Dear Friends,

Reflecting on our work in 2016, I have seen a year of growth and reinforced confidence for the programs, leadership and opportunities presented by Riecken Community Libraries. They are the hard-earned results of years of effort.

In both Honduras and Guatemala, we have strengthened critical library network infrastructure that will keep us moving forward. Libraries have taken on more self-government and management of their processes – demonstrating leadership development at its best.

High-value programs offered through the libraries that benefit entire communities have evolved into highly regarded models for the region. One example, our early childhood and nutrition program, is considered by development experts as the benchmark to strive for throughout Honduras.

Our organization has itself evolved, with stronger operational processes and institutional capacity. This has enabled us to acquire more, larger institutional partners such as IDB/Government of Japan and USAID/ASHA (Association of Schools and Hospitals Abroad). The opportunities we can create for the communities we serve are significantly greater with this support.

Despite strong program funding, Riecken Community Libraries faces the on-going struggle — as do many non-profits and NGOs — to finance basic operations and administration. We are actively using available resources and tools to help identify, nurture and secure unrestricted funding opportunities so that program investments can deliver the highest possible return to our communities.

The strength of the Riecken Community Library Model (see chart below) underlies the success of 65 Riecken libraries in Honduras and Guatemala. It is what makes us uniquely positioned to thrive in today’s world, and that of tomorrow.

William Cartwright  
President  
Riecken Community Libraries
RIECKEN COMMUNITY LIBRARIES

CHANGING LIVES FOR CENTRAL AMERICA’S RURAL POOR THROUGH COMMUNITY LIBRARIES THAT ARE OPEN AND FREE TO ALL

2016
BY THE NUMBERS

65
Community Libraries

372,862
Library Users

7,785
Active Volunteers

THE RIECKEN NETWORK IN HONDURAS

53
Libraries

286,266
Library Users

6,952
Local Volunteers

THE RIECKEN NETWORK IN GUATEMALA

12
Libraries

85,596
Library Users

833
Local Volunteers

Creating Community

Building Healthy Families

Empowering Women and Youth

Preserving Tradition for Future Generations

Creating Economic Opportunities

Creating Community

Developing Leadership and Capacity

Augmenting Public Education

Promoting Sustainable Self-Government

Creating Community

Building Healthy Families

Empowering Women and Youth

Preserving Tradition for Future Generations

Creating Economic Opportunities

Creating Community

Building Healthy Families

Empowering Women and Youth

Preserving Tradition for Future Generations

Creating Economic Opportunities
COMMUNITIES FACING CHALLENGE

The population of a Riecken Library community is composed mostly of subsistence farmers, growing corn, occasionally coffee or other crops, on small family plots.

- Many people are indigenous, members of racial and cultural groups historically excluded from access to higher education and high-paying jobs.
- Six out of ten families earn the equivalent of less than 100 dollars a month. Homes are often simple square structures with a dirt floor and an outhouse.
- Water is provided either directly from a nearby stream or from a well.
- Many of the outlying villages served by the central library do not yet have electricity.

Each Riecken Community Library serves all ages, from infants to the third generation, and its functions vary from Internet searches for school projects to reading programs to health education. Often our libraries are converted temporarily into clinics for vaccinations or other health services provided by visiting health brigades.

In Guatemala and Honduras, the public educational day is divided, so afternoon students might use the library in the morning and morning students in the afternoon. Teachers use the library to prepare lessons.

Being dynamic and responsive to each community’s needs, a Riecken library tailors services to its community and is open on weekdays typically serving 100 daily, or nearly 400,000 users, over 80% of which are school age children.
8 AM  The librarian, or in some cases a pair of librarians, opens the doors. The first students arrive, some finishing last minute details on homework, others using the Internet, if it is working, or reference books to complete school projects.

9 AM  Story time for preschoolers is a time for the librarian to demonstrate the power of communicating the written word to young children, who sit in a circle and are encouraged to ask questions to clarify themes and storylines. Books include some written and illustrated by local people, published with the help of the Riecken Foundation, with topics important to the community.

In a separate room a group of new mothers and their infants are gathered to learn how to care for their new children with an early childhood development and nutrition program.

10 AM  Indigenous elders — the “third generation” — arrive and use one of the spaces to tell stories and legends of the community to indigenous children. In some communities, young people have learned through these stories the locations of culturally significant landmarks and have mapped the locations, marking their GPS coordinates.

11 AM  Teachers from public schools prepare lessons for afternoon classes. Young people read, socialize, and browse the Internet.

NOON  At least five community volunteers help a crowd of students access reference materials and help apportion computer access.

1 PM  After the mid-day rush of students subsides, a clinic is set up. Today it is a screening clinic for people with vision problems. Some will be given prescription glasses or reading glasses; others with more serious problems such as cataracts, will be referred to a mobile surgery clinic that may operate twice a month.

3 PM  The board room is in use, reserved today by a group of local coffee farmers who are discussing improvement in access to markets. Also at this time the youth book club gathers around donated kindles to read and discuss the book of the week.

4 PM  The library’s youth group, young people from ages 12 to 18, is refining teaching points for its technology project on internet safety for children and young people.

5 PM  Students are doing homework. The librarian asks students to start wrapping up their work.

The local volunteer board, the junta directiva, meets to discuss issues impacting programs and projects, such as an offer from the Riecken Foundation to bring in two externally-funded projects that would expand the early childhood development and nutrition program, and focus on educating teachers on how to instill in children a lifelong love of reading.

Children and library volunteers help the librarian clean the library.

6 PM  Library doors close for the day.
KEY ACHIEVEMENT

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

The 2016 Honduras and Guatemala library associations, made up of and run by community volunteers, saw strengthened participation in general, and a significant increase in the role taken on by women. The networking provided by the associations goes beyond sustaining and evolving the libraries they serve, as they have become critical players in resolving community issues of all kinds.

The Honduran association, ARBICOH, started in 2006, today has 53 delegates, plus regional representation and a governing board. Riecken Foundation is not a voting member.

In Guatemala, after just two years in existence, the library association, ABITS, has legal standing, 12 delegates on a governing board and 6200 volunteers supporting it.

We watch proudly as both associations have gained firmer footing on their paths to self-determination. Setting their own organizational agendas, managing complex projects, and handling elections have been the responsibilities of ARBICOH and ABITS, and recently two key functions — logistics/coordination and reporting on project results were turned over to them. A productive annual meeting in December, paid for by the Inter Development Bank, gave further confirmation of the financing needed for additional strengthening of these leadership skills.

“The Riecken Guatemalan Community Library Association (ABITS) is a great support for the libraries in Guatemala. It is an institution that foments trust and can offer answers to concrete problems. Perhaps other institutions can offer economic support, but ABITS was also created to position the community libraries as true development actors. We all speak the same language as the libraries and we best understand their problems.”

Isabel René Santos
Governing Volunteer Board Officer
Guatemala Innovative Libraries Association
Weaving Knowledge (ABITS)
KEY ACHIEVEMENT

AN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT & NUTRITION MODEL FOR THE REGION

With funding from the Inter American Development Bank and the government of Japan, Riecken Community Libraries has built an early childhood development and nutrition program operating in all of the Honduras Riecken libraries. The program has standardized guidelines, and is implemented by teachers for the Ministry of Education, parents of the very young in the community, and nurses, doctors and midwives through the Ministry of Health and local health outposts. To date over 1500 people have been trained in the methodologies used in the program – that include working with parent and very young child together to encourage and maintain the good nutrition so critical to all aspects of development in later years, parent/child activities built on pre-reading skills development.

Over 5300 Hondurans have participated in the program activities. The program, expanded and enhanced throughout 2016, has delivered the best trained and equipped communities in the country, and has now been adopted through the libraries as a model.

“I had high hopes for the reading and early childhood development program as I thought the relationship with nutrition was interesting. As a licensed nurse, topics related to health and the reduction of malnutrition in the country are of interest to me. By participating I learned reading techniques and how to work with children and families via reading. I can complement reading with my experience and knowledge related to community health and how to improve health services for families in my community.”

Astrid Nunez
Nurse from the Health Post
Creating Culture Community Library
Nueva Morolica (Choluteca, Honduras)
I promote women leaders in the community of San Juan Chamelco (Guatemala). There is a lot of need. The women do not have enough confidence in themselves, the daily activities they take part in, or that they have the potential to improve themselves and their community. Many women have no support and with this program they receive valuable training in self-esteem, computers, and the values and potential women like them have.

Doris Amanda Botzoc
Women’s Leadership Program
funded by Partner Burns-Fazzi Brock
San Juan Chamelco (Guatemala)
THE RIECKEN FAMILY

Throughout 2016, as before, Riecken Community Libraries have been supported by the amazing efforts of a very lean but effective and dedicated staff, thousands of volunteers, and the generous contributions of donors and partners.

This year we are grateful for the generosity of each and every donor, and of the following funding partners:

- Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (IDB)/Government of Japan
- Brown Family Foundation
- Burns-Fazzi Brock Foundation
- Christer Garbis/Amazon.com
- Peterson Foundation
- Adrian Ridner and Family
- Board Members and Friends of Riecken
- The Family of Richard Strock
- Strachan Foundation
- Study.com
- USAID/AIR

In Memoriam

In February 2016, the Riecken Foundation lost Jim King, a longtime true friend, Board Member and Riecken Community Libraries donor. Jim loved working with the children in the libraries and never missed opportunities to visit them in his travels. He is missed by the entire Riecken Community Library family.

Riecken Foundation Board of Directors

Allen Andersson
Dan Bradbury
William Cartwright, Chairman & President
Liz Davila
Jon Hofius
Adrian Ridner
Jim Wilson
INVESTMENT BY CATEGORY

Programming  64%
Human Resources  20%
Fundraising  9%
Operating Costs  5%
External Services  2%

INVESTMENT BY COUNTRY

Guatemala  21%
Honduras  79%

See Independent Auditor’s Report and Notes to Financial Statements.

* 2016 Net Asset information is pending institutional audit due September 2017.

The Riecken Foundation is a private foundation that is currently in transition from legal status to Public Benefit Foundation, a 501(c) (3). During this process, the United States government (IRS) has determined that Riecken Foundation can act as a non-profit organization 501(c) (3) and with all the benefits that entails.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Leadership</strong></th>
<th><strong>Volunteers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Hours</strong></th>
<th><strong>Economic Potential</strong></th>
<th><strong>Library Users</strong></th>
<th><strong>Donor Dollars Invested</strong></th>
<th><strong>Internet Users</strong></th>
<th><strong>Computer Usage</strong></th>
<th><strong>Gender</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7,785 Community Volunteers who actively participate in library programs</td>
<td>1,542 New Community Volunteers</td>
<td>280,268 Volunteer Time</td>
<td>Putting a value on volunteer hours Average of 3 hours per week per person at $1.32USD hour/day (minimum wage)</td>
<td>372,862 People who use the Library Services</td>
<td>For every $10 USD spent on programming: Technology $0.16, Reading Programs $3.31, Entrepreneurship and Youth $0.12, Local Leadership Development $1.18, Cultural Identity and Young People $0.07, Women’s Business and Leadership $0.88, Fundraising $3.46, Operations $0.82</td>
<td>74,746 People connected to Internet in libraries: Men 42%, Women 58%</td>
<td>140,381 People using technology: Men 44%, Women 56%</td>
<td>Total Users: Men 48%, Women 52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>User Ages</strong></td>
<td><strong>Donor Dollars Invested</strong></td>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td><strong>Computer Usage</strong></td>
<td><strong>Donor Dollars Invested</strong></td>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td><strong>Computer Usage</strong></td>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td><strong>Computer Usage</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41% Children (0–12 years old)</td>
<td>Technology $0.16</td>
<td>Total Users: Men 48%, Women 52%</td>
<td>34% Reading</td>
<td>14% Supporting Teachers</td>
<td>13% Technology Use</td>
<td>8% Youth Activities</td>
<td>4% Health Activities</td>
<td>4% Environmental Activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Changing Lives Through Access to Information

UNITED STATES
PO Box 30, Princeton, NJ 08542, USA
+(650) 206-2539
info@rieckenlibraries.org

GUATEMALA
Calle Real de Jocotenango
Lotificación El Pedregal No. 9
Jocotenango, Sacatepéquez
Tel. +502-7888-7308

HONDURAS
Colonia Ruben Dario, Calle Venecia, 2216
Tegucigalpa
Tel. +504-2235-9927

www.riecken.org

© 2017 Riecken Community Libraries. All rights reserved.