

Mission UpReach Newsletter

What are you thankful for?

By: Phil Waldron, CEO

Happy Thanksgiving. I don't know about you, but Thanksgiving Day is my favorite holiday in the year. For me it is a day that is filled with memories of loved ones, many of whom have now

As we start into the Thanksgiving season, we want to pause for a moment and be thankful for several things. Donna and I are so very thankful to God for the privilege of being able to lead Mission UpReach and the incredible team members that we have working

here on the ground to nurture and care for the seed that you have planted."

As we head into the final two months of our year end fundraising campaign, we would like to remind you that we depend on your donations to continue these life transforming



gone on to be with the Lord, good food and a day of catching up with relatives who I haven't seen since the year before or even longer.

I love the words of the Apostle Paul in Philippians 4:6-7 where he writes, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

with us. We are thankful that our God and Father asks us to "cast all of our cares on Him" especially "in every situation." And we are thankful that He is with us even in the difficult and trying times. We are thankful that month after month and year after year He provides for us and blesses us. And we are thankful for your prayers and your financial support.

We often tell our visiting mission teams that come and work in a brigade that, "we have the privilege of being

programs that have impacted so many people over the years. If you haven't already pledged or given towards the campaign, please do so now. You can send me an email and let me know what your pledge will be over the next 12 months at: phil.w@missionupreach.org or you can send a check in to our business office in Longview, Texas. Either way please reach out and let me know what you will be able to give this year. We are counting on you.

Annual DESEO teachers' meeting

A large part of serving our community well is keeping our hand on the pulse of the needs of the people we serve. Our DESEO Program serves many schools throughout our area on a weekly basis and our regular presence helps us serve well. But in addition, we hold an annual meeting with the teachers from each of the schools we visit to get their feedback as well as thank them for the way they have welcomed DESEO into their schools. This year, 37 teachers were in attendance where we were able to discuss each school's achievements and give out awards. In the discussion time, the teachers expressed how impressed they are with how our team comes to the schools very prepared and always with a unique and dynamic way to teach the values. The children don't want to miss school the day that DESEO is coming and wait with eagerness for the DESEO bus to arrive with the team. They've also observed improved behaviors in their students overall. Each teacher expressed how it's a blessing for DESEO to come to their schools and provide a fun educational experience that is uniquely different from their day-to-day studies. The afternoon



tutoring the children receive has kept many kids in school and has been an incredible asset to the teachers, especially for the students who struggle. In Crucitas, where we have the best participation in tutoring, there are students who must walk one hour to get to tutoring and then one hour home, but they never want to miss out! The importance of a partnership with the teachers at each school cannot be overstated. Their gratitude and suggestions make our program even more effective each new year. We can't wait for the 2024 school year!

Closing celebrations for 2023



The end of the Honduran school year is already here and with that comes the DESEO closing celebration. The team visited each of the 17 schools we worked in this school year and said farewells to some 1,000 students they impacted. Our hope is that most of these goodbyes are just "see you later" because we will see them next year or they will attend our church or come to

our annual Kids' Camp. But the reality is that some kids may be pulled from school to work so they can help their families financially. Some kids will be graduating from 6th grade and will be leaving our DESEO Program, but our prayer is that they will be able to continue their education.

With the closing of DESEO, we also had our last game for the UPWARD basketball program for this season. Parents and teachers alike are invited to the big final games and trophies, awards, and t-shirts were given out at the end acknowledging all the kids' hard work and improvement. We had 50 kids from six different schools participate in the afternoon basketball program this year.



Update on the Moses Project



In addition to a focus on their high school classes, the teens at the Moses Project have gotten to participate in a variety of other dynamic activities.

1) They have been cultivating a garden and using the sales of the produce to save for the seeds to grow next year's garden.

2) Due to a generous donor, we have been able to purchase a new laptop for each of the boys at the Project so they may complete daily Rosetta Stone English classes. Many of the boys list learning English as their favorite activity. Before, there were only 2 computers available

in the common area, so they had to take turns doing schoolwork. But now they will be able to give more attention to their individual English language studies as well as learning how to use computers effectively, which is an important marketable skill.

3) We recently began a STEM club (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) at the Moses Project. Traditional public education in Honduras focuses on rote memorization and copying from the board, but hands-on, engaging activities are necessary to spark an interest in learning that students will carry with them. They will be participating in fun activities like building spaghetti towers, bridge competitions, programming, and electrical circuits. We're excited to develop these young men to be problem solvers, innovators, inventors, and critical thinkers!

4) The STEM Club time is also paired with soccer training. The boys have such a passion for soccer but have never learned drills or received any training to develop their skills. Approaching a game with discipline and being able to see measured improvement is a big motivator for these young men!



Thank you for your continued support of this program, and we look forward to impacting more lives each year as the boys are offered life-changing opportunities to better their future.





A note from Donna

I have decided of late to focus daily on my blessings. It's amazing how that decision changes my day and helps me to clearly see the ways that

them has brought me so much healing.

Additionally, this year Phil and I have been "adopted" by three precious little ones to be their grandparents. I have longed to be a grandmother for so many years. Letting go of ever seeing my son's potential children has been one of the hardest things I've had to do. But being chosen by these sweet children who now call us "abuelito" and "abuelita" is so beautiful.

These things remind me of the words of **Isaiah 61:3**, **"And provide for those who grieve in Zion – to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of despair."**

I am so thankful to our Father for His abundant blessings and for giving us beauty, gladness, and praise. I pray that you may find that same gift as we reflect this month on thanksgiving.

God is working in me and around me.

Just a few days ago, as I was spending time with the 11 boys at our Moses Project, I realized how God has allowed me to place my displaced love for my son upon these precious boys. I don't know if they have any idea of the great pride and joy I feel as I have witnessed them more closely this year develop into young men. They have all grown and matured beyond my wildest imagination. Being with them, listening to them, and sharing life with

2023 Brigade Season

VCOM.....	January 1-7.....	Medical
Redtail Community Foundation.....	February 4-11	Construction
Brad Russell Medical Team	February 24-March 2	Medical
Country View Family Farms	March 16-23	Construction
Ryan Duncan Team.....	May 19-26	Surgical
Southside CoFC, KY	June 22-29	Medical
Pine Tree CoC, TX.....	July 20-27.....	Medical

Mission UpReach Board

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Other Giving

Mission UpReach is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. We can assist you to designate MUR in a corporations' matching gifts program, or giving through a United Way campaign, or as you prepare wills for your estate.

Please contact us:

Our mailing address is as follows:

Mission UpReach, Inc.
3221 Dundee Road
Longview, TX 75604

Please send all checks, donations and correspondence to this address.

You can correspond directly with Phil and Donna at:

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