

Our Resurrected Christ Brings Hope!

Kathy Bryson
International Training Director

At SIFAT, we focus on meeting basic human needs—food, water, basic sanitation, microenterprise, health— physical needs that are vital for development. But, we also work in holistic development that includes restoring broken relationships with self, others, creation and God.

We may help people have food to eat, clean water to drink and even to begin a microenterprise. But if they live in a relationship where they are constantly berated, physically abused and oppressed, they may find it hard to believe that God loves them or that they are worthy of love.

I went to a meeting with rural women farmers to meet our neighbors near our new property in Costa Rica. During the meeting, stories of pain, humiliation, anger, abuse and hurt tumbled out of the lips of these women, but several also told of how they were able to face their problems because Jesus had become real to them and helped them. I was amazed at their experiences in a reality so different from my life experience of a supportive father and loving husband. I was amazed how God's Holy Spirit moved through these women, helping them to face abandonment, poverty and abuse.

Juana was totally silent and withdrawn, but at last, she felt empowered to tell her story. She was married for 30 years. She worked hard daily, milking cows and taking care of farm animals. While her husband got paid for it, she did most of the work, plus housekeeping, cooking and raising the children. He continually berated her, calling her a fat

ugly slob. She looked down and said, "I guess I am, but he shouldn't say that." Tears streamed down her face as she sobbed. One woman got her a tissue. The next one gave her a cup of water. Two others put their arms around her.

The suffering Christ was there in the midst of their pain and struggles. And He used others who had experienced similar things to minister to each other. These were powerful moments experienced together, bearing one another's burdens. Many must have left feeling lighter after sharing their stories and being heard. It gave them strength,

knowing they were not alone. The cages of poverty, lack of education and opportunity, continual abuse and low self-esteem are oppressive and still there. SIFAT is called to be in mission and ministry to a hurting world, holistically.

Yes, we will continue to promote food security, clean water and job skills. But, we will also seek to heal the broken-hearted and wounded spirit by sharing God's all encompassing, unrelenting,

unconditional love that truly transforms hearts, lives and communities and allows us to develop.

Soon, we will celebrate Easter. We are resurrection people! I heard that joy in some of the stories of these women. I am thankful I have the opportunity to work with these women and our students from many communities across the world where life is harsh. Thank you for supporting SIFAT and helping us reach people like Juana! We need your help to take the message of the resurrected Christ and his Integrated Gospel to others! Please partner with us in SIFAT's new Latin American ministry as you worship the Living Christ this Easter.



Thank You for Supporting SIFAT Do

Roberto and Monica Contreras
SIFAT Ecuador Directors

"Then these righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?'

And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!' "

Matthew 25:37-40

Isaiah was born on May 5, 2020, in the midst of a worldwide pandemic. He was completely malnourished at birth because his mother did not have the resources for a good diet during her pregnancy. His first cry would not be his only cry. He continually was crying from his birth until August, because he was hungry.

In Ecuador, 1 of 4 children less than 5 years old is chronically malnourished. Isaiah was that child. Malnutrition limits a child's full development and leaves traces for a lifetime. Children with malnutrition are more likely to become adults with low stature, fewer educational achievements and lower financial incomes during adulthood. This not only impacts the individual, but also affects the social and economic development of communities and our country.

Because of donations given for SIFAT Doctor in your House, we have been able to provide nutritional reinforcement since August when Dr. Roberto learned about Isaiah's situation. He will not become a sad statistic.

Like Isaiah, 500 children, adults and the elderly who live in extreme poverty were suffering from diabetes, hypertension,

psychological diseases, gynecological diseases, epilepsy, etc. They have benefited through our program with virtual medical visits and needed medications for 30 days. Another 500 children were checked and given parasite treatments and vitamins for one month, as well as medical certificates for school. SIFAT provided 200 expecting mothers checkups and prenatal vitamins. Additionally, 500 adults and elderly people received vitamins for one month. These people are all part of the marginal urban communities of our 11 SIFAT Ecuador projects: Guamaní, Cutuglahua, Machachi, Villaflores, Puengasí, Llano Grande, Calderón, Aida León, Puyo-Amazonia, Atacucho and El Beaterio.

In Aida León, we met Estefania. She is 23 years old, married and has two young children, ages 1 and 5. After her mother died from breast cancer, Estefania adopted her three younger siblings, ages 8, 12 and 13. Estefania is a maid and her husband is a bricklayer. They are out of work and are struggling to keep their family alive. Their family often cannot eat three meals per day.

Estefania and her husband, like so many Ecuadorians, are being impacted by COVID-19 in Ecuador. The statistics reveal that about 300,000 have been infected and almost 16,000 people died in the pandemic so far (as of Feb. 2021). Already, it has left 1 million people unemployed, while another 5.3 million workers are in precarious working conditions. The decline in production that Ecuador's economy faced during the beginning of the pandemic is ongoing and has resulted in a significant drop in the labor market, leaving 83 percent of the workforce unemployed or precarious. According to official statistics, only 17 percent of the economically active population has a job that meets the minimum legal requirements.

But, there is hope for Estefania's family because our Golden Bread program could provide monthly gifts of rice, a staple in Ecuadorian homes. Now, the seven members of this family have something to eat for their daily lunch. Like Estefania, another 17,000 of the most vulnerable, who are part of our



Doctor in your House — 2020 Report

SIFAT projects, have been able to receive rice donations during the past eight months of pandemic. Because of your financial support, we have been able to also include dozens of Venezuelan refugees in search of a better future for their families.

With tears in their eyes, Mary, 70, and Francisco, 71, said, “Thank you SIFAT brothers and sisters! We now have a hot breakfast every day. Before, we wanted to die because we had no hope, but now we see that God exists and that He loves us.”

By the end of 2020, Ecuador will have a population of approximately 1.3 million people over the age of 65; 57.4 percent of this older adult population is in poverty or extreme poverty. This means that 6 out of 10 older adults in Ecuador reach retirement without a fixed source of income that allows them to survive. Lack of income is one of the main problems of the elderly people. Older adults in need do not have access to a decent employment, which causes them to look for jobs in cleaning or construction services, but in extreme cases, they are forced to resort to begging. Begging is the harsh reality of the majority of the elderly in the slum of Atucucho. Because of your donations, SIFAT has provided 12,800 hot breakfasts. So, Maria, Francisco and 78 other elderly living here ate a hot breakfast daily for the past eight months.

In Ecuador, we eat guaguas de pan (a special pastry) and drink colada morada (a purple sweet soup) on November 2 each year. The elderly in Atucucho could not imagine participating in this tradition, but SIFAT provided this treat for them. On that Monday, we were Sharing God’s Love in Practical Ways to each one of these 80 elders.

We are taught to be “Doers of God’s Word, not only Hearers.” All of you, our brothers and sisters in Christ, who have supported SIFAT’s ministry in Ecuador have been doers of God’s Word! Matthew 25:37-40 has been a reality for Ecuadorians in extreme poverty aggravated by the pandemic. Thank you for your prayers and financial support! There is much still to be done for those in need. We are counting on each one of you, our SIFAT family, to help us continue this program in 2021. May God bless each of you and reward all your generosity!

Please designate your gift to SIFAT Doctor in your House on the check memo or in the notes of your online donations. For all of our Doctor in your House updates, visit

www.sifat.org/tag/sifat-doctor-in-your-house



Estefania uses an app to have a virtual doctor’s visit with Dr. Roberto in Ecuador. Her family received rice, so their family would be able to eat after she and her husband lost their jobs during the pandemic. With your support, our programs in Ecuador have helped almost 18,000 people!

A note from Peggy Walker, our international team coordinator

Dr. Roberto and Mónica sent updated news from Quito recently. On Feb. 7, presidential elections were held, and a new president will take office in late May, which means new regulations and plans may be put into place. So far, Ecuador has only received enough vaccines for 4,000 people, and there are at least 200,000 medical workers on the front lines. It is reported that doses for 39,000 more people will arrive after April. There has not been a vaccination schedule released for the general public. When we look at the reported numbers, we expect they are extremely under reported, since many in the communities where our projects are located do not have access to medical facilities for testing. We know the needs of these communities are going to continue to increase as the economy has been shattered, and people struggle to survive. We will be sharing our plans for completing the construction project in Aida Leon in the next SIFAT Journal. We hope you will continue to be “Doers of God’s Word” and support our programs in Ecuador.

A New Partnership in Ecuador

Peggy Walker
International Team Coordinator

SIFAT Ecuador is excited to announce a new partnership with World Vision, a Christian organization helping children, families and communities overcome poverty and injustice. For the next few years, SIFAT teams will be working with World Vision in El Beaterio, a very impoverished community in the south of Quito.

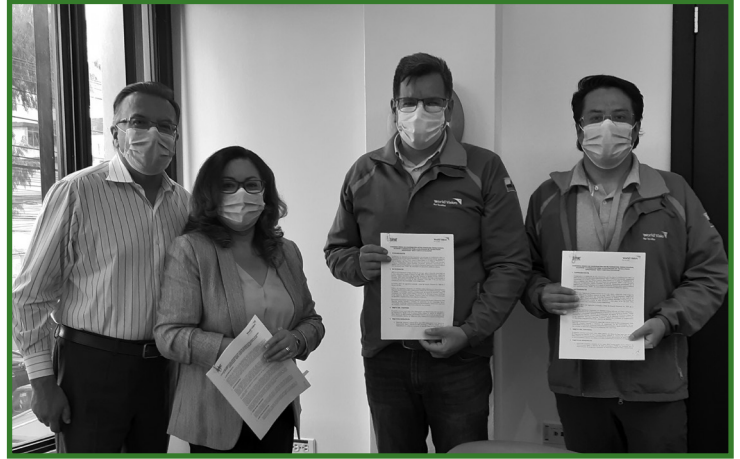
SIFAT and World Vision have similar goals—to work alongside the poor as a demonstration of God’s unconditional love and empower communities to set their own goals, equipping them so that progress is sustained and continued long after we leave the communities.

El Beaterio is an area of extreme poverty, much like Atucucho was 20 years ago when SIFAT teams changed the future for the children of that community by building Little Seeds of God and Mama Yoli’s House. Our first project in El Beaterio will be the construction of a daycare/training center to help bring about the same kind of change in this community.

Because of COVID-19, construction plans must be put on hold until early 2022. However, through our *Doctor in your House* program, Dr. Roberto has already started our health initiative to take care of the children in greatest need. This year, we hope to provide vitamins and parasite medicines to more than 1,000 children in El Beaterio. In 2022, we need at least eight medical teams to see as many as possible of the 1,900 children and 8,000 of their relatives waiting for medical care. The need is dire. Many of these children are handicapped and have underlying conditions, such as diabetes and epilepsy. Dr. Roberto is also praying for two women’s health teams, as many of the ladies have never seen a doctor. It will be a challenge to meet the medical needs of this community, but we know that SIFAT teams have never shied away from treating the most needy, always showing great love and compassion. As always, a VBS component is needed on every team. This community is mainly unchurched, so we want to make sure the children are taught about Jesus. According to Dr. Roberto, a majority of these children have been abused, and many are from single parent homes. How wonderful to know they can laugh, be hugged and feel the love offered by our wonderful VBS team members.

Although we will be working with World Vision in El Beaterio, we cannot neglect those communities where we worked in the past. To serve those people, medical teams will also be needed for clinics in Guamani, Machachi, Atucucho and Velasco.

We pray that SIFAT teams will be able to travel to Ecuador in 2022. There is much work to be done and many dear friends waiting for us to return. Please start organizing a team now, because the needs have never been greater. We will be working closely with our staff in Quito to make sure all team members will be safe as Ecuador reopens. Please contact me by email at walkerp@sifat.org for more information.



Dr. Roberto and Monica Contreras with World Vision representatives after they signed a new partnership in November. SIFAT teams will work with World Vision in El Beaterio in the south of Quito.

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Are you moving? Don’t forget to send us your updated contact information. E-mail info@sifat.org with your new mailing address, phone number and e-mail address.

Overcoming Obstacles in Bolivia

Sarah Corson
SIFAT Co-founder

Huber Ramos is the director of CENATEC, SIFAT's sister organization in Bolivia. At 80 years old, Benjo is still very active and serving as president. They are working together on a poultry project in Sapecho, which will provide another protein source for the area and help pay CENATEC's operating expenses. This project is being funded by people like that support our graduates through our Graduates' Project Committee. Since they started last June, there have been many obstacles to overcome, but they do not give up easily. The government's lockdown response to COVID-19 meant they could not get roofing, nails and materials for the three buildings to house the chickens, but they cut trees to use as posts for the roof. Finally, they were able to get the other materials from the city. Now, they have the electricity and water in the buildings, and the rice hulls for bedding are ready to put down. Again, they had to wait several weeks for the government to approve their business as safe food for the public. When that was finally completed, another unforeseen obstacle arose.

The commercial farms that grew soybeans were offered a higher price to sell to other countries, so their crops were exported, leaving Bolivia with very little commercial chicken feed, causing the price to soar. The government sets the price of the chickens higher to pay for the extra cost of their feed. But, CENATEC must buy chicken feed before they can recoup it when they sell the chickens. The feed costs are much higher than their budget will allow. However, the government and soybean farmers are negotiating to maintain enough soybeans at home to keep the cost of the feed down. This struggle over who gets the soybeans is an effect of the hunger pandemic triggered by COVID-19. Huber and Benjo have not given up hope. They feel sure something will happen soon and are praying for a positive outcome. Waiting is not new to them. They have learned patience and perseverance.

Meanwhile, they are helping others. Benjo and Huber investigated which flowers can grow at the high altitude of Iputi, a village near Quesimpuco where the Auburn University Engineers Without Borders helped install a microirrigation system. Now that they have water, they can plant flowers that will feed the bees. But they do not have flower seed in their isolated village. Quesimpuco has been producing honey since SIFAT gave beekeeping training there decades ago. Now that

Iputi has a water source, they could raise bees.

What flowers grow best and feed the bees? Benjo and Huber found that a tree called Lluvias de Oro/ Golden Rain. The tree is loaded with flowers, so even one or two seeds for each family would grow a tree with a mass of flowers. But when they went to Iputi to deliver the seed, Benjo became very sick. While traveling, he did not have food that his body could handle with diabetes. He almost died, but Huber got him back to the capital city to a hospital. After several weeks, he is now better and actively pursuing the things CENATEC can do while they wait for the market to adjust the cost of chicken feed. Please pray for his strength and health. CENATEC is involved in a number of other ways they are helping people who have lost their jobs because of Covid-19. And each project has its own obstacles.

One of our joys at SIFAT is hearing from our graduates as they write us about their experiences taking their SIFAT training back to their

neighborhoods. Sometimes we feel overwhelmed with the many obstacles they face. But, we also are inspired by the patience our graduates have. If they can not get over an obstacle, they will find a way to go around it. Lifetimes of living in hard places where there is very little infrastructure to provide basic needs has instilled a deep dependence on God to help them find some way to reach their goals. Most of our graduates know how to wait without giving up. They have developed patience to an amazing degree. Please pray for SIFAT's network of graduates serving in the hard places to share God's love in practical ways across our world.



Huber Ramos, director of SIFAT's work in Bolivia, has been working together with Benjo Paredes to take the integrated Gospel to marginalized and suffering people in their country. As Benjo grows older, Huber takes the harder jobs. He has many physical problems to face just getting to the people in need. Please pray for Huber and Benjo, who are overcoming great obstacles in helping their people during this pandemic and for the network of SIFAT graduates across our world facing obstacles with faith and patience.

Take a SHARE in SIFAT!

Be part of SIFAT all year! Our monthly commitments — the SHARE program — help us budget effectively. Sign up at www.sifat.org/donate or contact Marie Lanier, lanierm@sifat.org.

Matching Funds

Have you checked to see if your employer will match your donation to SIFAT? Many companies do, and some even match donations of retirees or spouses of employees.

IRA Contributions

If you are required to take a disbursement from your IRA, you can donate a percentage or all of it directly to SIFAT. By donating to a nonprofit without receiving the disbursement, you do not pay taxes on the disbursement.

Plan 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, corson@sifat.org, for more information.

Questions or Need Help?

Contact Diana, accounting@sifat.org, if documentation is needed for your company's matching funds or if you have questions about getting your IRA donation sent directly to SIFAT.

Agape Students Graduate

Peggy Walker
International Team Coordinator

How exciting to see a once homeless child, orphaned only 12 years ago by the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Uganda, graduate from university and become a productive young man or woman ready to tackle the world with confidence and hope! Through the support of SIFAT teams and sponsors, this is exactly what has happened to the children raised in our Agape Total Child Care Center and Christian Academy in Mukono, Uganda.

Agape was started by SIFAT graduate William Nsubuga in 2008 with 27 children that he rescued from the streets. His heart broke as he saw the needs of so many young people who lost everything in this horrific epidemic, which hit especially hard in Uganda. While renting a limited space for the children in an unsafe neighborhood in Lugazi, Uganda, William presented his dream to SIFAT leadership: to provide a safe Christian home for these children, where they could feel loved and attend a good school. His vision took hold. During the next few years, SIFAT mission teams built a first class boarding school and orphanage on land SIFAT

donors helped William purchased in Mukono.

The orphanage became home to 43 children from 8 to 12 years old. SIFAT supporters became their sponsors, the children thrived. Most have graduated from Agape and have gone on to study at universities or to attend trade schools near Mukono. Three were even able to attend school in the United States. It has been inspiring to watch their journey!

While many are now working as nurses, teachers, electricians and caterers, 10 are still in university and six will graduate soon from high school at Agape. Those in university are a diverse group studying law, accounting, information technology, engineering and education. We have been able to pay tuition in past years from generous supporters and a SIFAT Agape Scholarship fund, but the fund was depleted in 2020. If you would like to help secure a future for these young people, please send a donation designated for the *Agape Scholarship Fund*. All gifts will be applied to their university tuition.



Jemimah, who grew up at Agape, graduated from nursing school and is now the school nurse at Agape Christian Academy. She has been in charge of implementing all of the COVID-19 protocol to keep all of the students safe and healthy.

Planting a Coronavirus Garden

Marie Lanier
Promotions and Marketing Coordinator

Michael Edeke is a SIFAT graduate in Uganda and has taken part in our International Graduates' Projects program. But when the pandemic hit last year, his family and community were suffering. They had nothing to eat and were desperate. He wrote SIFAT with news of their situation and asked for help. Through the emergency fund created by SIFAT supporters, we could send some help immediately.

Michael recently sent an email update and again expressed his thankfulness. He shared, "What a faithful God we serve. We know that you gave to us out of love, not out of you having in abundance. Amen."

Because of his SIFAT training, Michael understands that although relief is sometimes needed, it is not a long-term answer. He took some of the funds we sent and invested it in a garden of maize, beans, sweet potatoes, cassava and dragon fruit. He wrote, "We didn't want to keep begging you for food, so we have been digging our food. Our soils are fertile with lots of water."

They began harvesting the maize in early February and have plans to bless a nearby church with some of the flour as the harvest continues. Michael closed his email asking how he could pray for us and asking for us to pray for the elderly, because they are being targeted by coronavirus. An African proverb says that when an elder dies, it is like burning a library. Please join us in praying for Michael, his community and all of our SIFAT graduates and their ministries throughout the world.



Michael with the first maize harvest.

Training is the beginning, but not the end. SIFAT serves as a bridge between people in need and people who want to help, offering you an opportunity to work alongside our graduates and their communities. To see current projects, visit www.sifat.org/international-missions/international-projects.

Shop for a Cause!

Everyday online purchases can raise money for SIFAT! Whenever you shop online, you can support SIFAT.

Thousands of retailers will donate a percentage of your purchase to SIFAT. Use Goodshop or iGive, search for your favorite store and follow the link to its website to shop with purpose.

www.goodshop.com/nonprofit/servants-in-faith-and-technology-sifat or www.igive.com/sifat

AmazonSmile donates .5% of each purchase made on Amazon to SIFAT.

www.smile.amazon.com/ch/63-0776048

Android and iPhone users can turn on AmazonSmile in their updated app's settings.

A Voice from the Past

Sarah Corson
SIFAT Co-founder

It was 1994, and SIFAT had formed a partnership with the Arenas family to use their mission center for SIFAT training events in Venezuela. Zabdiel Arenas took us to visit the people to whom his dad ministered. The only “road” to their homes was the Caparra River. As our canoe stopped at the bank at Saturnino’s home, we saw his wife Leonor dipping water out of a small hole in their yard. The water table was so high, they only had to dig a foot or so to find water. People lived in these conditions because they had no other option except this flood zone of the polluted river that rose and fell with the rainfall. The owners of the commercial farms on the higher land left the damp, mosquito-ridden banks of the river for the poor to live on as squatters.

Leonor left her pan of water and came forward to welcome us. Soon Saturnino joined her with a friendly little boy at his side. The child smiled and put out his hand to shake ours like his dad did. “Welcome,” he said. “My name is Daniel.” Such a precious little boy! This was a beautiful family with a strong, quiet dignity that I realized came from a deep trust in God. Their two little girls came running out to greet us, too.

Leonor put rice on to cook over an open fire and joined us on their porch, which served as the living room. Saturnino handed his Bible to Zabdiel, and we gathered around for a home service, while their baby slept in a hammock hung from the rafters in the middle of our group. We sang, prayed together and listened to the scripture. Each one gave a testimony of God’s faithfulness. When Zabdiel told them about SIFAT’s first training session in Venezuela, Saturnino asked if he could attend.

We had a great month of classes with 35 young ministers and community leaders. Saturnino was eager to learn everything. In the health class, he learned to make ORT (Oral Rehydration Therapy). Six teaspoons of sugar and one half teaspoon of salt in a liter of water could save a life when one was sick

and was getting dehydrated. “If I had known this, our little girl might not have died,” he told us sadly. He brightened and said, “But at least I will know what to do the next time a child in our neighborhood is sick.”

Years passed, and we closed the Venezuelan Training Center because of terrorists that crossed the nearby border of Colombia. Saturnino continued as local pastor to travel up and down the river, sharing his faith along with all he had learned in the SIFAT training. We have not seen Saturnino’s family for 26 years, but we never forgot them.

Last year, we were able to buy property for a training center in Costa Rica. We sent invitations to our graduate network throughout Latin America. Quickly, applications came in from various countries. Those who could not get visas to come to Alabama could get to Costa Rica more easily and classes would be given in Spanish.



The Corsons met Saturnino and Leonor in Venezuela 27 years ago. Now their son Daniel plans to attend a future training at SIFAT’s new Central American Training Center in Costa Rica.

One application brought us great joy! It was a voice from the past. It was from Venezuela from Saturnino and Leonor’s little boy. Daniel sent a letter telling how the things his Dad learned at SIFAT had helped his family to have a better life. He said he grew up dreaming of someday participating in SIFAT’s training classes and starting a training center at their home on the river. However, as the years passed, his dream seemed farther and farther away. But, he excitedly explained, because of SIFAT’s Central American

Training Center in Costa Rica, he can get a visa and attend! His dream can come true!

When COVID-19 calms down, the boy we met almost three decades ago plans to be one of the students in the first practicum in Costa Rica. Now, he is an adult with a family of his own. He wants to study with SIFAT and return to work with his dad to start a mini-SIFAT on the Caparra River. Our lives have gone down different paths for 27 years—such different paths, both with many twists and turns—but now it is coming together again, all based around the deep desire we both live by—to share God’s love in practical ways.

Hunger and Ecology in La Tigra

Dave Kennedy
Director of Leaf for Life

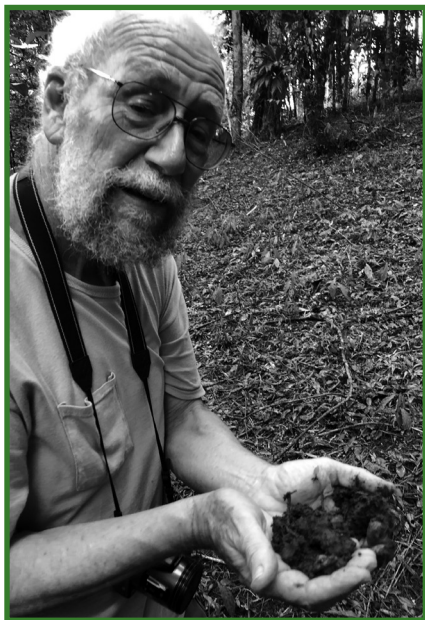
We are all called to help see that the world's children are well-fed. We also have a duty to protect the natural resources of God's Creation, so that future children can share in this bounty. Meeting these twin obligations requires teaching the next generation of community leaders a new way to be stewards of the land and a new way to produce food.

Despite impressive gains in production, modern agriculture has been unable to meet these obligations. More than 40 percent of the world's preschool age children and pregnant women still do not have enough iron in their diet for good health. Almost 200 million children lack the Vitamin A to protect them from infection. Beyond that, industrial agriculture depends on large areas planted in single crops grown with chemical fertilizer and pesticides. This approach is rapidly squandering the soil, the water and the rich diversity of plants and animals that are needed to produce food in the future.

Since its birth, SIFAT has tried to reach people who are working hard to make a living on small farms. There are about 500 million farms in the world that are smaller than five acres. The families that live on them suffer from high rates of hunger and poverty. These small farmers are the natural stewards of the land. But they need help learning

how to protect the soil, water and other natural resources while, at the same time, reaping more abundant harvests to better feed their communities.

SIFAT's new training center in La Tigra, Costa Rica is ideally situated to teach a new generation of Central American and Caribbean community leaders. Located on a 5-acre working farm, the center borders a river and one of the world's most diverse tropical forests. Here, they can discover techniques for producing better food with less environmental impact and develop a deeper understanding of the interconnected systems that support life. People tend to love what they know and to defend what they love. The natural world of God's Creation needs more of our love. At the new SIFAT center, community leaders can learn how



healthy soil produces healthy plants; healthy plants produce healthy animals and people; and healthy people create healthy communities.

Dave has taught in SIFAT's trainings in Alabama and internationally for about 25 years. Our graduates return home knowing how to harvest and prepare the nutrients in leaves, so thousands of children now have their nutritional needs met. Dave is the author of three books on how to use leaves for nutrition. He included recipes that children will enjoy, so they will get their vitamins! www.leafforlife.org

ESL Volunteers Needed in Costa Rica

Volunteers are needed for three-month periods throughout the year to teach English as a community outreach to Costa Ricans, as well as to our community leaders from other countries. Fluency in English is an important job skill to have in many countries. Consider investing some time getting to know internationals and investing in helping them have a brighter future.

Housing is provided on the rural SIFAT campus in La Tigra, San Carlos, near Arenal Volcano. A background in education and/or English as a Second Language (ESL) is strongly preferred. Contact Kathy Bryson, international training director, at brysonk@sifat.org.

Need a Unique Gift?

Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day and graduations are right around the corner. Honor the important people in your life and help SIFAT!

Commemorative bricks are still available for Sarah's Garden. Order online today at www.bricksrus.com/order/sifat or contact SIFAT for more info.

Central American Training Center Update

Kathy Bryson
International Training Director

We are excited to be in partnership with the National Agricultural University of Honduras (UNA) to help design SIFAT's new agroecological demonstration farm in Costa Rica. In February, a team from UNA arrived at our Central American Training Center to explore the property and create a design. This team of faculty and students plans to establish a replicable family farm as a model of small scale sustainable living. SIFAT will incorporate this demonstration farm in our training in meeting basic human needs with appropriate technologies. Plans include a nursery for seedlings and promoting reforestation with endangered species, a farm

science shed to make organic fertilizers and pesticides and an animal house with varieties of farm animals.

Later this year, a group of 10 interns from UNA will come to Costa Rica for three to six months to get the farm up and running, and we will host workshops on what we are doing. We are currently preparing — clearing land, moving animal pens and redesigning fences.

We need your help! Contact me at brysonk@sifat.org to support the development of this teaching farm to address food insecurity and help families feed their children in Latin America.



Jose Araya, farm manager of SIFAT's Central American Training Center in Costa Rica, demonstrates an appropriate technology sugar cane press made of old car parts to Oscar Fereira and Josue Matute, director of the Agroecology Center at UNA in Honduras.



Kathy meets with program directors of a Costa Rican ecological educational children's program at Santa Rosa National Park near the Nicaraguan border to discuss ways of collaborating in training a group of teachers and community leaders in Haiti.



Planning the land use for the demonstration farm, a replicable model of sustainable living for small rural farm families in Central America and beyond. (Don Jose, center, with design team members Oscar and Jose.)



SIFAT staff, the UNA team and program directors of an exemplary ecological training program with local rural Costa Rican schools. We hope to partner in training and bring SIFAT international students.

Learn & Serve Internship Revamped

Josiah Corson
Campus Program Manager

Educating people on how to serve is one of SIFAT's main priorities. One way we have continued to do that through the years is with campus internships. In the past, college aged students have lived on campus while they learned our programming and helped facilitate Learn & Serve events. While this format has been beneficial to us, we decided it is time to improve our internship program. We have created a new internship curriculum that is focused on servant leadership, learning in depth about poverty and its causes, getting involved in community development, learning how to steward our earth and being trained in all the programming options SIFAT offers to retreat groups.

When our interns leave, we want them to say that they feel empowered, see poverty differently and are ready to be in ministry no matter where they go in life. We hope to continue to grow this program to have more than one intern at a time, but we are happy to introduce our first intern going through the new curriculum. Bryson Frost is a 22-year-old Tennessee Tech graduate from Cookeville, Tenn. He is already part of our SIFAT family; he served as a Learn & Serve counselor in 2019. We are excited to see how Bryson is impacted by our revamped internship and hope to use him as a guide for future interns. If you, or anyone you know, would like more information about our summer or year long internships, please email corsonj@sifat.org.



We welcomed Bryson Frost, a previous summer counselor, to campus as a Learn & Serve intern. He will be the first to go through our new internship curriculum.

Our Galilee Campus Reopens

Marie Lanier
Promotions and Marketing Coordinator



A Girl Scout learns to make homemade tortillas in our Guatemala house.

After almost one year of our campus being closed to groups, we welcomed Girl Scout Troop 20136 for an Around the World retreat. We knew we missed getting to share SIFAT's message with others, but it was evident with the excitement leading up to their arrival as we prepared the Global Village and updated our programming notes.

We have new safety guidelines in place. Although some of our events may look different than in years past, we are ready for your group to come visit! If you want to talk about planning a retreat, have our staff bring an event to you or need questions answered about COVID-19 accommodations, please contact Josiah Corson, corsonj@sifat.org.

Be sure to watch our social media and upcoming e-newsletters for information about Learn & Serve opportunities this summer and other campus news!



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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

Millions of people in Texas were without electricity because of an arctic blast dipping into the Deep South. About 15 million people were under a boil water notice. In San Antonio, people went to the River Walk for buckets of water to flush their toilets. Basic human needs Americans take for granted became high commodities—food, water, heat and electricity.

SIFAT focuses on teaching people from developing countries how to meet these needs. Sometimes it is easy not to see someone in Africa or Asia, but Texas is in our backyard. Art Stephenson, one of SIFAT's board members, lives in Houston. Art and his wife Loa were huddled around their only source of heat, a small gas fireplace. Water pipes in their attic froze and burst, pouring water into the living area. They had no water until a part could be found, and then the water was not potable. Art pulled from the technology he learned from SIFAT: the simple Sawyer filter to purify drinking water not only for their house, but also for family and a previously homeless man.

During this time, Art received emails from SIFAT graduates in faraway countries who were praying for Texas. Somehow, they knew about the situation and

remembered us in our time of need!

From Nigeria, Pastor Blossom wrote that Jesus summarized it well. Loving God and neighbor is the heart of the law. Love is what moves God to give his all, and love is the distinguishing mark of Christ's disciples. Blossom said he once had a dream where he was shown his mansion in heaven, but there were no furniture. He said, "I queried my guide why other houses were furnished, and mine was not. The guide explained when you get to heaven, you get a house, but you have the responsibility to furnish it through service." Scriptures say, "Through love, serve one another." It would not make sense to go to heaven and live in a house without furniture. I would like my epitaph to read "He loved God and people."

Art replied, "I have found helping others is rewarding independent of any future in-heaven experience. I would miss out on so much joy if I did not help others." Blossom, a man of few material means, is praying for us and leaves us with the promise of the Lord in Isaiah 43:1-2. These verses are worth reading in this time! We wish you all this promise as we recover from these difficult times. Thank you for being part of SIFAT's outreach!