

## JUNTOS Newsletter February 2017

For the very first time we have lost a teacher. The lovely, cheerful Iris has resigned from JUNTOS and taken a job in a municipal government. We are happy for her for she has found a position where she can advance, can earn more and have a career path. We are sad for ourselves because she is an excellent teacher with great rapport with children and adults. Those of you who have visited the sites know that when visitors came, it was Iris who introduced the children and generally made everyone feel more comfortable.



Saying good-bye to Iris in the main plaza in Cuernavaca.



Iris smiling.

Iris started with JUNTOS in 2008 when she was only 18 years old. Then she was still in secondary school and therefore was an assistant for one year. Since 2009 she has been a full time teacher and has grown with the job. Like the others, she has mastered new programmes such as Photoshop and Wix and has taught these to our students. In addition, our lead teacher Lilia, gave her more and more responsibility and asked her to create new materials.

Iris is now employed at the Xochitepec Municipality as a secretary. She told us that on her first days she was required to fill in forms and do other clerical work on the computer. Since these are skills that she mastered some time ago, the work she was requested to do seemed quite easy. She also emphatically told us that she left because she had better opportunities and saw long term possibilities working for the municipal government.

Iris is the third of four siblings. Her eldest brother is a driver for Sabritas, a chips company; her sister is a homemaker and her youngest brother, an accountant. It is the youngest brother who has been urging her to look for something else and to aim higher in terms of a career. He has urged her to begin her university studies to become a teacher and she is thinking about this as a further possibility. She really likes dealing with children and her experience at JUNTOS has also proved that she is an excellent teacher. In an ideal world she would be able to start her new job at the municipality and go to school on evenings and weekends.

We are happy that JUNTOS was able to give Iris the opportunity to teach, to become proficient with Microsoft productivity tools and to complete her high school. Microsoft proficiency, high school completion and work experience were key requirements for her new job. We will hire a new tutor, most probably an outstanding student currently with JUNTOS and hope that person will have the same success as Iris. We wish Iris all the luck in the world and thank her for the many years she has spent with us. Her big smile, her enthusiasm and warmth will be missed.

On another front, we continue to further education for girls. To that end we have been able to procure funds for two girls now residents at the Salvation Army home. Elideth (Eli) was at Amor para Compartir and María Magdalena (Magda) was not. Both girls are attending Prepa (high school) already and we hope the funding and support will encourage them to continue.



Sixteen year old Magda on the left, and seventeen year old Eli, on the right, in January 2017.