

Guatemalan Middle School Scholarship Recipients
10/23/02

Yolanda Tacatic Josal

Yolanda is 14 years old and a second year student at the Básico Level of education (Básico is a 3 year program equivalent to middle school). Her school is called the Instituto Mixto de Educación Básica Cooperativo, and it is about a 30 minute walk away in the neighboring village of Bola de Oro. She comes from the village of Cerro Alto which is in the Department of Chimaltenango, Guatemala. Her birthday is May 20th.

At school, Yolanda likes studying English and science. She would love to become a doctor someday. Extra curricular activities she enjoys are basketball and soccer. During her interview, I commented on her lovely pink blouse. She told me she made it herself and that she enjoys sewing very much. Her favorite color is red. When asked what she would be doing during school vacation time, she looked over at her mother and they both laughed. Her mother, Alicia Josal Velázquez nodded and said, “Of course she’ll help me with the children”.

Denis Orlando Set Yancos

Denis is a serious 14 year old boy from the village of Bola de Oro, Department of Chimaltenango, Guatemala. He attends the middle school called the Instituto Mixto de Educación Básica Cooperativo. He lives at home with his 4 brothers and 4 sisters and spends much of his time helping out there. He helps to plant tomatoes and prepare chickens for market. He doesn’t seem to enjoy the plucking job as it stains the skin of his fingers and this embarrasses him. He did not want to shake my hand because of this.

At school, Denis enjoys studying English and science, but unlike Yolanda, he hopes to become a mechanic like his uncle. He says that his uncle has been able to help pay some of his “incidentals” fees at school, but there are other children in the family who also wish to attend school someday. Although tuition is free in Guatemala’s public schools, one cannot attend if they cannot cover the cost of uniforms and school supplies. He is very grateful to have gotten this far in his education, and hopes to be able to finish Básico (middle school) and then become a certified mechanic.

Denis likes the color red, and his birthday is September 14th.