

# NEWSLETTER

## College - An Impossible Dream

Dale Meade

For many children of the Christians in Colombia, attending college is an impossible dream. Being born into very poor families, they normally would never have even been able to dream of attending university. When their families turn to Christ and become Christians, in most cases the children also become Christians and begin to excel in life and often begin to dream the impossible dream; of attending college and becoming a professional and rising out of the depths of poverty. Christ improves the lot of the family in the spiritual, social, and economic realms, but often one generation is not enough to enable the children who have grown up in the church to afford attend college. The economic realities are simply too harsh, a college scholarship can range from \$500-\$5,000 per year.

For many years, we have attempted to step in and help these young people realize their dreams. We have offered college scholarships to dedicated young people who have grown up in and are faithful to the church. We have always carefully guided these young people to make sure that they remain strong in their faith as they study in a secular world to become the Christian professionals of tomorrow. The program has allowed dozens of Christian young people to study and we already have several graduates who are working in their chosen profession as dedicated Christians. They provide a moral direction to the country and they provide both economic and social benefits to the church as they tithe and use their skills in church leadership. In a country like Colombia, having skilled professionals in the church also raises the level of the church and allows it to minister to a wider segment of the population.

The main problem with this program, is that it has never been self-sustaining. We have never received sufficient donations to cover the program and have carried it to a large degree from our general fund because we feel it is such an important program for the future of not only the Church in Colombia, but also the moral direction of the country. The recent recession in the U.S. has affected our one-time offerings and even some of the regular church support that used to allow us to continue this program despite lack of designated funds. As a result of our reduced funding of our general fund we no longer have funds that can be used to cover the scholarships. For the last year or so, we have not been able to accept new applications for scholarships and even the scholarships for the three current students are in jeopardy. We simply cannot sustain them with the current level of designated funding as we are currently running a deficit of greater than \$11,000 in the college scholarship fund.

If we are unable to secure special donations to cover this program, we will be forced to end this only opportunity for many Christian young people. Please consider helping us to encourage these fine Christian young people to dream and then realize their "impossible dream" of attending college and becoming a Christian professional. Please consider making a special donation to our college scholarship fund deficit. God will bless you for your generosity and bless a young Colombian Christian through your love and concern.

*Please consider making this the project for your small group, Sunday school, youth group, or a special fall project at your church.*

## Benevolent Work: A Critical Element of Responsible Ministry

While our primary work has always been evangelism and church planting with a secondary emphasis on leadership training and Christian education, we have also always been very concerned about the social well-being of the Christian community and the special needs presented by natural disasters and illness. We have always tried to help when we could in these situations.

In July, I was busy getting ready for the work crew when the call came. It was Lizeth Castañeda, a young lady from the church that is benefitting from our scholarship program. She had called to tell me her little brother, Daniel, was sick and in the hospital with dengue fever. Normally that tropical disease is pretty nasty but it is not fatal. I have had it twice, as has Jeanie. The joke is you won't die, but it will hurt so much you might wish you had, and that is about the truth.



Sometimes, however, dengue fever takes a nasty turn and becomes hemorrhagic. Lizeth called me to tell me that Daniel was in the hospital with hemorrhagic dengue and was in critical condition. We began praying fervently for him and for a rapid and full recovery. Yet in a case like this we must do more than just pray. They needed to do several tests to monitor the disease and effectively treat it. There was no time to lose as Daniel was slipping into a light coma and becoming non-responsive, but the Castañeda family did not have the money for the tests and Colombian hospitals will not treat a patient unless they can pay up front.

Since something had to be as soon as possible, I quickly exchanged some money and sent it to them that very afternoon. With payment assured, the hospital began to monitor his blood count in the morning and evening. It became evident a platelet



transfusion was necessary to save his life, which we also covered with funds from our benevolent fund. Still, for the next three days Daniel hovered on the ragged edge. We continued to pray as the physicians continued to treat him. Then, by the weekend, he began to improve. We all said a prayer of thanksgiving and breathed a sigh of relief, it looked like he was going to make it.

Daniel continued his recovery and is back to being the ornery little boy that we all want him to be. We are all very thankful to God and to all of you. The Castañeda

family is very appreciative as well and asked that I send you all a special word of thanks. Because of our benevolent fund, we could jump in and immediately help when the need arose. In this case, any delay might mean that Daniel would not have made it. This quarter we would like to encourage any of you whom God so leads to help to donate to our benevolent fund to help in cases such as Daniel. A little boy whose family has been members of the church for a very long time rejoices in his presence thanks to those who have supported this valuable component of our ministry.

This ministry is vital not only for the people in the church who are helped through it, but it provides a great Christian witness to their families and neighbors. What better way to open the door of the Gospel than by providing for a physical need of a fellow Christian. By helping out those within the church that are in need, we give them a great opportunity to share their stories with those around them. In a world that is often cold and hard, showing love for one another is indeed a powerful witness.

In order the help people when they need it we try to keep some extra funds in our benevolent fund for emergencies. If we had waited until we could raise funds for Daniel, he wouldn't have made it. The total cost for Daniel's treatment that we covered was \$212, not much for us here in the US, but this amount can be a year's wage for someone like the Casteñada family, and the hospitals will not treat unless they can be guaranteed payment within a few days. Thanks to generous people who gave last year, we were able to help as soon as the need arose. If you would like to help with our Benevolent Fund please mark your donation for the Benevolent Fund. Your generous gift might help someone start a business to provide for their family, help feed a hungry family, or even save someone's life.

*If you would like to be a part of this program fill out the coupon to the and send your donation to the address to the above.*

## I want to Help

Yes, I want to help with the ministry in Colombia South America. I would like to:

- Sponsor a College Student in the amount of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Send a donation to help with the Benevolent Fund in the amount of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Sponsor a student for 1 year \$228
- Sponsor a student for \$19/month
- Provide a partial scholarship
- Send a one time donation to help with the scholarship program. \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Sponsor a Teacher \$500/year

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return to:**

**Colombian Christian Mission  
Post Office Box 95  
Rittman, OH 44270-0095  
e-mail: SusyMorris@supportccm.com**



## Keep up with what is going on at the Colombian Christian Mission

If you would like to keep up to date with what's going on at the Colombian Christian Mission, visit Dale's Blog on our website: SupportCCM.com

You can read about what Dale is doing on his blog and visit his Flickr account to see images of work crews, school programs, special events and other interesting things.

## Sponsor a Teacher Program

We have great teachers at Colegio Peniel. Each year through our Sponsor a Teacher program we are trying to raise support to be able to give each of our teachers a bonus at the end of the year. We are trying to raise \$500 for each teacher or \$9,000 total. They give up a lot of benefits and economic gain to work at Colegio Peniel. Help up thank them and show them that we appreciate all that they do in providing a quality Christian education for the poor children of Colombia and teaching them about Jesus.

