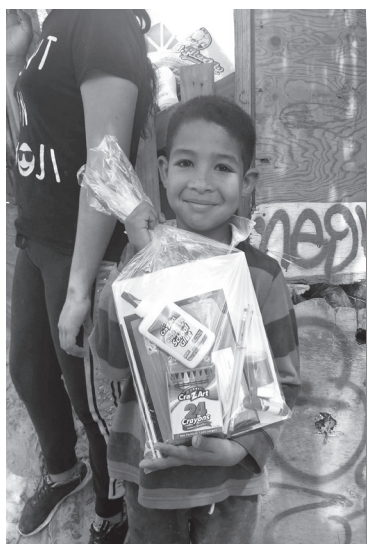


Education - Taking the Long View

June 2021



Helping kids with basic supplies encourages them to engage and keep going in their schooling!

Every parent has choices to make when it comes to their children. We make decisions about who they spend time with, what hobbies and programs they're involved in, and what experiences they should have to give them the know-how they need for life. In my American mind, I have a hard time comprehending this, but for many of the families we work with in Tijuana, the determination of whether or not their kids go to school is one of the decisions they need to make.

Take for instance Adriana's family who live in one of our neighborhoods. Adriana is currently a single mother with five children; Teresa (18), twins Geseyra and Yeseyra (17), Estefani (15) and Brandon (9). It would be very tempting for Adriana to put Teresa to work to make extra income for food. Maybe she could make tamales to sell, scrub dishes at a local restaurant, or now that she's eighteen, get a factory job. Another factor is that Mexico sends their kids to school in two different shifts. There are both morning and afternoon time blocks. What if Brandon gets assigned the morning shift and the rest of the girls, the afternoon? Because Adriana needs to work too, one of the girls would need to stay home with Brandon instead of going to school. How do

you make the decision of who doesn't get to go? Underlying all of this is a traditional undervaluing of education that permeates the group mentality of the poor neighborhoods in which we work. You begin to see yourself in Adriana's shoes and understand a bit more the difficulty of the choices she's faced with.

There is so much on the line with a decision like this. Dropping out leads many on the path of drug use, gang involvement, or teen age pregnancy. It continues the cycle of poverty which has such a strong grip on the communities we serve. Finishing school however gives a high school graduate the upper hand when it comes to employment, along with the self worth of completing and achieving that which possibly no one else in their family has. It becomes a decision to sacrifice some benefit now for what might be possible for them in the future!

Spectrum Ministries has been helping Adriana's family with some of their school needs like uniforms and pencils and notebooks, etc for



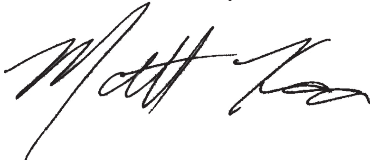
Estephani, Brandon, and Geseyra are looking forward to getting back in the classroom!!

the last six years. In fact, through our annual July school supply distribution, we hope to see over six hundred kids receive materials they need to be ready for the first day of school. Every year we put these needs in front of you, our Spectrum partners and you enable us to come alongside and encourage many families in their efforts to keep their kids in school. It really does make a huge difference!

Fall of 2021 will be unique for these kids in that Mexico still hasn't restarted in person classes due to the pandemic. Their plan is to begin September 2nd, almost a year and a half after they closed the doors to stop the virus. Many in our neighborhoods had an extremely difficult time regularly taking part in the online options the schools offered. These kids now find themselves a full year or more behind their classmates. That makes this year's distribution all the more vital to have them ready and motivated to resume their educational journey.

We want to influence the kids in our communities for Christ and desire to see them discover all that He has planned for their lives. Education is a tool God can use to not only keep them off the wrong path but equip them with skills that can provide for their future families and take them into various areas of society where they can make a difference for Him. These are the dreams we hope our kids will have, and with your help and prayers, for some these dreams will be realized!

From all of us at Spectrum, thank you for all your love and support for us and all that God is doing in Tijuana!



Matt Kooi
Director of Spectrum Ministries



A year and a half of schools being closed was so long. May God help these kids to learn and catch up to where they need to be!



When families have multiple school age children, the costs can add up quick. Parents really appreciate our help with supplies.

PS - Plans are moving forward for kids camp this August! Please join us in praying that God leads and provides all we need for these kids to go to camp and learn about Him!

"Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be." - Psalm 139:16