

# SIFAT Journal



Sharing God's Love in Practical Ways

Fall 2016

## Take a SHARE in SIFAT

Marie Lanier

Promotions & Marketing Coordinator

“How can I be a part of SIFAT?” I am so glad you asked. The best way is to **become a SIFAT SHAREholder!**

SHARE stands for Sharing His Abundant Resources Effectively. It is simply a commitment to donate to SIFAT's general fund monthly.

Why is the general fund important to SIFAT? By knowing how much we can expect to receive through pledges, we are able to budget effectively. Our staff and board of directors can plan whether we should accept new international projects or expand our programs.

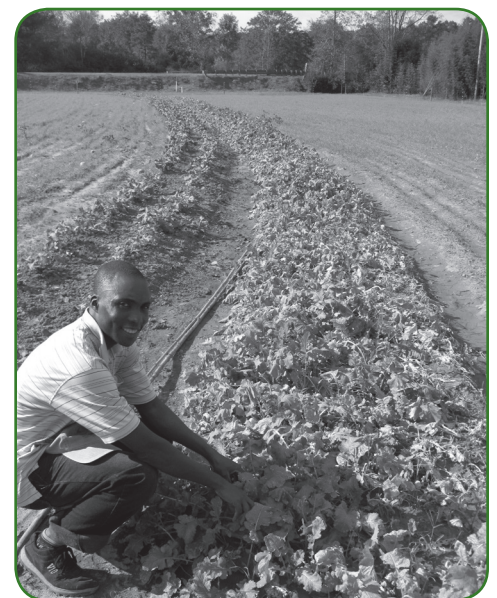
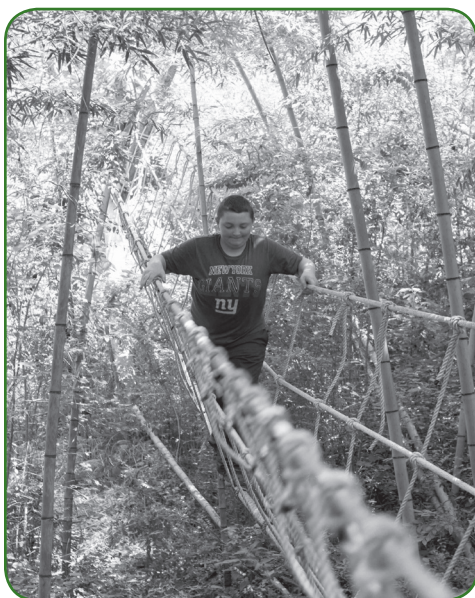
Your becoming a monthly SHAREholder means we can count on steady, timely funding that allows SIFAT to deliver a lasting impact on families and communities in need around the world. You allow us to use funds where they are most needed — to complete an underfunded project, to pay our staff fair wages, to immediately help during a natural disaster or sponsor additional trainings, to keep the lights on in our office. For 37 years, we have trained people from 91 countries how to meet their basic human needs. Our efforts are to work with communities and families to lift themselves out of poverty, *Sharing God's Love in Practical Ways*.

Can we count on you “being in”? Our

staff and board of directors have made commitments to be SHAREholders and challenged one another to find new donors, as well! Whether you commit to give \$5, \$25 or \$500 each month, your gift is important and will keep SIFAT *Sharing God's Love in Practical Ways* for years to come.

To sign up, please complete the information on the enclosed envelope and mail it now with your monthly contribution. Please make a note in the instructions box on the confirmation page for SHARE. All gifts are tax deductible.

If you have questions or would like more information, please email me, [lanierm@sifat.org](mailto:lanierm@sifat.org)





# Fall 2016

## Ecuador Earthquake Response

Thank you all for responding so quickly to our emergency relief request to help the people of Ecuador after the 7.8-magnitude earthquake in April. Your immediate donations allowed us to provide food, water and other supplies to communities in need soon after the initial devastation, and we are continuing to do so today.

Our executive director Tom Corson has traveled several times with SIFAT alumna Anita and Villaflores Pastor Rafael to the quake area near Bahia de Caracas to give aid to their sister churches and more than 400 children in 4 Compassion programs.

They took bundles of much needed food staples bought with your monetary donations to hundreds of families, as well as tarps, water, parasite medicine and children's vitamins. Tom spoke with many pastors and individuals still living in tents or under makeshift shelters about their immediate needs and their hopes for the future. Tom and Pastor Rafael held classes on the use of the

150 Sawyer water filters SIFAT installed to provide millions of gallons of clean drinking water.

When he returned, Tom told us about the miracle of one of these churches in the center of the earthquake zone. Normally, the church has services at about 6 p.m. on Sundays. On April 16, however, they moved the service to 3 p.m., because their pastor was moving to a new congregation, and they were having a celebration for his family that night at another location.

The earthquake struck precisely during the time the church service should have been happening. Only 15 minutes after everyone had left the church, the building's roof collapsed! Because of the special celebration, 200 people from the congregation were not in the church. All of their lives were spared! Some of our medical teams treated patients now living with family members in Quito. Their eyes were filled with pain as they told their stories of losing everything,



including several loved ones. They are asking for our continued prayers, as there is still so much emotional healing that needs to take place.

SIFAT has assisted with initial relief needs and Pastor Rafael continues to lead his congregation to minister to those affected by this disaster. We are now making plans for future training efforts and other long-term opportunities to serve.

Rebuilding has just begun. Dangerous aftershocks are still occurring regularly, often felt by our SIFAT mission teams more than 100 miles away in Quito. We could not have provided this help without your generosity. We thank you again for always answering His call when immediate aid is needed. Your gifts and donations directly impacted families who would not have received this support otherwise.



## SIFAT Partnership with Honduran University Expands

Kathy Bryson  
Training Director

SIFAT was delighted to host the visit of the President of the National Agriculture University (UNA) of Honduras and four of his staff on our Lineville Campus. This gave us the opportunity to reflect upon our partnership thus far, which has included offering their students scholarships to SIFAT's Field Training in World Hunger Solutions since 2012. Subsequently, we have visited their campus, exchanged faculty/staff for training workshops and founded AHESUNA, the Honduran Alumni Association of SIFAT/UNA graduates—now some 40 strong.

Recently, four members of AHESUNA went to assist SIFAT staff member Byron Morales with one session of the three-year community promoter workshop training begun through a partnership with the Alabama-based nonprofit AHMEN. It was wonderful to see these new university graduates so willing to volunteer to share their knowledge of agriculture and development with other community members working for positive change in marginalized areas of Honduras. We are inspired to continue our investment of capacity building and partnership with local Hondurans and with UNA as they work for community development in their own country.



*Above: UNA's president and four professors visited SIFAT recently from Honduras.*

*Below: Four training graduates assist in AHMEN-SIFAT training.*



## Haiti Graduation

Byron Morales  
SIFAT Trainer

After four years of working with SIFAT's Community Promoters Training Program in Haiti and with all the adversities of time, costs, social upheaval and insecurity, 39 courageous Haitian promoters received the diploma for completion of the full program in theory and practice on August 26 in the community of Simon in Les Cayes.

The program impacted their personal lives, their families and the schools and neighborhoods teaching, working and advocating for children and women's rights.



*A group of 39 community leaders recently completed a four-year training to receive their certificates. A special musical presentation was part of their graduation ceremony.*



# Fall 2016

## Save the Date!

Nov. 29

is

## #GivingTuesday

For the last three years, SIFAT has participated in #GivingTuesday as part of a nationwide rally to support nonprofits through a centralized day of giving. This year, #GivingTuesday is on Nov. 29 — the Tuesday after Thanksgiving.

Mark your calendar and tell your friends. Don't forget to make a donation to SIFAT on #GivingTuesday!

To donate online and have 100 percent of your gift go to SIFAT (no processing fees), you can give through The Advance. Use the link below and search 982812.

[www.umcmmission.org/give](http://www.umcmmission.org/give)

Click on SIFAT to go to our page and use the large, red "Give Now" button to make a donation.

Because Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church will not be offering matching funds, we need your support more than ever!

*Reminder: End-of-year gifts must be received or postmarked by Dec. 31 to receive tax credit for this year.*

## Field Study Participants Take Part in Slum Experience

Kathy Bryson  
Training Director

Each May and August, SIFAT leads a Field Study in "World Hunger and Malnutrition: Practical Skills to Make a Difference," where community leaders from developing countries live and learn with U.S. university students and international university students. In addition to interactive classroom activities demonstrating community development skills such as community mapping and conducting resource inventories, participants also learn specific appropriate technologies to meet basic human needs, such as fuel-efficient cookstoves, fortification of local foods with green leaf powder and water purification.

One part of the training is SIFAT's simulated slum, where participants experience a little of what life is like daily for millions in our world as they struggle to obtain food, water and shelter. It is truly memorable to put 50 people from around the world together in a situation like this and to see the wide range of responses to conditions of deprivation. Many Americans who have never lacked emerge from the experience with different perspectives of poverty after



*Field Study participants not only learn appropriate technologies, but they also experience what life is like in slums.*

walking in the shoes of others for just a little while. They often comment on how creative their international classmates are, as they are put together in families to try to survive in the slum.

In the end, participants are clear that it will take all of us—from both the developed and developing worlds—to join together to address poverty effectively.

## Stay Connected with SIFAT for our Latest News!

Visit our blog ([sifat.org/blog](http://sifat.org/blog)) and find us on Facebook ([facebook.com/sifatbook](https://facebook.com/sifatbook)) for updates between newsletters! Sign up for our e-newsletter on [www.sifat.org](http://www.sifat.org)

**Are you moving?** Don't forget to send us your updated contact information. E-mail [info@sifat.org](mailto:info@sifat.org) with your new mailing address, phone number and e-mail address.

# SIFAT Journal



## Water Watch Training

Kathy Bryson  
Training Director



SIFAT received a grant through Alabama Water Watch, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and the EPA Office of Environmental Education to host a special three-day certificate training on June 28-30. *Exploring our Living Streams* was designed to teach 4-H educators and others stream biomonitoring and water chemistry. We were pleasantly surprised to find out Mad Indian Creek, which runs through SIFAT's campus, is in excellent condition.

Sergio Ruiz and Mona Dominguez of Auburn taught techniques of netting and categorizing small stream critters, which requires very few materials and can be appropriate both in the US, as well as international contexts where money for expensive monitoring equipment is scarce. By matching the small water critters to pictures, even children and those with limited science backgrounds can still be good stream monitors and become citizens actively involved in protecting their own community's natural resources.



## Shop with SIFAT for the Holidays

As you start shopping this holiday season, please remember SIFAT!

### SIFAT Village Store

To schedule a time to shop or purchase a gift certificate for the Village Store, contact [villagestore@sifat.org](mailto:villagestore@sifat.org). You can buy limited items online: [sifatvillagestore.ecwid.com](http://sifatvillagestore.ecwid.com)

### Online Retailers

Popular retailers offer a percentage of your purchase as a donation to your favorite charity — SIFAT! Go to [goodshop.com](http://goodshop.com) or [iGive.com](http://iGive.com) to find coupon codes and shop at your favorite stores (you will be redirected to the retailers' sites).

Do you shop on Amazon? For a portion of your purchase to benefit SIFAT, use [smile.amazon.com/ch/63-0776048](http://smile.amazon.com/ch/63-0776048).

### Commemorative Bricks

Honor a loved one by ordering a commemorative brick for our new patio and fire pit. Order online at [www.bricksrus.com/order/sifat](http://www.bricksrus.com/order/sifat).

### In Honor / In Memory

Not sure what to give the person that has everything, or want to give a lasting gift? Send a donation to SIFAT in honor or memory of someone special with the name and address of whom you would like us to send an acknowledgement.



# Fall 2016

## What is Mission Team Success?

Peggy Walker  
International Team Coordinator

This was an eye-opening year for me concerning the purpose and goals of SIFAT's international teams. I never thought very much before about what "success" meant when we discuss the work and the mission of these short-term teams. However, while on a trip to visit our Agape orphanage and school this summer in Uganda, it finally became clear.

As I talked to those beautiful children, most of whom I have known since they were about 8 years old and are now finishing high school or attending university or trade school, I realized SIFAT's short-term mission team success is defined by what happens in the lives of the young people with whom we work all over the world. It is not just about finishing the construction of buildings or the number of patients we see on a medical team. Our success is about the lives that have been changed, the children who have been given a chance to grow up to be self-supporting adults who know the love of Christ and know what it means to have

a family of people from distant lands who give their time, their money and most importantly, their love to these kids in Uganda, Ecuador and Bolivia. And what a success story it has been in the 12 years I have been organizing these teams! On every trip, I see young people from the most humble of beginnings who are now doctors, dentists, nurses, teachers, pastors, mechanics, plumbers and students excelling in their university courses because of the education they have received in SIFAT schools, daycare centers and after-school mentoring programs. I see them leading worship in our churches in Ecuador and as mayors, leading towns in the most remote parts of Bolivia. I see them caring for patients, installing irrigation systems, repairing our broken vehicles and teaching the children who follow behind them in our programs. I see real hope for these young people, I see self confidence in what they can achieve ... I see SUCCESS!



## Thank You 2016 Mission Team Members!

### Bolivia

Auburn UMC  
Auburn University Engineers Without  
Borders

### Ecuador

LaGrange College Service Learning  
Montgomery FUMC - Medical  
Auburn University Building Science  
Auburn University Nursing

University of West Georgia Nursing  
Texas A&M University - Medical  
Clear Lake UMC  
St. Luke UMC  
St. Luke's UMC - Medical  
Alexander City Methodist Church  
Guntersville FUMC - Medical  
Faith UMC  
Aldersgate UMC  
Fairview UMC  
Montgomery FUMC

Pasadena UMC  
Cornerstone UMC

Auburn University Building Science  
Centerpointe Church - Medical  
Shreveport FUMC - Medical

### Uganda

Fairhope UMC  
Fountain Church

## Growing Up at Agape

Peggy Walker  
International Team Coordinator

In June, we took SIFAT teams from Fairhope UMC and Fountain Church from Lagrange, Ga., to work with the children at Agape Total Childcare Center and Agape Christian Academy. What a joy that was!

The teams hosted VBS for the Agape kids and built a dining hall for Agape, so they no longer have to eat in their dorm rooms. I use the term “kids” loosely as almost all are teenagers now and hardly recognizable as the young, scared, seemingly hopeless children William Nsubuga found on the streets so many years ago. They are now excellent students with a deep Christian faith, ready to go out into the world with the knowledge that they have something to contribute, that they have a family and that they are loved. Agape is their home. We are all their family, and for all their unimaginable pasts,



they now have self-esteem and know they have the support of people through SIFAT who will make sure, if they work hard and do well in school, that they will graduate, get a job, have their own family and give back to those who will follow behind them in similar circumstances.

We have almost finished constructing the school and orphanage. The graduates are attending trade schools and universities. The farm is now producing eggs, milk and produce for the children, as well as a little revenue for the school.

It is always a blessing to be with these kids and always a sadness to see so many who are in just as much need as ours were only a few years ago. It is endless in Africa. SIFAT, William and all our supporters can only do so much, but for those few we have been able to touch, oh what a difference it has made! Their hugs, their love, the overwhelming greeting when you get off that bus ... it is like nothing you have ever experienced!



## Donate IRA Distributions to SIFAT

Maximize your donation to SIFAT by transferring from your IRA tax free.

A law permanently passed in Congress in 2015 now allows individuals 70½ and older to transfer their yearly required minimum distribution (RMD) from an IRA directly to SIFAT without

those funds being taxed.

This donation does not increase your adjusted gross income, which may be helpful if you do not itemize and cannot deduct charitable contributions. Also, it may be helpful to keep your distribution out of your adjusted

gross income to avoid Medicare high-income surcharge or help make less of your Social Security benefits taxable.

Please consult your financial advisor and/or accountant for professional tax advice and more information on how to donate from your IRA to SIFAT.



# Fall 2016

## Bridging Generation Gaps on Mission Trips



*St. Luke UMC brings teams to SIFAT to participate in L&S retreats before going to Ecuador. Their team has an easier transition time after arriving in country because of the preparation they received at SIFAT.*



*The 2016 St. Luke UMC Ecuador team's youngest member was 13 years old, while the oldest on the team was 67. They believe in breaking age barriers among members in the church, and an international mission trip brings the youngest and oldest together to serve others as the hands and feet of Jesus!*

Jason Martin  
St. Luke UMC Team Leader

This summer, St. Luke United Methodist Church from Tupelo, Miss., made its third visit to Ecuador. In preparation for mission work, we consider what it looks like to be people that live out our calling to provide a hand up to the marginalized and the poor. We understand that our perspectives towards the mission field must be focused in four areas: locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. We have been utilizing the incredible resources of SIFAT for many years. What started out as an every three-year venture has transitioned to every other year with hopes of going every year.

As a youth pastor, one of my roles is to help build relationships between teenagers and older adults. We have a 5 to 1 ratio mindset, where we want students to have significant relationships with at least five other adults beyond their parents and myself. In doing so, we specifically work towards building relationships with older adults. We have found that these adults are a tremendous asset to the youth ministry.

When we put together a team for Ecuador, we do so with an eye towards a broad spectrum of participants. On our most recent trip, our youngest participant was 13, and our oldest was 67. We believe that our best efforts come when we span these age barriers that are falsely put into place. Those barriers are that young people cannot travel abroad because they are irresponsible or that older people cannot be effective because of their limitations. We know that these barriers are unfounded. Students and seniors alike are capable of being the hands and feet of Jesus when we pair them together.

As we prepare for our experience in Ecuador, we specifically plan a retreat to SIFAT prior to our departure. We utilize the campus in Alabama to help prepare our participants for their experience in a developing country. We have found that this retreat, which utilizes the Learn & Serve model, provides experience that is invaluable to the preparation of our team. Then as we arrive in Ecuador, the transition to our time in this developing country is eased because of the preparation that we did at SIFAT.



## Lessons Learned in VBS

Sherri Swickard  
Faith UMC Mission Team Leader

Another year has come and gone! Another week of sharing God's love in Ecuador. As usual, everything yet nothing was the same. I was not even sure I was going to be able to go! Prior to the trip, I had some medical problems, but it all worked out as it always does when God is in control.

This year we had 14 people on our team, a few less than last year, but one thing I have learned over the years is that each year we end up with the perfect number! This year, we returned to Calderon, which is always nice as we get to see the people we worked with before and reinvest in the relationships we previously built.

Because of my health scare, I could only be part of VBS, which was hard to do since I always enjoy the construction part of our work. But, if I had done construction rather than VBS, I may have missed out on what were two of my favorite days!

The program we were doing that day was on the Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). We read the scripture along with a short story of what the fruits were and what they meant. We always go into these programs hoping to teach scripture to the kids. I asked the kids if they had heard the story before and all raised their hands. I then asked if they could tell me what the fruits were. In unison, they started calling them out in the exact same order as they show up in scripture! I thought I am not sure I could do that! I could probably come up with all nine of them, but who knows what order they would be in. That night during our devotion time, I started telling the team what happened and then asked all of them if they could do it. We tried, but the answer was a resounding no! The best part was realizing that as we (and the other teams) teach Bible stories to the children they are listening and absorbing them in a way that we do not always do.

The next day, we were discussing the Armor of God to the teenagers. It was

interesting to hear that they had never heard that story. Since they had not, we went into a little more depth on what it meant to put on that armor every morning before you leave your house. When we asked what problems in their lives they thought the armor might protect them from, the first response was bullying in school. Then we heard alcohol, drugs and all of the other typical teenage issues. That day we were able to teach them that a teen is a teen is a teen! It really does not matter where you live, what your background is or even when you were a teen. We are all alike and have the same problems in our lives. To make that day even better, I was adopted by three of the teens to be their American grandmother! A day I might have missed if I had been doing construction!

*Below left: Construction teams made much progress on the Calderon church addition, which continues for our 2017 project!*

*Below right: Although unable to help with construction this year, Sherri found three teenagers willing to "adopt" her during VBS!*





# Fall 2016

## We Shall Help Each Other in Quesimpuco

Ivan Roman

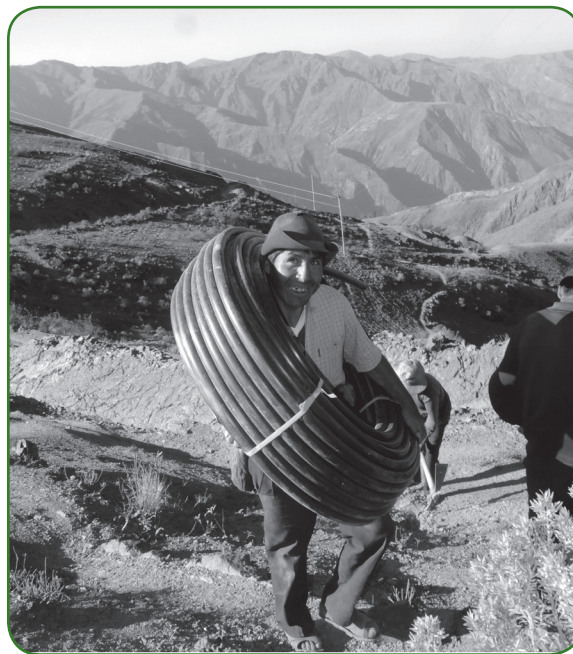
Latin America Project Coordinator

Sharing God's love in practical ways sometimes takes us far away from our comfort zones. Many who wish to go on a mission trip, but cannot, help others to go. For many years, SIFAT has brought together teams of visionaries ready to invest in the Gospel. I would like to share our progress in Quesimpuco, with the hope that you will rejoice and continue to help us be a life giving presence in places few dare to go.

This summer, Auburn UMC and Auburn University's Engineers Without Borders worked in Quesimpuco to help make the plan a reality as the most pressing needs of a community are met. SIFAT/CENATEC works in four specific areas there: Education and Training, Missions and Evangelism, Public Health, and Socioeconomics. These four areas reflect our goal to minister to the whole being, at both personal and community levels.

In Education and Training, we sponsor Delfin Cahuaya, a teacher in computer science, Christian education and music. In Public Health, we were blessed to have the community use their privileged status as an Ancestral Autonomous Community to request municipal health authorities for our own Dr. Ruth Noemi Mamani to become the head of the Quesimpuco Health District, which includes Quesimpuco and four other villages. Except for Quesimpuco, these communities do not have road access, and some are more than eight hours

away by foot. Since she is a native of the area, Dr. Ruth Noemi is at home walking those trails to reach the neediest. Dr. Rebeca Churata has recently finished her studies to be a dentist. We are expecting the government to assign her part-time to Quesimpuco. These two doctors, both SIFAT trained, will make a great team to staff SIFAT's health program.



*A community member carries irrigation materials on a mountain trail near Quesimpuco. Families are organizing into farming groups to help build microirrigation systems to grow crops!*

Through Yanapanakuna Farmer Association (Yanapanakuna is Quechua for "we shall help each other"), the community has organized into Agricultural Production Units (APU). An APU is a community-based agricultural land unit with its own

water source, water storage tank and irrigation grid managed and maintained by each neighborhood. Since 2012, Yanapanakuna has helped organize three APUs in the area around Quesimpuco. In August, two more communities asked to join. These communities met with Auburn University's Engineers Without Borders and made plans to be part of the new five-year commitment with the communities. This plan will include other community proposals, including a foot bridge over a creek (which swells mightily during the rainy season) to enable farmers to bring their produce to the main road, a guinea pig farm and a naturally heated greenhouse prototype.

Quesimpuco also hosted Auburn UMC, which brought a team of veterinarians, a construction crew and veteran missionary nurse Sharon Rooks, who assisted Dr. Ruth Noemi and Dr. Rebeca. More than 2,500 animals received vaccinations and parasite medicine; the veterinarians traveled to nearby villages to take care of sheep, goats, cattle, some pigs and a chicken. The construction crew helped community members lay pipes for their irrigation distribution grid. Opelika FUMC provided funds for medicines, which were bought directly from Bolivian labs.

Yes, you have been a part of this huge enterprise! Your prayers and contributions have helped SIFAT be the bridge our Bolivian brothers and sisters need to walk out of underdevelopment, isolation and disease into a new era of hope and dignity.

## My Trek to Quesimpuco

Samuel Corson  
Bolivia Team Member

In July, I went to Bolivia with my Dad (SIFAT executive director Tom Corson) on a team from Auburn UMC. We worked with veterinary and irrigation projects in the Andes Mountains near Quesimpuco. Before approaching the challenges Bolivia had to offer, I thought about what we would be doing there and why it was necessary. SIFAT's purpose in mission is sharing God's love in practical ways. As we served more needy people each day, I learned something really important: by attempting to touch those around me, I found that they really touched me. I felt that we helped each other.

The moment we arrived in the impoverished village of Quesimpuco, the impact of poverty struck me. The people wore hand-sewn garments and cheaply made sandals to protect their gnarled feet. Simple things we take for granted in the States were nowhere to be found. Another shock to the inner millennial inside me was no cell service!

This basic luxury I had comforted myself with was gone. Setting aside apparel and the modernized luxury of a cell phone, we found that the most essential things we needed were food and safe drinking water, which were provided for us by our team.

Indigenous families came with herds of sheep, goats and cattle. I helped the veterinary group part of the time. Our job was to inject each animal with medicine to prevent parasites or illness. Once their animals were seen, we would pray with the family and say goodbye. I also helped the engineers part of the time with setting up a pipeline for irrigation. I felt this was one of the most effective forms of ministry in which we could engage. Giving an arid, mountainous region access to water for growing crops or simply to drink is providing a need not to be taken lightly.

Of the many beautiful things I saw in Bolivia, I was most touched by the children. Their genuine smiles never failed to make me fall in love with each one of them. Although our different languages may have set up communication barriers, we shared unforgettable experiences. To be a part of the lives of these children and feel their love are moments I will never forget. Saying farewell sparked a promise to return one day.

After seeing SIFAT's ministry of sharing God's love in practical ways carried out, it was clear to me that the driving force behind missions is possessing a gospel-centered heart. I felt that the same sacrificial love that Christ showed us on the cross was lived out in our cross-cultural encounter between the Bolivians and the Americans. As team members, we gave to a cause that was greater than ourselves, but we received far more than we gave. We felt the joy of working with Christ together with our Bolivian brothers and sisters for the Kingdom of God.



*Samuel Corson, SIFAT executive director Tom Corson's son, went to Quesimpuco for the first time this summer. Samuel spent much of his time with the veterinary component of the team helping to deworm and vaccinate the livestock.*



# Fall 2016

## Pastor Felipe's Legacy

Tom Corson  
Executive Director

Many of you remember SIFAT graduate Felipe. I remember him as the pastor who served us potato soup three times a day in a training we did for the people of his hometown. That soup was the most expensive food I had ever eaten. It cost Pastor Felipe a painful climb over an incredibly steep and high mountain peak to the next village to get the bushel of potatoes. But, it gave food to the large crowd who came to SIFAT's training. Pastor Felipe's leg was swollen from osteomyelitis. Sores had to be cleaned daily from the infection in his leg bone working to the surface. He could not bend his knee and he could hardly walk, but he climbed that mountain and carried the potatoes back, even though it took him two days to do it. Food was very scarce in his village, but he ensured that everyone at the training had meals.

The testimony of Pastor Felipe's faith deeply touched everyone who heard him. He truly loved Jesus, and he loved every person he met. Even when he was slowly dying, he would not quit. His favorite Bible verse was Philippians 1:21, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." When SIFAT supporters brought him to the best medical care they could find in the Southeast, doctors said he had three months to live. He returned to Bolivia and founded two more churches – in villages where there was none – before he left us to go to his eternal home. Pastor Felipe said the only sadness about dying was that his children would be unable to continue in school and prepare themselves for service. A group of SIFAT supporters promised to pay for his children's education, so he died happy. They were true to that promise.

Felipe's daughter, Rebeca, recently graduated dental school and opened a small clinic. In August, she served with our team in Quesimpuco, where there is no dentist. This is the village we have called *the end of the world*. Dr. Rebeca was deeply moved by the poverty of the people there and spoke at the team's closing supper.

"I have a good job, and for the first time in my life, enough money to live without stress," she said. "But I see the need of these people, and I see the struggle of SIFAT to get a good health program established in this area. I remember what SIFAT did for my dad, and the schooling you have given me to help me become a dentist. I want to be part of SIFAT's work here. I feel this is the legacy my father left me – that serving God by serving the neediest is the greatest life we could ever live."



Dr. Ruth Noemi, the little shepherd girl whom our supporters sent to medical school after she graduated from our high school in Quesimpuco, is working as the doctor for that area. With Dr. Rebeca, they would make a great team. Thanks to dentists in the Auburn area, we already have funding for some dental equipment

for Dr. Rebeca. We are working through the Bolivian health department to enable her to join in the work in Quesimpuco.

Some fathers leave their children money to invest to keep them secure in this world. But Pastor Felipe left Rebeca the legacy of a vision – to serve the neediest in the name of Jesus. What a great opportunity God gave us to empower Pastor Felipe in his ministry and to make it possible for his daughter to prepare and continue to serve our Lord into the next generation.

### Planned Giving for SIFAT's Future

Did you know that you can donate stocks or leave provisions for SIFAT in your will?

Contact executive director Tom Corson, [corsont@sifat.org](mailto:corsont@sifat.org), for more information.

## SIFAT Combats Hunger

Sarah Corson  
SIFAT Co-founder

I once visited a woman being held in jail for disturbing the peace when she was drunk at a party. She told me where she lived and asked me to go check on her children. It was such a sad visit. Five little children were huddled together, cold and hungry. The youngest, about 18 months old, appeared to be mentally challenged. He sat still on the floor, looked straight through us when we tried to talk to him. He did not show the slightest response, as if he did not see us. I held him in my arms, and he did not resist, nor did he respond. He was clearly alive, but it seemed that his brain did not process anything, as though he could not feel. We turned on the heat and cooked a meal for the hungry children. As I took the baby in my arms to feed him, suddenly he saw the plate of food and lunged forward almost jumping out of my lap. I grabbed him just in time to keep him from falling. He began to eat with great enthusiasm. After he was full, he was a different child. He was laughing and playing with the other children. There was such a drastic change, that he did not appear to be the same baby. It was a shocking example of what terrible things hunger can do to a human being's personality.

SIFAT has been working for 37 years to help stop hunger! Today, Galilee Campus provides demonstrations of many things that we teach both Christian

workers from a global audience and American young people whose lives are being directed into paths where they may choose to make a difference in the world for Christ.



*SIFAT gardener John Carr and Farm to Table Interns Blaze Johnson, Sarah Grace Kirkendall and Sean McMahon are growing fresh vegetables on the Galilee Campus that are being used in the cafeteria for Learn & Serve and training participants. The cafeteria staff, led by manager Hellen Hopkins, are canning and freezing the extra to use throughout the year!*

Teaching how to grow more nutritious food has been a major part of our work. This summer, SIFAT's gardener John Carr has an amazing garden! It is a great teaching tool, as well as providing the food for the groups studying at SIFAT. Because of three Farm to Table Interns, the garden has provided bushels of fresh food for our cafeteria and neighbors. Sarah Grace Kirkendall, Sean McMahon and Blaze Johnson learn by working alongside John each day. These interns help John grow, cultivate and harvest the

food. They help our cafeteria manager, Hellen Hopkins cook and serve this produce. By investing a few months of their lives this summer at SIFAT, these interns have been instrumental in training our graduates and youth to help hungry people in many parts of the world.

While our Galilee Campus in Alabama is filled with youth in our Learn & Serve Summer Experience, a group of SIFAT mission team members have been working in Uganda helping William and the children in Agape Child Care Center. Other teams served in Ecuador with families in the slums, in addition to helping with the Ecuadorian earthquake victims. In early August, Auburn University's Engineers Without Borders team followed the Auburn UMC mission team in Quesimpuco, Bolivia, to help build another irrigation system to provide food in the

dry season. SIFAT training graduates have returned to their countries with the knowledge and skills they learned to share the integrated Gospel of Christ for body, mind and soul.

SIFAT began 37 years ago to help hurting people find the ABUNDANT LIFE Jesus came to bring us. Our vision includes spiritual and physical health! You have been helping us reach those who are lost, hungry and suffering.



# Fall 2016

## Nursing Classes Participate in L&S Retreats

Amy Weaver  
Auburn University OCM

*Editor's Note: The original article appeared on The Newsroom on Auburn University's Office of Communications & Marketing website in September 2014. Auburn University and Auburn Montgomery continue to bring classes to SIFAT each semester. This article has been edited for length and reprinted with permission. To read the entire article, go to [www.ocm.auburn.edu/newsroom/news\\_articles/2014/09/auburn,-aum-nursing-students-transformed-with-trip-to-lineville,-alabama.htm#](http://www.ocm.auburn.edu/newsroom/news_articles/2014/09/auburn,-aum-nursing-students-transformed-with-trip-to-lineville,-alabama.htm#)*

Whether or not Auburn and Auburn Montgomery nursing students travel to Quito, Ecuador, to provide health care to women and children, they all get to travel to Lineville, Ala., for a simulated experience.

For Auburn and AUM nursing students, a trek around parts of the 176-acre campus in Randolph County is designed to show them the living conditions in places like Uganda, Bolivia, Liberia and Nepal. They also see a slum that would be found in an urban area.

SIFAT staff members explain how dwellings were made and how natives live and prepare meals. They also use a garden to teach students about sustainable production techniques.

“The SIFAT experience makes an impact on our students, whether or not they go abroad,” said AUM Assistant Professor Ginny Langham. “Extreme poverty and hunger, homelessness and malnutrition occur within the United States and Alabama, not just in Third World countries.

“With the high number of rural counties in Alabama, it’s vital that health care providers be knowledgeable of and sensitive to the unique needs of vulnerable populations. ‘Health Promotion, Disease Prevention’ is the mantra of our public health nursing course. The activities at SIFAT allow students to understand the significance of community education to promote healthy living and prevent illness and disease among those who are in need.”

About a decade ago, Auburn nursing students started making annual mission trips to Ecuador with SIFAT volunteers. In 2006, only students in the cultural course went to Lineville. All Auburn students began going there in 2010; AUM students began in 2013. Auburn and AUM faculty have been so impressed with SIFAT it is now part of the curriculum on both campuses.

Auburn Associate Professor Kathy Jo Ellison said she is grateful for the change in the curriculum for what the experience can add for students.

“They teach some core cultural values that are not part of the study abroad trips – how you empower and not hand out to inspire personal and community growth, how to give back without appearing superior,” she said. “They use interactive experiences to help students realize what it is like to be oppressed and feel hungry. They hear about the use of appropriate technology, how clean water can be produced with what you have on hand, and how health is taught and addressed in areas where there is no doctor. It can be quite powerful for students.”

To experience oppression and hunger, lunch is only served to a certain number of students. Those without a meal are left to watch others eat.

Auburn’s Leandra Milton was ready to eat lunch as she entered the dining hall. She had picked a white chip so she sat at the corresponding table. For the demonstration, it meant she would not be given a meal. The few students who picked red chips enjoyed a complete meal. The three or four tables that made up students with blue chips each shared a plate of tortillas. White chips went without.

“We all just sat and watched the people at the red table eat. After they finished eating, we talked about how we felt,” she

*Continued on page 15*

### Learn & Serve Interns Needed for 2017

Are you a college-aged person wanting to serve on our campus? Internships with our Learn & Serve campus programs are available! Questions? Go to [www.sifat.org/learn-serve](http://www.sifat.org/learn-serve) for information

## L&S 2016: A Counselor's Perspective

Ryan King  
Learn & Serve Counselor

This summer, eight phenomenal counselors, one superb worship leader, three wonderful farm-to-table interns, the best program director and assistant program director spent seven weeks teaching and serving nearly 400 student and adult participants in the 2016 Learn & Serve (L&S) Summer Experience. Our theme this summer was Restoration, and Romans 8:18-21 was our core scripture.

In this passage, Paul describes creation as waiting eagerly to be liberated and restored from its bondage to sin and decay. In our lessons and small groups, we taught about how God is working presently in the world to bring about such a restoration to His creation. We talked about where restoration is found (through Jesus), the physical restoration of our broken world, the spiritual restoration each of us needs as broken people, and taking part in restorative action – entering into the story of redemption and restoration our God has been writing in His

### REGISTER FOR L&S 2017 NOW!

Session One: June 4 - 9  
Session Two: June 11 - 16  
Session Three: June 18 - 23  
Session Four: June 25 - 30  
Session Five: July 9 - 14  
Session Six: July 16 - 21  
Session Seven: July 23 - 28

Visit [www.sifat.org/learn-serve](http://www.sifat.org/learn-serve) for more information and to register your group or individual now.

### Nursing Retreats

*(Continued from page 14)*

said. “It was eye opening for me because this was a simulation of how the world eats. Most people eat very little or not at all, and if they do eat, it’s not always nutritious. When all was said and done, everyone did get to eat, but I think we appreciated it more.”

In the garden, students learned how items like the leaves of a sweet potato plant could be dried, ground up and mixed with corn meal to make tortillas. The students also learned

creation, and invites us to write with Him, ever since it fell away from Him.

As we formed new relationships with the students and adults, we also got to hear their stories of how they need/have seen/have participated in restoration. The highlight of it all was watching the students grow and better understand the work of restoration taking place in their lives and seeing them empowered to strive for restoration for our brothers and sisters as well!

L&S 2016 was the best summer of not only my life, but I’m sure many students and other staff, as well. As fantastic as it was, I know the best is yet to come. And how exciting is that!



*Our Learn & Serve Summer counselors led the Restoration themed Summer Experience this year. College students and recent graduates can find information about 2017 internships and summer staff positions on [www.sifat.org/learn-serve](http://www.sifat.org/learn-serve).*

how to build a garden in a bag, a technique that is useful in environments where space is limited.

“I think this is going to make me a better nurse by helping me realize that not everyone is as fortunate as I am,” said Auburn’s Emily Higgins. “And being able to see how I can come up with cost effective ways to help the patient experience better health care.”



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Return Service Requested

**SIFAT's Vision:** Bridging the First and Two-thirds Worlds to alleviate spiritual and physical poverty, encouraging people to develop their God-given potential.

**SIFAT's Mission:** To share God's love through service, education and personal involvement with a needy world.

## From the Desk of Tom Corson

**S**IFAT needs you! I am writing today to ask you to become a monthly donor through our SHARE program as addressed in this issue's cover story. By joining the SIFAT board of directors, our staff and other vested supporters to become a *SHAREholder*, we can count on predictable and stable funding for the organization to plan and provide consistent staff and outreach to some of "the least of these around the world". This commitment will allow us to thrive, ensuring sustainability and magnifying SIFAT's impact for so many needy people and communities. Becoming a *SHAREholder* is simple, easy to set up, and makes all the difference in the world to allow SIFAT to create lasting change.

**F**or 37 years, SIFAT has actively engaged in addressing the root causes of poverty through training people how to meet their basic human needs. We have successfully supported projects and educated thousands of people ... from pastors, community leaders, medical and public health professionals to teachers and students from elementary school through university ... folks that want to make a difference in the world by *Sharing God's Love in Practical Ways!*

**A**s you read through this edition of the *SIFAT Journal*, the stories and articles are a testimony to what God is

doing through SIFAT. With your commitment, we are uniquely positioned at this time to grow and equip Christian workers more effectively than ever to meet the enormous needs in our world today. Your decision to be part of this with us is hugely significant!

**I** thank God and each of you that have been part of praying, participating and supporting us for all these years because SIFAT would not be here without you. Will you take another step to ensure SIFAT as an organization will continue to grow and flourish for years to come? Will you join and become a *SHAREholder* and commit to give monthly? No amount is too small. Don't wait! Simply fill out the enclosed form on the return envelope and mail your commitment to SIFAT. You will soon receive a certificate showing that you have answered the call to allow SIFAT to continue to make a difference for the Kingdom!

Partners in Christ!

Learn more about *SHARE* on the front page of this issue of the *SIFAT Journal!*