | 8:00 EST  
[globalshore.org/vision2021](https://globalshore.org/vision2021)





Anderson, above, works on Social Studies; Jesarela, below, watches a video from her English teacher, Ms. Pasma



Pastor Jervin shared some encouraging verses, and exhorted Jesarela and Anderson to take care of their hearts, even through difficult times. “We need to be careful with what we let into our hearts and minds, because there are things that can discourage us. For example, take care when you’re around people who complain a lot.”

“Discouragement can lead us to speak poorly of God and our leaders. On social media, people have lost their patience and spoken poorly about their leaders. This division is what the enemy wants. But God takes discouragement really seriously. Be encouraged in the powerful name of Jesus!”

Pastor Jervin then asked the family to share. Jesarela and Anderson talked about their studies, how they’ve been able to watch lessons and do their schoolwork. Then, their father Bryan leaned forward and started to share.

Bryan works as an emergency room nurse at the military hospital in the capital, and his wife works as a nurse at the public hospital in Antigua. They both continued working through lockdown. “I remember when I was a child there used to be army curfews, but it’s been so long since we had a curfew,” Bryan said.

There’s a COVID wing at the military hospital, and at the government hospital where Bryan’s wife works, the COVID wing is completely full. “There’s a lot of cases throughout the city, too,” he explained. “I heard the Minister of Education wants to start classes again, but with the new variants it seems really unlikely.”

The Guatemalan government recently issued a statement exhorting the population to follow restrictions. More municipalities are in “red” in the traffic light system, with higher COVID numbers. Several critical care units throughout the country are completely full, and some hospitals are struggling to maintain care.

Vaccination has been slow to start. As nurses, both Bryan and his wife have been vaccinated, but are still taking precautions. “It seems like the virus is here to stay,” Bryan observed.

Pastor Jervin prayed a blessing for the family before he left: that God would care for Bryan and his wife at work, that God would bless Jesarela and Anderson in

their schoolwork and that discouragement would leave their home in Jesus’ name.

The staff made their goodbyes (mostly waves with one quick hug of the students) and wove their way back between the motos and the deep freeze out onto the street. Before they drove away, Bryan came out to the street, masked: he’d forgotten to ask Anderson’s teacher about how many folders they needed for the homework—three, one for each teacher—and what color they needed to be—any color.



The Vásquez family in their living room

The next day, a Friday, the staff were back at school, preparing for the next week. Bryan came with Jesarela to hand in the students’ homework. He waited in line with the other parents, handed in homework (in three folders) and received new work packages for the following week, while Jesarela stood nearby with another Grade 9 student, taking advantage of one of the few times she would see her classmates. Before long, the teachers were filming new instructional videos, and the family back in their house, starting another week of schoolwork from home. Amidst the discouragement and blessings, with increasing calls to open schools and various hospitals at COVID capacity, this new rhythm of life shows no signs of change. //

## OUR HOPE IS IN CHRIST

The gates to our school have been closed to students for over a year, now. We're praying that we could come back to classes, that once again North American teams could come and join in our ministry, but we still don't know when this season will end.

But our hope is not in the return of our students, in a return to "normal". **Our hope is in Christ and His promises, in His presence and His guiding hand.**

With canceled donations, groups and fundraisers, we find ourselves at a financial loss again this year. We've launched new fundraisers and connected with donors, but we are still facing a projected loss of \$50,000. God has provided for us time and again through the generosity of our friends, donors, sponsors, summer program alumni and trip participants.

**Would you give towards our mid-year need of \$50,000?**

**We know that God is good even in this season. We know that He will make a way for us, and for you, too.** Our campaign will launch at our annual Vision Night on June 10th. We hope you'll join us to hear about our year so far and the work that God has been doing in our midst. We're including some of your stories, too, and are looking forward to an encouraging time together!

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