



Fundación Ayuda a Educar  
2021 Annual Report



Dear Donor,

The work to put together Ayuda a Educar started last January, sparked by a series of conversations between Dorindo Burgo, a Marist brother who has taught in Venezuela for decades, and a few of his former students, who were now, like many Venezuelan professionals, living in the U.S.

Dorindo had just come back to the country after a lengthy retreat in his native Spain. He was shocked at the decline of Venezuelan schools since his departure. An unprecedented inflationary storm had melted salaries down to the point where teachers' monthly pay wouldn't cover bus tickets, much less food for their family.

The private institutes the Marists ran in big cities such as Caracas, Maracay and Maracaibo, which catered to the middle-class and charged tuition, were OK. But in the free, state-sponsored schools the Marists operated in impoverished districts (the so-called *barrios*) and rural areas, more than half of the teachers and school staffers had left their jobs—a mirror of what was happening in most of the country. The quest for survival had forced many of these educators to join the largest mass migration in the history of the Latin American continent.

Was there anything we, living outside of Venezuela, could do? We (Lucía, Dashiell, and Ángel) owed much to a Marist education – the foundations of our professional success were laid at Colegio Champagnat in Caracas. We knew there were thousands like us, immigrants and exiles who landed on their feet thanks in part to the lessons imparted by the Marists and who would be proud to give a helping hand back. And the most effective way was to directly help teachers and school personnel, so they could remain at their post.

So we incorporated in March as a Florida non-profit, and started laying the pipes to finally raise funds in September. As of Dec. 31 we had raised more than \$18,000 – from members of the Venezuelan Marist community and from new friends who rallied to our cause. Very

importantly, teachers, administrators and students at Christopher Columbus High School, a prominent Marist institution in Miami, gave us an incredibly generous donation and warm encouragement. All this support has allowed us to deliver packages of food for more than 350 teachers and staffers in 8 rural and underprivileged schools.

Much remains to be done. In October we applied with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service for tax-exempt 501c3 status. If we attain it, our donors would be able to claim a tax deduction for their gifts (currently they can't.) It would also help harness the power of corporate matching programs. It's a long journey, which we hope to complete in 2022.

In the meantime, we also need to keep raising money and growing our community. In the longer term, we would like to find ways to extend our support beyond simple food deliveries, and also beyond the Marist network of schools. We initially focus on the Marists because we know first-hand that they're action-oriented, disciplined and effective educators and administrators. But the decline is system-wide and will have dire consequences for Venezuela and the hemisphere if not addressed, even in the humblest manner.

Thankful for your support,

The directors of Ayuda a Educar

(Lucía Murlá, Dashiell López, Ángel González, Guillermo Morón Morello and Dorindo Burgo.)

**Ayuda a Educar, Inc.**

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## WHAT'S IN A PACKAGE

In 2021 we focused on launching our first program, “Ayuda al Maestro.” It very simply consists of the delivery of basic foodstuffs, bought at local supermarkets, directly to teachers. We aim to make repeated deliveries to the schools that fit our criteria, funds permitting. A typical package looks like this:



And contains the following (with slight variations due to availability and price.)

<u>Item</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>USD</u>	<u>Total USD</u>
Tuna can	2	1,90	3,8
Sardines	2	0,70	1,40
Beans	1	1,20	1,20
Rice	3	0,80	2,40
Corn flour	3	0,95	2,85
500 g of pasta	4	0,55	2,20
500 g of margarine	2	1,90	3,80
Dozen eggs	1	1,77	1,77
1 kg of sugar	1	1,08	1,08
1 liter of cooking oil	2	3,10	6,20
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26,70</b>

When deployed at ETI Ildfonso Gutiérrez in Maracaibo on Dec. 15, 2021, “Ayuda al Maestro” looked like this:



As of Dec. 31, we had delivered packages at 8 schools. We managed to do a second round for some of these just in time for the holidays.

School	Date	Packages delivered	Cost
<b>ETI Ildefonso Gutiérrez (Maracaibo)</b>	9/20/21	60	\$1,602.00
"	12/15/21	54	\$1337.58
<b>CECAL Ildefonso Gutiérrez (Maracaibo)</b>	9/20/21	8	\$213.6
"	12/15/21	6	\$148.62
<b>Manuel Ángel Puchi Fonseca (Maracaibo)</b>	10/2/21	60	\$1429.2
"	12/15/21	60	\$1486.3
<b>UEP Marcelino Champagnat (Maracaibo)</b>	10/27/21	19	\$545.9
"	12/15/21	19	\$470.66
<b>UEP Prof. Misael Vilchez (Maracaibo)</b>	12/9/21	66	\$1,634.87
<b>UEP San Pablo (Machiques, Zulia state)</b>	12/16/21	54	\$1,333.26
<b>CEMACAL San Pablo (Machiques, Zulia state)</b>	12/16/21	31	\$765.39
<b>ETIP Marcelino Champagnat (Maracay)</b>	12/16/21	54	\$1333.8
<b>Total</b>		491	\$12,300.97

In total, 352 teachers and school support staff benefited directly from your donations.

## IMPACT

Teachers were floored—and many shared emotive words with us. Our favorite was a WhatsApp message from Leandro, a teacher (and Marist alumni) at ETI Hno. Ildefonso Gutiérrez, in Maracaibo.

*“What great help we received. Today once again life has shown us that even in the deepest darkness you can receive a small light, which, no matter how small, becomes a beacon to keep walking toward hope and optimism... making the good moments greater than the not-so-good ones...*

*I ask GOD to fill you with life and health so you can keep making an effort to help others, to fill you with the will to keep working hard so you can keep carrying those beacons to those who are in darkness. To the person that receives it, that small light means love, optimism and gratefulness.*

**THANK YOU, MARIST FAMILY, THANK YOU ALUMNI, THANKS FOR YOUR AID TO WHAT WAS ONCE YOUR HOME. BLESSINGS TO YOU.”**



*Teachers from ETIP San Marcelino Champagnat, in Maracay, welcome their donations on Dec. 16, 2021.*

### **BUDGET AS OF DEC. 31, 2021**

Donations	\$18,066
Cost of packages delivered	\$12,301
Other expenses (regulatory, banking and other fees)	\$663
Remainder	\$5,102

### **PLANS FOR 2022**

- We anticipate to spend the remainder of our funds in Q1, continue our fund-raising and focus our food delivery program, “Ayuda al Maestro.”
- We hope to secure 501c3 status from the IRS.
- We’ll explore the logistical challenges of launching new programs – “Ayuda a la Escuela,” providing help to school infrastructure, and “Ayuda al Alumno,” which would give help pay for school lunches or breakfasts to underprivileged students.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

It would have been impossible to launch Ayuda a Educar without the selfless help of VisualizeAgency, which set up our website, and Camero&Company for their accounting support.

Marla Gómez, Axel González and Leonardo Camero- thank you!

Carlos Agell, Sandra Sevcik, Eglia Gómez, Manuel Solórzano, and Luis Pérez. Thank you!

Heartfelt thanks to Brother Albert Rivera, Principal David Pugh, and the teachers and students at Christopher Columbus High School in Miami.

And especially, thanks to each of our more than 80 individual donors, for their generous support to this nascent venture.

Here's to a fruitful 2022.

