



“Injustice Anywhere Is a Threat to
Justice Everywhere.” - Martin Luther King, Jr

Thoughts on Social Justice from a Child’s Perspective

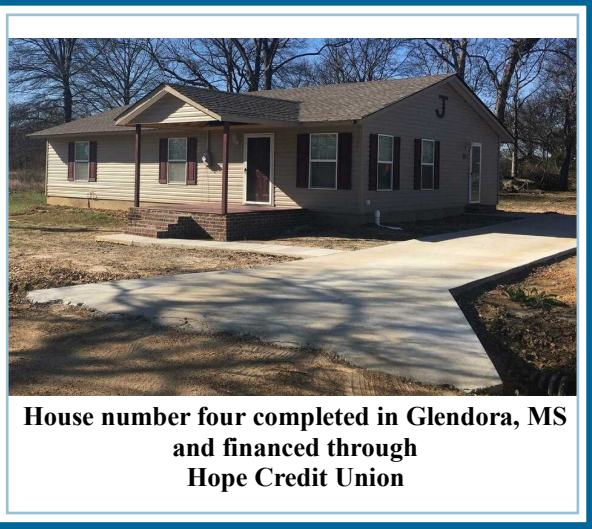
By Gale Hull - President

From the first time I (Gale) stepped into Glendora, there was a young boy there to greet me. Over the years he has developed friendships with many of our team members. He is a deep thinker well beyond his 11 years. The first memorable words I heard him speak were to other local kids, who at the time were making fun of him for hugging some of our team members. They said, “Why you are hugging those people” His response, unashamed, was, “I like them.” The kids told him he was crazy.

When he was 8 years old, he was walking to The Emmett Till Museum, holding hands with a team member, when he said, “You know, if it wasn’t for Martin Luther King, we would be arrested for holding hands.”

One day on site, he asked if he could be my helper. Every time I came to Glendora, he worked side by side with me, cleaning up the yard and organizing for the team. Not long after, I began paying him as he would work so many hours, even after I told him he could go home.

Last year we had a long talk about school, which he hates because of his learning disabilities. In the course of our conversation, we talked about how **(continued on Page 3)**



House number four completed in Glendora, MS
and financed through
Hope Credit Union

Our new mailing address:

PID
PO Box 901
Ipswich, MA 01938

Ending Poverty through Higher Education

By Kirki Thompson - HE coordinator & Aubrie Gallagher - Office Manager

Sergio Eduardo Ajpop Chay was born on January 19, 2001 to Rosalba Edelmire Chay Coyoy, a housewife, and Carlos Alfredo Ajpop Velásquez, a day laborer, in Cantón San Lorencito, Guatemala. He is the eldest of three children. Sergio was born with strabismus (crossing of the eyes); but because of his family’s scarce resources, they could not afford medical care to correct the problem.

When he was four years old, Sergio began school at the local Rural Mixto School in San Lorencito, Zunilito in Suchitepéquez. He continued to attend this local school until the age of nine, when his life changed forever. At this time, he received a sponsor through PID’s Child Sponsorship Program. This gave him the resources to continue school and provided him with food and medical and dental care for his family. At age 13, Sergio started secondary school at the Telesecundaria Institute in San Lorencito.

After 9th grade (14 or 15 years old), tuition costs in Guatemala rise dramatically. This means that most students cannot afford to continue their education. For those that can continue, completing 12th grade earns students the equivalent of a U.S. associate’s degree. With this degree, graduates take jobs as nurses, teachers, and mechanics. Without it, their economic futures are not bright.

Sergio finished 9th grade wanting to continue his education. In 2017, he applied to, and entered, PID’s Higher Education Program. Students who enter our Higher Education Program in Guatemala (and can find a sponsor) receive help with tuition, school supplies, books, transportation, and uniforms (as needed). Without this financial boost, most students are unable to continue their education, sealing them and their families into poverty indefinitely. **(continued on Page 3)**



Sergio, Age 9

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Special Points of Interest:

- **Annual Celebration -March 22, 2020 (see page 4 for more info)**
- **Save The Date October 24, 2020 - Annual Benefit.**
- **If you would like a child sponsorship payment booklet, email Marin@pidonline.org.**

Meet Sami –Our New Team Leader



Sami in Haiti

Samantha Pinar (Sami) is a 2019 graduate of St. Joseph's College in Maine, with a major in health and wellness (specializing in international health and wellness), a minor in biology, and a love for Haiti. She was the perfect candidate to work for PID. Last year, she spent six weeks in Haiti as an intern working on the medical program. Sami's dream is to become the new Field Director in Haiti. Unfortunately, with the continued unrest in Haiti, this has been put on hold. She decided to take a position with PID as a

trip team leader. While she had been studying Creole, she quickly added Spanish, so she can lead teams to Guatemala and Peru. In December, she spent almost 5 weeks in Guatemala, hosting teams for four weeks and spending one week at Spanish school. She will be traveling to Mississippi soon where she will help work on the medical program. When she is not traveling, Sami provides much needed support at the office in Ipswich. We are very lucky to have Sami as a part of our PID team!

If you are interested in volunteering, becoming an intern, or team leader contact Gale@pidonline.org.

Haiti Happenings

Our programs continue to run, despite the unrest. Pouchon is the acting field director, and all of the Haitian staff have stepped up to help manage the programs. The clinic is open, with Dr. Paul (who now lives in our compound during the week with his wife) seeing new patients every day. **Child Sponsorship is running, and kids are still able to go to school.** We currently have a house under construction! There will be no teams heading down through May, but keep your eye out for updates on our website for continuing travel updates.

“Where justice is denied, where poverty is enforced, where ignorance prevails, and where any one class is made to feel that society is an organized conspiracy to oppress, rob and degrade them, neither persons nor property will be safe.” - Frederick Douglass

In Remembrance of the Earthquake in Haiti

Remembering the earthquake in Haiti 10 years ago today, we remember the anxious days when we could not reach anyone in Haiti and did not know if our staff was safe. We remember the joy of seeing a message via Google Earth (pictured below) saying they were safe followed by the tears twelve days later upon seeing the devastation. We are thankful for all of the individuals who reached out at that time to help by traveling to Haiti to provide medical care by counseling and construction help, by helping on the US side with logistics, and by donating generously.



A message spelled out in stones reads: “We need food and water.”

The Unsung Heroes of Social Justice

By James Hull, Co-founder and Instructor in History and Social Justice

A recent issue of our newsletter highlighted the contributions of several volunteers, staff, and supporters, whom PID President Gale Hull described as our organization's unsung heroes. These committed and compassion driven individuals quietly work behind the scenes to maintain PID's programs and supportive infrastructure, which translates into life changing opportunities for those who struggle with extreme poverty. I always feel as if I am in the presence of a saint when our office celebrates the unexpected visit of one of these “gold star” unsung whom Gale and I remember as having been among the first--over thirty years ago-- to sponsor a child or to ride in our Annual Bike for Haiti and are still going strong in their sponsorships (now intergenerational!) or in their fundraising or volunteering for PID.

Likewise, through PID's Department of History and Social Justice, we celebrate the role of such unsung heroes in the histories of social justice movements in the four regions in which PID operates.

Usually when we think of these movements, we remember the big names associated with them, such as Haiti's Toussaint Louverture, Guatemala's Rigoberta Menchu, Peru's Jose Carlos Mariategui, and the Mississippi Delta's Fannie Lou Hamer and Medgar Evers. And we should celebrate the lives and work of these “sung” heroes for having transcended the imposed parameters of their circumstances and having paid dearly in their personal lives for promoting popular movements that challenged dominant paradigms of oppression and radical inequality.

Notwithstanding the valuable leadership roles of these extraordinary individuals, the heart and soul of social justice movements always lay in the myriads of unsung participants who daily sacrificed their time and put their lives, resources, and reputations on the line by quietly working behind the scenes to maintain organizational infrastructure and existential forms of resistance and social imagination. Such courageous persistence has moved the dial (albeit ever so slowly!) toward more just and humane societies. **(continued on Page 4)**

(Thoughts continued) different it would be when he finished school. I told him to finish even though it was hard.

I told him, "Someday you will be judged by how hard you work and your great personality, not because you cannot finish some paperwork at school." We talked about his dreams for the future.

"I want to be a PID team leader!" When I asked him why, he said, "I want to help others and to build houses for people that have bad houses." Later, he wrote a paper about his dream and read it to the team.

In September of 2019, when I went to Glendora, he was different. I asked if he wanted to go grocery shopping for the team. He grumbled that he did not. I thought, "He's almost twelve. It's probably a pre-teen thing." At the last minute he changed his mind and came along. During the drive, I would have one of the most difficult conversations of my life.

On our way, he said, "Can I ask you a question?" I answered, "You can ask anything." He asked, "Would you ever treat me like a slave?" My heart stopped in disbelief.

I responded, "I never would. Why did you ask that question? Do you feel like I treat you like a slave?"

"No, but would you treat me like a slave if slavery came back in this country?"

"No, I would leave this country before I did that to anyone," I said with tears in my eyes, "Is there anything else you'd like to ask?"

"I would like to ask those people, why did you burn us and hang us and kill us?"

I replied, "You know that the people that burned and hung and killed slaves are all dead now. But I want to apologize for what our country did in bringing people here to be slaves and for treating them so badly. I am so sorry."

We finished the conversation with talk about how racism is the problem for our country now. I explained that part of why PID is in Mississippi is because we hope we can do a little to make up for what happened in this country so long ago. He nodded his head in understanding. The conversation ended well.

I came away from my time with the talk feeling hopeful and privileged that I had gained the trust of this young man - honored that he was able to ask me hard questions and accept my answers. This one conversation gave me hope that there are young people who can articulate the cultural anger that rests in the hearts of the descendants of slaves. It eats at their souls, but no one wants to say out loud, "Why did you do this to us, and would you do it again?" No book I have every read on slavery or racism ever gave me such a clear understanding of the emotions that still surround this injustice in our country. But this boy did. He is the hope for the next generation of PID.

I want to thank all of you for being a part of PID and all that it encompasses. I hope that reading this inspires you to think about what it is like to be on the other side of an issue looking up, as a person, just like you, who wakes up and wonders - how did I end up here and how do I get out. I hope that you will remember that as PID supporters, you are a part of the solution. (excerpts for a speech for the 2019 Annual Benefit.)

Your MS child's Christmas gift will be given out at our "Winter" Party - held this February!



Sergio - Age 19

(Higher Ed continued) Because of the support of PID and his sponsors, Sergio graduated from the Instituto de Computación Informática in 2019, with a degree in Computing and Digital Devices. Sergio was recently offered a job as an assistant in a construction company where he has been able to utilize his degree while helping out his family financially. Sergio's dream is to attend university and become an Agricultural Engineer. With this degree, he will be able to lift his family out of poverty permanently. Without the help of the sponsors and donors of Partners In Development, students like Sergio have no chance of furthering their education, and stopping the cycle of poverty to which generations before them had been stuck.

PID's Higher Education program currently operates in Guatemala and Haiti. In Guatemala, full sponsorships are \$70/month (\$840/year), or half sponsorships are \$35/month (\$420/year) for the three or four years a student is in "high school". In Haiti, full sponsorships are \$35/month. Available sponsorships can be found on our website at www.pidonline.org/higher-education-sponsorships.

If you would like to help cover costs for students not covered by our standard sponsorships, please consider a donation to PID's **Sela Nelson Higher Education Fund**. Donations can be made by check (payable to PID), with a note in the memo directing it to Higher Education) or online at www.pidonline.org.

Guatemala Update

By Sami Pinard - Team Leader

Our Guatemala site has been buzzing with both construction and medical teams. Our medical teams have been seeing patients in our Ixtacapa clinic and have been doing clinics at our Xocola sight. The construction teams have been working on houses as well as a new library for the after-school tutoring and higher education students. The library will provide a space for students to do homework and receive after school help, and includes computers, printers, and internet. The leadership group has started again, and the 10-20 participants will complete the 12-week seminar. The cooking classes will also be starting up again in the beginning of February.



Patients wait outside the clinic in Xocola



Cooking Classes



New Library

Mississippi - Moving forward in Glendora: Another finished house, updated clinic and CPR classes for the staff

As mentioned in our last newsletter, we had begun construction on house #4 in Mississippi. Now, we are proud to report that we have closed on this house! What does this mean? For PID, it means that we are able to build new, safe, and affordable housing for people living in one of the poorest areas of our country, without PID carrying the financial burden long-term. For eligible citizens in Glendora, it means they've built their credit and are able to purchase and live in a beautiful new home, while building equity in an asset they can pass down from generation to generation. Thank you to all our donors and supporters and to Hope Credit Union for making this dream of affordable housing in the Mississippi Delta a reality!

Through PID (in partnership with the town of Glendora and the county of Tallahatchie, along with the skills of Justin - our new construction supervisor), the clinic has a new roof and ceiling, with renovated bathrooms and floors. This was finished just in time to hold the town's elections and for U Mass Dartmouth, one of our partners in the Glendora medical program, to hold a certified CPR training for all our staff. If you would like to learn more about joining a team or about our work in Mississippi, please visit www.pidonline.org/our-work/mississippi-delta.

Haiti FAQ:

Do I still need to pay my sponsorship if schools are closed?

A: Yes! If schools close, children are still required to pay their school fees. Also, sponsored children still receive other benefits such as free medical care and access to other PID programs.

(Unsung Heroes continued)

I think of the many unnamed high school and university students during the 1960s and 70s in Guatemala who paid with their lives--their tortured bodies found on the side of the road—for challenging a repressive military dictatorship installed and supported by the CIA. Or, I think of the peasant women of Peru, who risked their lives (many beaten or assassinated) by organizing national marches for peace and justice that condemned the violence and exploitation of both government troops and Shining Path rebels. Some of these women's groups remain in the forefront of current movements to protest resource extraction and environmental degradation by foreign corporations. Or I think of humble parish priests from Haiti's "Ti Legliz" community who supported the poor and marginalized in their struggle to eventually overthrow the Duvalier dictatorship. For their commitment to a theology of social justice for "the least of these," they suffered persecution from the church hierarchy and imprisonment or death by the government.

Likewise, social justice movements in the Mississippi Delta exude their own rosters of unsung heroes. Within even a twenty-mile radius of our PID site in Glendora, countless African Americans historically have sacrificed life, limb, and liberty to resist systemic oppression. The names of these heroes rarely appear in the history books or on the historical monuments. But the blood of their martyrdom and the sweat of their resolve saturates the soil of the Delta with a power of solidarity that sent to the dustbins of history both slavery and its little brother Jim Crow and will continue to do the same with any residual forms of those systems which continue to oppress.

If you would like to learn more about the many unsung (and sung!) heroes, past and present, of social justice movements in Haiti, Guatemala, Peru, and the Mississippi Delta and the historical, political, and macro economic forces they have confronted and continue to engage, consider taking this spring, an online (or taught at the office) course or signing up for our PID Journal of History and Social Justice. Contact me at james@pidonline.org

What's Up in Peru

The first trip non-assessment team trip happened in December; and we are happy to report, it was a success! The team-built a (desperately needed) extra classroom for a local school in La Ventanilla in Lima, Peru. There are 2000 kids that live in this school's area, but there was only room for 600 students. They previously had to no place to house children, who desperately wanted to learn, but there was physically no room for them. They also had a medical clinic and a Christmas Party!



Christmas Party in Peru



Building a classroom!

Our second team to Peru (this time, from Loras College) returned from Peru mid-January. While there, they built a large soccer field for a local school.

**"We fly out tonight and take a bit of Peru with us, and leave a bit of our hearts here."
- Eric Eller, Loras College**

Annual Celebration

Join us on March 22, 2020 from 2pm-4pm

Boone Hall

31 County St, Ipswich, MA

Come celebrate what has been accomplished with your donation dollars;

Find out what is happening in Haiti;

Visit with long time PID friends and fellow trip members!

Light refreshments will be provided. Please RSVP so we can plan accordingly.