



**Riecken
Community
Libraries**

ANNUAL REPORT 2018



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



In 2018 we witnessed the human drama of thousands of Central Americans that decided to leave their homes and towns to look for a better and safer life. The International Migration Organization of the United Nations recognizes that the immigrants are fleeing their countries for a mix of economic reasons, ongoing violence, family reunification, and the search for international protections.

The economic and complex political factors that impact Central Americans have resulted in a sense of insecurity and lack of opportunity for most in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador. The individuals deciding to flee their countries have now also been traumatized by the long dangerous trek across Mexico – exacerbated by the lack of community and strong familial support from which the refugees normally receive benefit.

To help improve local conditions and stem the flow of people going north in desperation, organizations from many

countries, including the U.S., have maintained their commitment to help support affected local communities through their work and their presence.

Riecken Community Libraries in Honduras and Guatemala exemplify this type of stabilizing organization, working with local leaders, young people, and other community organizations to help open access to information and support the creation of local opportunities. Our libraries offer programs for youth, technology, early childhood development, and health, providing tools to allow the communities to help themselves.

While there is no one solution to the rough challenges facing those in the region, we are certainly actors in the struggle to resolve the local them in the communities we serve. I invite you to an overview of our efforts to make a difference in Central America that can help strengthen civil society and build confidence in the region.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Cartwright".

Bill Cartwright
President & CEO, Riecken Foundation

Riecken Community Libraries: A Model for Sustainability

Community	Riecken Community Libraries	Local Government
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Governing Board • Local Volunteers • Local Programming Initiatives • Fundraising Activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners/Donations • Technical Advice • Training • Building Construction • Institutional Visits • International Volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Librarian's Salary • Utilities • Land/Building • Legal Recognition for Local Management



Many rural libraries in developing countries perish early from neglect, and lack of on-going management, relevant programs, or sustained community involvement. The key to the sustainable success of the Riecken Community Library networks in Guatemala and Honduras is the on-going cooperation between:

- * An organized group of volunteer citizens who manage and lead construction, maintenance and staffing of the library, and are responsible for the ongoing success of activities and programming
- * The municipal government that provides land and funding, and supports the library's work as a recognized part of the community infrastructure
- * The Riecken Foundation, who guides the overall establishment of the library, providing direction, financial resources, ongoing training and programming.



Key Riecken Library Statistics 2018

460,000

Visits in 2018 - 48% women/girls and 52% men/boys

42%

Of visitors are younger than 12 years old, 24% are 23 and older

200,000

Visitors used technology in 2018, 50% women/girls, 50% men/boys

100,000

Technology users regularly connected to the internet

7000

Local community volunteers in 2018

255,000

Volunteer hours logged, avg. of 3 hrs/week per volunteer

\$312,534

Value at minimum wage of \$1.23USD

2018 in Review

The core programs offered by Riecken Community Libraries include youth, reading and technology programs.

In 2018 Riecken also secured vibrant community development programs that fit into the mission of "modern community library."



Early Childhood Development and Nutrition is a program in the 53 Honduran libraries funded by a grant (expired 2017) from the Inter-American Development Bank. In 2018, we leveraged experience developing and implementing that program to expand into the Riecken Guatemala network with our own resources.

A girls' reader program, also begun in Honduras, has expanded to 11 libraries in Guatemala. 2018 is the first of two years in the curriculum for this program and we have hopes to expand it beyond the planned two-year curriculum. .

Riecken completed its fourth year of a women's leadership program in the libraries through BFB Foundation funding. The program empowers local women leaders who then create women's groups, eventually running businesses in their communities.

USAID/ASHA entered two key agreements with Riecken for over \$500,000 in technology equipment and library repairs for aging libraries. These goods and services were hard won and will go a long way to updating our infrastructure.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A RIECKEN COMMUNITY LIBRARY



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.





2018 Recognition

International Reading and Promotion of Reading Meeting in the Context of Migrants, Chihuahua (México), November 6-7, 2018

Riecken Foundation participated in a series of work sessions focused on the use of children's literature and the arts in meeting the challenges resulting from migration, violence and poverty. 52 attendees from across Mexico participated by invitation, giving presentations, sharing experiences and workshops. The key objective of the event was to create an international network of those working with children's literature and reading where displacement has created dire situations.

National Congress of Public Libraries, Bogotá, September 17-19, 2018

Columbia is one of the strongest representatives of public libraries as agents of social change in all of Latin America. In 2018, Riecken Community Libraries was invited to present its mission and initiative in Central America at this conference. The presentation, "Small Libraries, Big Impacts: Civil Society Experiences and Fundraising for the Libraries" was made to 800 attending librarians and cultural representatives.

Guatemala International Book Fair (FILGUA), July 2018

At this well-attended annual book fair, Riecken Community Libraries facilitated the second public library contents, providing exposure for library efforts to provide free access to information and services for often-excluded social groups. Judges from the publishing, government, and cultural sectors as well as international organizations designated winners of the Library of the Year contest using objective criteria. Two Riecken Libraries were winners based on their public services, programs and projects designed to create opportunities and positive change in their communities. Our congratulations go to:

- Community Library K'ak' Nojib'al de Xolsacmaljá (Tonicapán)
- Community Library of Wisdom in San Carlos Sija (Quetzaltenango).

Riecken Foundation Income/Expenses 2018

Riecken Foundation Income/Expenses 2018	Not Audited
Changes in Unrestricted Net Assets:	2018
Revenues, Gains, and Other Support	-
Contributions	\$311,000
Fundraising	-
Grants	\$188,000
Interest and dividends	-
Other revenue	\$578
Net assets released from restrictions	-
Total Revenues, Gains, and Other Support	\$499,578
Expenses:	
Library programming	\$153,505
Librarians	\$207
New libraries	-
Library Governing Boards	\$4,535
Volunteers	\$20,867
Salaries	\$240,389
Benefits	-
Other staff expenses	\$29,922
Monitoring and Evaluation	\$8,435
Financial expenses	\$2,884
Building expenses	\$24,374
Vehicle expenses	\$1,615
Office expenses	\$13,609
Professional services	\$46,107
Riecken donations	-
Local Library Directors	-
Miscellaneous business expenses	\$7,082
Total Expenses	\$553,531
Total Change in Unrestricted Net Assets	-\$53,953
Changes in Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	
Net assets released from restrictions	
Total Change in Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	
Increase in Net Assets	
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	
Net Assets, End of Year	

Percentage of Expenses by Category

Human Resources 9%

Operations 2%

Fundraising 11%

Programs 68%

Travel 7%

External Services 3%

We Are Grateful to Our 2018 Supporters

**BFB Foundation
David and Lucile Packard Foundation
Friends of Riecken Community Libraries
Kissick Family Foundation
Patricia Price Peterson Foundation
The Seattle Foundation
USAID/ASHA**

**Donors to Riecken Global Giving Projects
and Riecken.org**

Many Thousands of Local Volunteers





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