



San Miguel de Allende, México
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Comida Para Vecinos (“Food for Neighbors”) Covid-19 pandemic response program: Update for our Donors

October 25, 2020

Thanks again to each and every one of you who has donated money or in-kind support to the Comida Para Vecinos (CPV) food donation program organized by EdCaminos. Sonia Araiza (EdCaminos director) and Glenn Wilson (EdCaminos volunteer, SMA FAQ founder) came up with the idea in April, and I can confidently state that the program has been a tremendous success. This has only been possible with your support, so I would like to share some of the details about the program experience and impact so far.

I know this has been a difficult period for everyone, but EdCaminos families—and many families in the Independencia area of San Miguel—are often quite vulnerable even in “normal” times. With the widespread loss of employment that has accompanied the spread of COVID-19, the economic situation has become even more difficult. The CPV food donation program helps these families meet their basic needs, and provides some sense of security in these very uncertain times.

As I keep saying in the individual thank you notes we send out after each donation, we don’t know how long this pandemic will last, or how long-lasting the economic impact will be. At EdCaminos we are committed to supporting these families for as long as necessary, and we do hope that we can continue to receive your support. Since May 1, 2020 all donations to EdCaminos are being used for the Food for Neighbors food packages that are provided every week. None of this money is being used for administrative or overhead expenses, or for EdCaminos education activities.

On behalf of Sonia and the EdCaminos family—and our beneficiary families—I again want to thank you for your very generous support. Feel free to reach out to me (jmarshall@edcaminos.org) or Sonia (saraiza@edcaminos.org, in Spanish) if you have any questions. And when normality returns you are more than welcome to pay us a visit at the EdCaminos worksite on Ignacio Cruces to see our programs up close. Stay safe!

Jeff Marshall
Executive Director, EdCaminos

The Beneficiaries

The program started in April with about 25 beneficiary families, by the end of May had increased to 42 families, and since June has been fixed at 45 families. Each family has an average of 4 or 5 household members. The same families receive a weekly package of food and household products. About half of the beneficiary families have children who are participating in EdCaminos education activities.

The packages cost about \$10 USD to prepare, and include cooking oil, rice, beans, cereal, soups, sugar and other food products that vary week by week, as well as cleaning products. When possible the EdCaminos packages are augmented with bread and vegetables from other donor partners (see below).



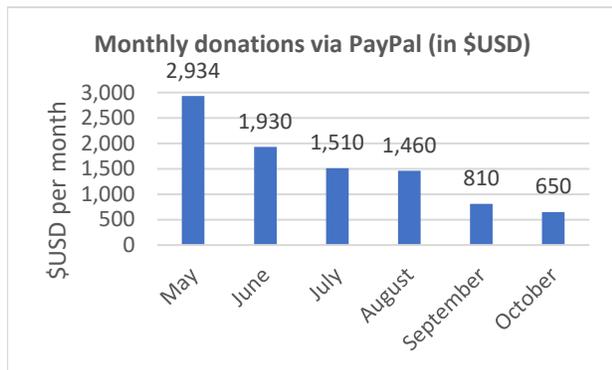
What the program means to the participants, in their own words....

We asked program participants to prepare a brief summary of their economic situation and how the Comida Para Vecinos program has helped them. Here are a few of the responses:

- "I am a single mother with an 8 year old and the pandemic has affected me since I work as a maid and my work days have been reduced and therefore my salary as well. The (Comida Para Todos) program has been very generous and has made the situation less difficult. Thank you very much!"
- "My husband has been without work and we are barely able to make ends meet. That is why we are so grateful for the very generous support of the program."
- "Thanks to you my children and I have food to eat."
- "My family has been impacted by the pandemic, I lost my job and so did my son. So we are very grateful for the support from the program."
- "The program has helped us throughout the pandemic period, especially due to unforeseen expenses that have come up. The program has helped us to be economically "tranquilo" and therefore emotionally "tranquilo" as well."
- "The program is a big help because my father only works part time now and my mother does not have work, so the household income has been reduced a lot. The food donations have helped us survive, and no one misses a meal in our household."
- "With the food donation support we are better able to use our resources to attend to other basic needs like gas, water and electricity."

Program Donations and Spending Summary

Since April we have received just over \$9,000 USD in donations via the PayPal link, and nearly \$1,000 USD in cash, checks and in-kind donations. Nearly 50 individuals or families have donated. As of mid



October 2020 we have spent about \$7,500, so between the donor support and EdCaminos funds we have enough to fund the CPV program through the end of 2020. We do hope the donations will continue, but this will obviously depend on the trajectory of the pandemic. As noted in the thank you notes after donations, EdCaminos is a 501c(3) registered non-profit in the US, in addition to being a registered Asociación Civil in México.

Our Partners

In addition to receiving money from our generous donors, EdCaminos has been partnering with other organizations and individuals to deliver aid. Special thanks to:

- **Feed the Hungry** has provided a lot of support with the basic support packages;
- **Banco de Alimentos** de San Miguel has donated food, bread and other basics;
- **100 Amigos** has donated food products;
- **Patrice Wynn** from Abrazos has donated facemasks for EdCaminos staff and beneficiaries;



EdCaminos is still working!

Thanks to our director Sonia Araiza, her assistant Esmerelda, the student tutors and our special volunteer Shannon Shaffer, EdCaminos is still working with young children in our after-school tutoring program. This has required some alteration of format, with more at-home work and monitoring. But we are still committed to attending to basic education needs during this difficult time to ensure that these children do not fall behind in school. ¡Buen trabajo Sonia and team!