

Haiti Devastated by More Natural Disasters

Sarah Corson
SIFAT Co-founder

After the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, people were desperate for clean water. Besides sending staff and volunteers to help with medical care and clean water systems, SIFAT worked with our graduates to provide them with simple Sawyer filters for their communities. They could filter unclean water to make safe drinking water. By working directly with SIFAT graduates, help arrived quickly to those in great need. After the latest natural disasters, Haiti needs our help again.

In 2010, relief response was quite different. Governments tried to get bottled water to people, but could not get trucks from the port on blocked roads. Plus, the cost including shipping was more than 1,000 times more expensive than using Sawyer filters, which purify a million gallons of water each. Relief workers are definitely needed; trained local people also are needed and often know the community's needs best and can get around local obstacles (gangs, corruption or impassable roads).

SIFAT is a development organization. We train Christian workers and community leaders and invest in building the capacity of local people to help their own communities. In times of COVID-19 and natural disaster, when we respond to emergency needs with relief, our graduates are trained and ready to help. We have learned that sometimes responsible community leaders who love their people and consider their work to be for God can be quick to deliver relief at much less expense than large efforts by governments and large organizations. SIFAT graduates have done amazing work during the pandemic in

helping their communities survive. Although we could not travel there, our graduates were part of these communities. They only need resources to empower them to do the work.

SIFAT graduates in Haiti are working together to determine what is needed and then prioritizing and planning how to deliver the relief. After political violence, earthquakes and tropical storms, people in Haiti are staggering with hurt, hunger, homelessness and a lack of sanitation and clean water.



Samuel's town has food, but no one has money, since their jobs are gone. SIFAT's first relief efforts went through Samuel. He had a plan! He sent us a list of what foods were needed to provide for a family for two weeks and the cost. SIFAT funds have been sent to buy food for his whole community—425 people—for two weeks. Just a start, but Samuel felt that the relief agencies probably would arrive by the time this food was gone to help more. If not, it would give people a chance to look for ways to support themselves.

Samuel and his family are sleeping out in the open because their house suffered damage—the walls are ready to fall. Most of the community are in the same situation. They all slept in the elementary school when the storm came through.

We need to send more to help our neighboring country that has suffered tragedy on top of tragedy recently. You can be part of the efforts, which start with you and SIFAT and end with our graduates' communities receiving your gifts for food and immediate needs. Designate your gift *Haiti Relief*.

The Hidden Pandemic in Ecuador

Roberto and Monica Contreras
SIFAT Ecuador Directors

School closures have affected 4.6 million children in Ecuador. There are children and adolescents who are in vulnerable conditions in their homes and face threats such as maltreatment and sexual abuse.

According to official statistics, 1 in 10 women in Ecuador was a victim of sexual abuse as a child or adolescent. More than half of the 17 million Ecuadorians are women.

The actual level of child abuse is more serious than official statistics reveal, as 1 in 4 victims in Ecuador “never” reported it. The victims remained silent out of fear of the consequences, out of shame, out of helplessness or out of fear of threats.

Sixty-five percent of cases of sexual abuse are committed by family members or people close to the victims. Of the family members who abused, almost 40 percent abused the same victim several times and 14 percent did so systematically.

However, these statistics are only the “tip of the iceberg” as there are also male children who have been victims, but the figures are not known. Of the total cases of sexual abuse, only 15 percent were reported and only 5.3 percent prosecuted.

Additionally, child sexual abuse and the distribution of pedophile material on the Internet has skyrocketed during the pandemic, which has accentuated child abuse in Ecuador by more than 50 percent, as this generates large revenues for networks of sex offenders, who have found a great opportunity to access a wider group of potential child victims in the current health emergency.

Child violence and abuse is another of the social pandemics caused by COVID-19.

Prevention against child violence and sexual abuse is very important. That is why in the projects of Villaflora, Guamaní, Machachi, Velasco and Cutuglahua, a prevention campaign was developed against violence and child abuse. They named it Children are of Christ – They are not to be touched! (Many of our mission team members have served in these churches that were planted through SIFAT graduate Anita and her husband Pastor Rafael’s leadership and ministry.)

In total, around 700 children ages 6 to 18 attended. The children learned through games, music and didactic material about their body privacy and how to break the silence. The children received a T-shirt with the campaign’s theme written on it: Los niños son de Cristo – No se los toca. We want this message that children are of Christ – they are not to be touched to be read permanently by all the people around the child.

Thank you for your support of SIFAT. Because of the SIFAT Doctor in your House donors, SIFAT Ecuador was able to sponsor the T-shirts for 50 children in the Velasco project. SIFAT medical teams from Centerpointe Church in Palm Bay, Fla., have been providing care for this impoverished neighborhood for several years and have developed a close relationship with the church leaders and community there. Please continue to pray for all of the children and their families who may be suffering in silence during the pandemic.



Progress in Aida Leon

Marie Lanier
Promotions and Marketing Coordinator

Thank you to everyone who has given so generously to help our Aida Leon project in Ecuador. Originally, this church waited 10 years for our teams to arrive to begin construction of a new building to give its after-school program much needed classrooms and bathrooms, as well as a cafeteria space, professional kitchen and offices. In 2020, we were preparing to finish this project. We all know the pandemic's effect on our plans and the uncertainty of the future. But, we also know that as the lockdowns and safety regulations ease, the children will return before our teams can travel. Now more than ever, as Dr. Roberto and Monica shared in their latest article (pg. 2), these children need a safe haven, where they will receive hot meals, Bible lessons, school tutoring and positive social interaction.

A \$10,000 matching fund started this fund-raising effort, and we have raised about \$45,000 so far. We hired unemployed laborers from the community to work alongside our foreman Miguel, and the church even organized work days to pour the roof.

Although we wish we could be there in person to see this building through its completion, we know that the church is being encouraged through the generosity and prayers from our SIFAT family.



(L to R) Engineer Edwin Contreras, Pastor Wilson and Dr. Roberto Contreras review plans before resuming construction in Aida Leon.



The Golden Bread: Feeding the Hungry

Peggy Walker
International Team coordinator

SIFAT Doctor in your House/The Golden Bread has been a success story since its beginning in May 2020, allowing us to provide help those we work alongside in Ecuador. Pastors in our seven projects have passed out untold bags of rice and other food to their communities. SIFAT Ecuador director Dr. Roberto Contreras has teleconferenced hundreds, providing much needed medicines to those unable to visit a clinic. Children in these projects have been given vitamins and anti-parasite medicines. The elderly in Atucucho are still receiving hot meals daily. We only scratched the surface of the needs created by COVID-19, but without these programs, most of these people would have had no help. Food and medicine are essential, but almost as important is showing those with the most need that we truly care!

With generous supporters understanding the desperation of these people, we have raised more than \$152,000 since April 2020. The one-shot Chinese vaccine is now available in marginalized communities, but economic recovery in Ecuador is still a long way off. We see how greatly many have been impacted by the small amount SIFAT provides through *Doctor in your House/The Golden Bread*. We ask for your help as we commit to continue these programs. Thank you!



An elderly gentleman receives a hot breakfast in Atucucho, where SIFAT teams served for many years. Although Ecuador is now getting COVID-19 vaccines out to the public, its economy is still suffering the effects of the pandemic. Jobs are scarce, and needs grow daily.

SIFAT Doctor in your House Continues Serving Communities in Ecuador



Diego receives his treatment instructions from Dr. Roberto and Monica Contreras.

SIFAT Ecuador director Dr. Roberto Contreras uses technology to provide medical care for people in the communities in which our mission teams usually provide medical care. He is taking care of the most vulnerable and those who have no access to healthcare.

A few weeks ago, 13-year-old Diego, who attends the Aida Leon after-school program, felt bad and was experiencing pain. His mother tried to get him an appointment at a government health center, but could not because they are overrun with COVID-19 patients. While visiting Aida Leon, Dr. Roberto was able to examine Diego and give him a diagnosis and medicine. For two weeks, Diego has been improving daily. Thank you for supporting *SIFAT Doctor in your House*!

Learn More About SIFAT Graduates' Projects

New graduates' projects needing funded will soon be approved and added to our website. You can also review previous projects that have been completed because of the support of SIFAT donors.

www.sifat.org/international-missions/international-projects

For more information about becoming a project champion to raise funds for one of our graduates' projects, contact GPC chairman Art Stephenson, stephensona@sifat.org.

Poultry and Paiche in Bolivia

Peggy Walker
International Team Coordinator

Huber Ramos, director of CENATEC/SIFAT Bolivia, and his wife, Aurora, were very ill with COVID and had a long, difficult recovery. During this same time, Benjo Paredes was in the United States to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, so he was unavailable for three months. Despite these setbacks, progress was made on the CENATEC poultry project, and the chicken houses and fish pond were completed. Unfortunately, the price to purchase the chickens and chicken feed have escalated dramatically. After years of working in Bolivia, we know few things ever run smoothly, but turn out okay in the end. We are so grateful that Huber and his family are well, and Benjo is protected against COVID!

In the Fall 2020 issue of *The SIFAT Journal*, we shared about this project in Sapecho that was started to raise funds to pay CENATEC's operating expenses and Huber's salary, allowing him to host our SIFAT teams and manage logistics for SIFAT projects while continuing his work with CENATEC. We are excited about the project and anticipate its success. The chickens are raised to sell, while the chicken waste is disposed of in a small pond to feed tilapia. These tilapia become food for the paiche that are being raised to sell, as well. Paiche (*Aripaima gigas*) is one of the world's largest freshwater fish, growing to a length of almost 10 feet before being sold. There is a thriving market for this delicious fish, as it has become very popular in fine restaurants throughout South America.

Thank you for supporting SIFAT Graduate Projects like this one. We know these small projects make a difference in the communities in which our graduates serve and in their ministries as they strive to be self sustaining.



While waiting to receive the chicks, project manager Rodrigo (left) took training classes from the company providing the chickens. He, Huber (center) and Benjo are ready to get this project started!



Left: Benjo stands next to the authorization sign at the farm entrance from the governmental agency that oversees fish and poultry farms.

Right: The chicken house has been completed and is ready to receive chicks soon!



Interns Develop Model Farm in Costa Rica

Sarah Corson
SIFAT Co-founder

The weather in Costa Rica demands our attention! Recently, a huge rainstorm threatened to wash away the crops our interns had spent weeks planting and tending. All the staff and students raced together to complete a terrace and, just in time, were able to divert the flood. On a sunny day, a pipe broke that carried our stream to the small fishpond. The fish were almost ready to harvest, and the interns had planned to celebrate with a fish supper. Instead, they had to fix the pipe immediately, if the fish were to live. This was another emergency that involved staff and students working late into the night. Teamwork saved both situations. Teamwork describes the mighty effort the interns in our training in Costa Rica have been living out every day of this session.

Eight interns from the Honduran National Agricultural University (UNA) are working at SIFAT's Central American Training Center in Costa Rica for three months. Each is doing his or her senior research project to leave as models for our future trainings. Together, these examples of appropriate technology make a small model farm to show how a family can support itself with knowledge of certain simple, but game-changing, technologies. One project demonstrates how to purify water, another how to make organic fertilizer, another which varieties of plants are best to produce vitamins for health. One project shows a good chicken house design and how to make one's own balanced organic feed for the chickens.

Two additional volunteers, Andrea and Nahim, are UNA graduates, now professional agricultural extension workers. They work with the students, making sure all their projects fit together to enable a family to provide their own food and have enough to sell to meet their other basic needs. The interns have studied these ideas in class, but have not had an opportunity to implement them until now. They believe that this small farm model can make a big difference in the lives of the poor who barely survive haphazardly now by living off the land without knowledge of how to make it sustainable for both the earth and the people. In return for their hard work, SIFAT provides them with lodging, basic food staples and classes and seminars in community development, nutrition, health and spiritual formation. A SIFAT internship involves both studying and working—learning and serving.

All 10 of these young people grew up in rural areas and received university scholarships. Most of them are the first in their family, and some in their community, to go to college. They are deeply grateful and are eager to take what they are



Above: Professional volunteers Andrea and Nahim guide SIFAT interns through their senior projects in Costa Rica.

Below: Interns from UNA in Honduras have worked this summer setting up a model small farm with appropriate technologies at our Central American Training Center.



learning back to their communities. All day, they work on their projects, and at night and on rainy days, they study the SIFAT curriculum. They have bonded with each other, our SIFAT Costa Rica staff and teachers and are truly a team working together, making the model small farm a reality.

These interns will finish on September 15. With their projects completed, they will be leaving behind great teaching tools to help make future training sessions successful. Since Central America has hundreds of minifarms, where families are impoverished and struggling to survive on eroded land, this small farm model will be open for all to visit and learn the technologies that can make their minifarm succeed.

Stay Connected with SIFAT

Visit our blog (sifat.org/blog) and find us on Facebook (facebook.com/sifatbook) or Twitter (@sifattweets) for updates between newsletters! Sign up for our e-newsletter at www.sifat.org.

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.

WOW on Lake Wedowee



SIFAT staff members Josiah Corson and Shelby Dickey with her husband, Scott, led WOW on SIFAT Sunday on July 25.

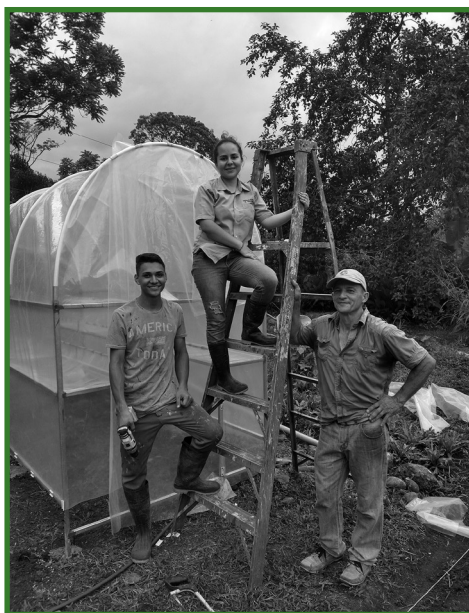
Each summer, SIFAT sponsors Worship on the Water (WOW) on Lake Wedowee. After canceling in 2020, we were excited to be back for 2021. Although the number of weekly attendees is less than prior years, we are averaging about 90 people and had more than 275 people worship together on July 4! We have welcomed families from WOW to our SIFAT campus for tours.

Thank you to all of our guest speakers and musicians who have made this possible, as well as Lakeside Marina and Lake Wedowee Docks for their assistance at our venue.

University Collaborations

Kathy Bryson
International Training Director

We are excited about our on-going partnerships with universities in Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica. We are in dialogue with a university in northern Brazil that works with Amazon indigenous communities. Engaging students and professors with community leaders to work together for solutions to pressing problems of poverty, food insecurity and environmental degradation has opened many opportunities for SIFAT to make a difference. SIFAT keeps the focus on practical solutions and a respect for local traditions and community empowerment. We stress integrated development, considering the spiritual, emotional and social aspects of community, in addition to the science and appropriate technology components. We plan to work together to design regional conferences focused on practical solutions for poverty and food insecurity in Central America.



SIFAT Costa Rica staff Alex (left) and Don Jose (right) work with Ana Pinto, intern from Honduras. This small greenhouse is designed as a solar dryer for leaves and agricultural products. The interns will dry nutritious sweet potato leaves full of micronutrients and then grind them into a powder used to fortify local foods such as tortillas and tamales—a practical, sustainable local solution for child malnutrition.

Shop for a Cause!

Whenever you shop online, you can support SIFAT!

Thousands of retailers donate a percentage of your purchases to SIFAT. Use Goodshop or iGive, search for your favorite store and follow the link to its website to shop with purpose. Coupons are linked to help you save.

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

www.igive.com/sifat

AmazonSmile donates .5% of each purchase to SIFAT.

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

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

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.

Opportunities to Be Part of Training in Costa Rica

Kathy Bryson
International Training Director

Sustainable Family Farm Demonstration: Cow needed!

We have been making progress on developing our farm family demonstration plot. An animal center and a farm science center to develop compost and needed fertilizers have begun being constructed. There is a rotational grazing system set up on a small plot to demonstrate best practices for a farm family with limited land to have a cow without degrading the soil and environment. Now, all we lack is the milk cow! Experts have pointed out the tremendous impact that poor management of cattle can have on degrading the environment contributing to food insecurity. We want to show positive solutions! If you would like to sponsor and name this cow, please contact brysonk@sifat.org.

Scholarships Needed!

We need your help to provide scholarships to community leaders from around the world to come to SIFAT for training in practical appropriate technologies and community development principles to address basic human needs in their own communities. Invest in local leaders to receive training and return home to teach others in their own language and cultural context.

We teach skills that make a difference. Too many children in the developing world will die today because of lack of knowledge of simple technologies that can make a difference and can be sustained locally. Examples include water purification out of local low-cost materials, kitchen gardens with fresh produce full of valuable micronutrients, fuel-efficient cookstoves that produce



little smoke, basic health skills, such as how to rehydrate children to prevent death from diarrheal dehydration—and more. We need your help to make it possible for community leaders from Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala,

Haiti and beyond to attend SIFAT training. Would you or your church group donate a \$100 partial scholarship to invest in training a community leader in practical life-saving skills to share with others in their community? Please designate your gift *Scholarship Fund*. Contact brysonk@sifat.org for more information.

Furniture needed for Costa Rica!

We are renovating the open-air facility that we use as kitchen/dining area as well as for community meetings. We need to furnish it! Can you help provide tables, chairs and seating areas? Please specify donation for *Central American Training Center Renovation*.

The Rocket Stove: Larry's Legacy

Sarah Corson
SIFAT Co-founder

Larry Winiarski—SIFAT's beloved teacher on fuel-efficient stoves, a biomechanical engineer, a man of faith, inventor of the *Rocket Stove*, tireless worker to help the poor—passed away suddenly on Aug. 5 at the age of 81. He was still fully involved in his work. Thousands of people live better lives because of this hard-working engineer, who loved people and enjoyed life to the fullest. The first time he came to teach at SIFAT, someone asked him why he had not used his degree for more money to have a more comfortable life. Instead, he had spent more than half a century working for the poor of the world.

Larry responded, "My wife died suddenly in a car accident. I was overwhelmed by my loss, but then I realized I had three little boys who had just lost their mother depending on me. 'Lord, help me!' I cried in agony. 'Help me be what these boys need! Help me raise them well!' And God did. I decided that I would spend my life trying to help the poor. I began to use my engineering skills to design technologies that the

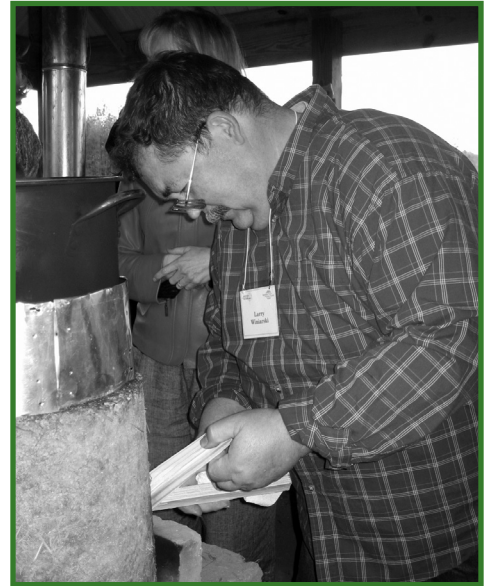
poor could control to give them a better life. I have found so much joy in knowing people from all over the world and seeing their lives change for the better."

We know many, but not nearly all, of the people Larry taught how to build and use a fuel-efficient stove. Women in the developing world often spend half their food budget to buy fuel wood or hours every day searching for sticks to build a fire to cook. Imagine how much help it is to get a large part of their fuel money to put back into food.

Delores, a midwife and health promoter among women in the Mam Tribe in Guatemala, came from a desert-like area where deforestation had left her community's land eroded. Twice a year, trucks came to the village selling firewood. They had to save money to buy enough to last until the trucks returned. When Delores heard Larry explain how efficient the rocket stove is, she was incredulous, but she built one, cooked on it and was convinced. She has helped her people save for education and healthcare instead of firewood.

Yurima from Venezuela gave a seminar on how to use a rocket stove the week before Larry died. Gas for cooking has become hard to get in her community. Women learned to build these stoves, and a problem was solved because Yurima studied with Larry.

In Nigeria, Raphael gives stove seminars to teach destitute widows how to make stoves from a resource they have available in abundance—mud. The widows in this area now make these portable models using a bucket as a mold and sell them in the market. They earn \$13 for each stove. Now, they have funds to put their children in school and supply other needs.



Larry Winiarski taught participants in SIFAT trainings how to build fuel-efficient cookstoves, which have saved lives throughout the world.

Grace from Ghana and the women in her town traditionally use tie-dyed fabric to make their clothes. The way many widows earn an income is to dye the fabric and sell it, but it has to be in hot water. Grace learned from Larry and took the knowledge home. The widows were able to feed their children well and also send them to school. Grace goes to other villages and teaches women what Larry taught her 15 years ago.

People in many countries are living healthy lives because Larry Winiarski never swayed from his decision to spend his life's energies teaching others to teach others ways to live happier and healthier. Even the day he died, a young man from Alabama, Jakob North, was on his way to Larry's home in Oregon to study more ways to use his mechanical skills to serve the poor.

We will miss you, Larry! We will never forget you! You built part of the foundation of SIFAT. Your influence for good will continue to be passed on to future generations across the world as long as time lasts.

Save the Date!

Mark your calendars now!
GivingTuesday2021 is Nov. 30.
Our matching fund will double your gift's impact. Watch our e-mail newsletters and social media posts as we announce our goal, this year's matching fund and ways you can give.



Connecting with a SIFAT Graduate's Family

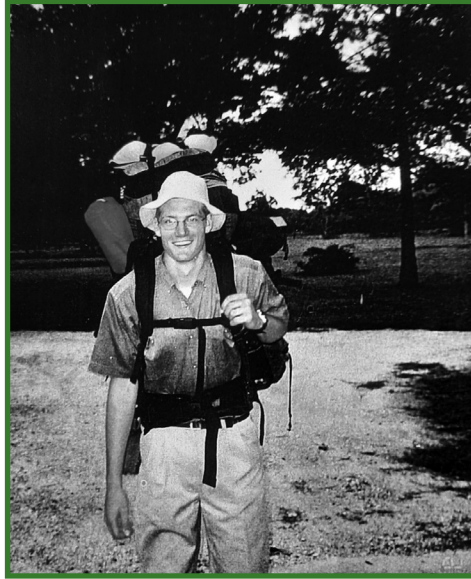
Samuel Corson
Summer Campus Staff

I cried for the first time in about three years. I am not one to externally display my emotions for the world to see. These tears came from a family I encountered this summer working a retreat at SIFAT. This story gives me a glimpse of the heart of SIFAT.

Franklin UMC came for a four-day retreat. No one in the group had been to SIFAT, except for Eileen Cross and her son Seth. While eating breakfast with Seth, he shared that he and his brother, Ben, had gone through SIFAT programming 20 years ago. Seth was persistent in asking questions on older appropriate technologies that we no longer teach and Old Aldea—the parts of campus that had been abandoned and ruined by floods. Seth's son, Ian, sat next to him; Ian listened attentively and was always the first one to pipe up with a question. He was laser-focused the entire program.

Before moving the group to the Global Village, Eileen began having minor heart issues and decided to sit out the next activity. While she was waiting for the group the next morning, I visited with her to make sure she was well. We sat on the porch of the lodge, overlooking Mad Indian Creek. My visit with Eileen changed my heart for the better.

We talked about the golden years of SIFAT. Then, she brought up her son, Ben. Seeing that he was brought up often, I asked about him. She told me that Ben graduated from the SIFAT training practicum. He had a heart for the little guy. He loved hearing from the elderly, but also loved teaching kids. Ben believed in loving and empowering powerless people in small communities.



The Cross family visited SIFAT with their church. While here, they shared the story of SIFAT graduate Ben Cross and how his time at SIFAT impacted his plans for the future.



Ben was not afraid of hard work. After the practicum, Ben spent a summer in Bolivia with Benjo Paredes, SIFAT's co-founder. Ben lived in the rock huts of the families in Quesimpuco and in the thatched roof jungle huts in Sapecho. He taught them how to use the turgor vacuum pressure of bamboo and rubber to pull clean water from the ground, and how to maximize the nutrient intake of their chickens, so that the families could eat more protein. Ben went to individual families and walked with them in their shoes to share God's love in practical ways.

When Ben returned, he gained a heart for Christ and a desire to plant churches in rural communities. In 2001 before beginning seminary, he went on a hitchhiking road trip to Alaska—intending to share the Gospel with everyone he encountered. As he reached Alaska, Ben experienced extreme chronic pain and rapid vision loss. He came back home for medical exams. As his sight faded, he recorded the Bible, so he could listen to it. Because of the chronic pain, Ben Cross died by suicide

on Jan. 23, 2002.

While Eileen and I were staring out into the creek, tears welled up in her eyes. I took her hand. She was still heartbroken—even after 20 years without her son. With a throat full of tears, she said, “I haven’t felt this close to Ben for a long time, but being back on these grounds makes me feel close to him again.” She continued, “Ian has his heart.” As I reflected on Ben and Ian, tears filled my eyes, too. Ian’s heart, on SIFAT’s grounds, was exposed to the reality of poverty and our responsibility to show love to the poor and needy. Watching Ian soak everything up like his uncle is both sorrowful and joyful to see.

Ben Cross is a figure on which we can reflect. He embodied compassion and love for the stranger and the poor. He lived with them at their level and taught them how they can live practically. He sought to develop families and communities in sustainability and God’s Word. Ben represented the heart and mission of SIFAT.

A Summer Retreat at SIFAT



Rev. Ashley Anne Sipe
Fellowship UMC, Trophy Club, Texas

Editor's Note: This article was originally published in Fellowship UMC's magazine to share about the experiences their youth group - The Grove Youth - were having this summer.

In June, I took a group of 10 youth from Fellowship UMC in Trophy Club, Texas, to Lineville, Ala. We spent the week at SIFAT, a global training site for appropriate technologies that are saving our neighbors around the world. Our youth learned about equity and loving neighbors we may never meet. They

experienced poverty simulations and went through an entire day and night in the slum experience and Global Village. They had to work to earn enough money to buy rice and beans for their family and then walk, carry wood and make a fire to heat up the water needed to cook their only food resources. They slept on the floor of a bamboo shelter just like one you would find in the Philippines.

I was concerned when I first signed us up for this trip that "pretending to live in poverty" may leave us feeling even more separated from the realized daily concerns of our neighbors who do not have the choice to "go home" at the end

of the week. However, SIFAT did such an amazing job of humbly honoring the true lives of our global neighbors with such dignity that our Grove Youth were profoundly impacted! The group of students who went on this trip are meeting in September to further reflect on their time at SIFAT and brainstorm ways they can make a local and global impact on the inequalities they see around them. I am looking forward to seeing how this experience continues to unfold the Kingdom of God in our midst!

Thank you SIFAT!



Youth from Fellowship UMC in Texas learned about fuel-efficient cookstoves (above), participated in team building games (top left) and enjoyed SIFAT's campus (top right) while on their retreat.

Book your fall or spring
Learn & Serve retreat
now! You can choose
one of our retreat
packages or customize
your own experience.
Retreats can be adapted
for any age group.

Visit www.sifat.org/learn-serve for more
information or e-mail
learnandserve@sifat.org
to schedule your next visit
to SIFAT!



**Southern Institute For
Appropriate Technology**

**Servants in Faith
and Technology**

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Bham, AL
Permit # 3029

**2944 County Road 113
Lineville, AL 36266**

Phone: (256) 396-2015

Fax: (256) 396-2501

E-mail: info@sifat.org

www.sifat.org

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

During this pandemic, I have been thinking about what is most important to God. I see suffering in many places, including in Randolph County where I live. My wife Dyla, son Samuel and I have COVID, as do several SIFAT employees. We are grateful, because we had a chance to be vaccinated before it struck us. Our experience is not nearly as bad as it would be if we were living in Bolivia, Ecuador and other places where people are begging for the vaccine.

The Japanese poet Kagawa lived in the slums among the poor. One line of a poem reads, "I cannot bear to hear starved children cry." Though we do not actually hear the sound of their cries, our hearts hear them as we receive e-mails from our graduates, telling of their communities' struggles. Stories came in from our SIFAT family whose lives were threatened with COVID: the more than 2,000 children in Ecuador without food or healthcare, one Ugandan pastor's church members climbing trees to pick leaves to eat and Aina and Blossom in Nigeria facing militant raids in 13 villages just this month—burning 500 homes, killing 68 people and displacing 25,000 others.

If SIFAT could not help them, who would? Just thinking about their suffering made it personal for me. Because our SIFAT supporters are faithful, we have been able to

help our graduates in these places of need. Thank you for your gifts! Most of all, thank you for your prayers!

Our hearts are filled because God is providing the resources to help those who are desperate. He has sent us Christian leaders from across the world to train for more than 40 years. We now have a network that can be where needs are at a moment's notice. We continue adding to that group. Soon, 10 interns will finish a time of studying and developing SIFAT's campus in Costa Rica to model a way to food security. We have started a Haitian initiative, using our graduate Samuel's plan of action, created with his community to help those that are in need. As we work together—our supporters, prayer warriors, staff, volunteers—God is using us all to share His love in practical ways to many suffering people across our world!

Thank you for being part of the greatest commandment to love your God with all your heart, body and soul and to love our worldwide neighbors as ourselves, even while we struggle through bad times! This pandemic should inspire us all to take action. Thank you for being part of our SIFAT family. Your prayers and contributions have been heard as a call to action: to love God and our neighbors around the world. Thank you!