



# Highlights & Happenings

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## Irving, Karen, and Daniel: A Dream Team

The support Feed the Hungry provides in 36 communities includes not only ingredients for meals but also nutrition, hygiene, and cooking classes for school cooks, mothers, and children. These services help ensure that the benefits of our meals program are sustainable and go far beyond the lunchroom. Our licensed nutritionists play an invaluable role in support of that mission, applying their skills and passion to the following areas.

### Menu Development

With guidance from the nutritionists, FTH's Chef Valentín and his kitchen staff create school lunch menus for tasty balanced meals that please the palate, respect local customs, and take advantage of what's available each season. They collaborate on how to incorporate lots of healthy ingredients into the dishes, because many children enter school unaccustomed to fruits, vegetables, or variety. The nutritionists also worked on the light breakfast menu that is offered at some of our school kitchens. Plus, with the recent launch of our Early Childhood Nutrition Program, this team took on the added responsibility of helping to develop simple yet wholesome meals for infants.

### Education



*"The nutritionist handed each one of us an image of the Plato del Buen Comer... I glued it on my fridge and my little boy, every day when he sits down to eat, he looks at it and tells me that his plate has to look like that one. So yes, I have tried and put in his plate more of the things that it needs to include." - Mother testimonial, Nuevo Pantoja*

Our nutritionists also conduct workshops for the children and for their mothers, emphasizing the importance of good nutrition and what a "balanced plate" should look like. Menus are shared with the mothers so they can prepare easy, inexpensive, healthy meals at home. In addition, they conduct cooking classes for the moms who prepare the meals in the FTH school kitchens.

### Health Assessment

Another task our nutritionists undertake is weighing and measuring the children to monitor their growth and development. This provides a database that allows FTH to track the tangible results of the meals program and to see trends that might indicate that adjustments are required—for example, when overweight becomes as much a concern as underweight. We see this happen when communities gain easy access to processed products.

Obesity has become epidemic in Mexico. Junk food is available on seemingly every corner, even in poor rural communities. In some families, soft drinks have replaced water as their primary beverage and children pick up processed cakes on their way to school instead of having breakfast at home.

Our nutritionists teach the children and their parents about the health repercussions of overweight, such as diabetes, vascular issues, heart conditions, and kidney disease, and the importance of exercise combined with a proper diet.



Left to right: Daniel, Karen, and Irving with the kids of Plan Juárez, one of 36 rural communities where FTH operates a school kitchen (as well as the most distant and perhaps the most disadvantaged).

(Continues on page 2)



Meet the Team

With so many tasks under their care, our nutritionists are some of the busiest staff members at FTH! We seized the opportunity presented by the school summer break to check in with them.

Irving Ayala Zúñiga, Bachelor's Degree in Nutrition

Irving has been with FTH since 2017. What Irving enjoys most about his job is the social work aspect, because it's not just about feeding the children—it is also about educating them on what constitutes proper, balanced nutrition. It has really made an impact on him to see that despite the work done by the government and by other organizations, there are still so many cases of malnutrition in Mexico. Even in urban areas of San Miguel de Allende, malnutrition is a very persistent malady. His greatest accomplishment? Being able to really get to know and work closer with people who are in great need, which is something that he's only experienced at FTH.



"I attended the nutritionist's talk; he told us we should use more fruit and vegetables in our food, and, the amounts we should give our kids, and how many times a day." - Mother testimonial (Image: Irving teaching kids about the 'Plato del Buen Comer'.)



Karen Yvette de Santiago Paredes, Bachelor's Degree in Nutrition

Karen started working at FTH in May 2018. Helping the children in the rural communities is what she enjoys the most about her job, thinking of strategies to improve their diets, and having conversations with them to better understand their individual situations. Karen also loves conducting the educational workshops, as she considers education to be a very important tool to help the children and their parents understand that proper diet in childhood is critical to a healthy life. During the school year 2018-2019 she thinks her most remarkable achievement has been to observe the improvements in the children's health evaluations, comparing the current findings to the ones of previous years.

"Us mothers don't have a notion of portion sizes; we give our children too much of one thing and very little of that which they should be eating more of. I learned a lot in the workshop, as far as what my kids need to eat more of and what is best for them." - Mother testimonial (Image: Karen leading a nutrition workshop for the kids.)

Daniel Frías, Bachelor's Degree in Nutrition

nutrition, but also their quality of life. Daniel considers that his greatest accomplishment. Every one of his efforts is directed towards making a meaningful change. Along with his colleagues, they implement tools and techniques to correct and prevent malnutrition, the many cases of which have shocked Daniel since his first day at FTH. For Daniel, it's wonderful to witness how the kids served by FTH improve day-by-day, and how their faces light up every time they share a meal with their classmates.

Daniel joined (or, as he puts it, "became part of the great FTH family") in 2018. What he most enjoys about his job is to be able to help the children, not just by improving their

The work carried out by our nutritionists is at the very core of FTH's mission, and we couldn't succeed without their diligence, passion, and skills, as well as their evident love for the children. We're so grateful to have them on the team!

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By the numbers

School kitchens supported:	36
Charities supported:	7
Pounds of food delivered weekly:	12,000+
Miles driven by our volunteers every week:	1,000+
Meals served every school day:	4,500+
Budgeted meals for calendar year 2019:	1,049,000

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Highlights & Happenings  
bere@feedthehungrysma.org

CONTACT

(+52) 415 152 2402  
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# President's Letter

Earlier this year, my wife and I were in Auckland, New Zealand at the end of a vacation when I saw that a person could jump from the top of New Zealand's tallest structure (628 feet) for free if over age 75. I decided to make the leap. I convinced myself it was perfectly safe. An hour later, connected to a harness, decked out in a Flash Gordon jumpsuit, I stood on a small ledge looking at the very tiny people below.

The only real courage was in taking that one small step into nothingness. That was horribly difficult, but once over the edge, you had no control of what was going to happen, except that you were going a long ways down very fast. The landing was easier than expected, and it was exhilarating!

In some ways this could be a bit like committing to charitable giving. Once you do, you will find it was not so difficult to make the decision, and your generosity is rewarded by the thrill of seeing the faces of the hungry children who are receiving a hot school lunch that may be their only nutritious meal of the day.

I'm betting we could all find minor expenses that are easy to eliminate in order to come up with as little as \$20USD, which would fund meals for two children for an entire month. An automatic monthly donation can change their lives without significantly affecting yours.

Giving is a gift to the giver and requires only small steps, not great leaps.—**Al Kocourek, President of FTH**



## OUR CURRENT REACH





## The Mission Continues

Feed the Hungry continues to be dedicated to improving the health and well-being of the needy in our community; we now provide roughly 4,700 hot meals every school day, food for 7 local charities, and nutrition education for families. But did you know that we are also concerned with preschool children, their mothers, school kitchen and dining facilities, and the community's water supply? We hope you enjoy learning about some of these initiatives, and we thank you for your support. With your help, we are changing lives.



### Pre-Kinder Nutrition

Our Early Childhood Nutrition Program launched earlier this year, with the goal of providing sustenance for children not yet in preschool, and to encourage breastfeeding among the mothers of infants. To ensure optimum nutrition for their babies, these mothers also receive a nutritious meal themselves. The food is prepared and served at an existing FTH school kitchen. Valentín Patlán, Feed the Hungry's Head Chef, has prepared menus that change every other week, and the meals have been enthusiastically received.

At our pilot locations (Plan Juárez/Misión Chichimeca and La Campana), we are very happy to see moms with their little ones go to school to eat every day. Lucina Maldonado, an elementary school teacher at La Campana, said she encourages the moms to truly take advantage of this program. "The program expansion is a wonderful idea, as the effects of malnutrition are irreparable in children younger than three years old. Including the mothers who are nursing is an even bigger blessing."

We are now committed to extending this important program to four more communities by the end of 2019!

### Second Meals and Extra Helpings

The children who receive our school meals are welcome to more than one trip through the lunch room. We are pleased when we see some kids take second and third helpings! In several locations we are now also providing breakfast for children who arrive to school too hungry to stay alert in class until lunchtime: Nuevo Pantoja, Salitrillo, El Nuevo Cimatario, Los González, Clavellinas, and Nuevo Pantoja. And at Estancia De San Antonio, Loma De Cocinas, Fajardo De Bocas, and La Campana we provide a second lunch due to longer school hours.



### Clean Water Is Also Essential

We continue to work with Caminos de Agua to find solutions to the lack of safe water for drinking and cooking in a number of the communities that we support. Every week, in addition to food for the school meals, we are delivering purified water to the kitchens at La Palmilla and Las Cañas, until their well pumps are repaired by the local officials.

In the community of Palo Colorado, where we operate a kitchen serving 150 meals daily, there are major water issues which we are addressing along with NGOs Caminos de Agua and Casita Linda. After several meetings with the school principal, we have developed a plan to make the existing water catchment system operational. Caminos de Agua has agreed to provide an in-kind donation of technical support, educational modules, and ceramic filters for each classroom. The balance of the project cost will be shared by FTH and Casita Linda, covering essential materials and labor, and a line from the cistern to the adjacent new FTH kitchen.



### Clean, Safe Places to Dine

A beautiful new kitchen at Palo Colorado was lovingly built by our generous "architect angel," Rafael Franco, who provided the materials and labor free of charge. Mr. Franco also constructed a new dining area for the children in the rural community of Alonso Yáñez.



New kitchen in Palo Colorado

New shaded dining area in Alonso Yáñez. The tables are decorated with colorful paint splashes!



# Join Us for “Autumn Magic”

## A Journey Into the Heart and Soul of San Miguel de Allende

October 11—17, 2019

Most visitors to San Miguel de Allende wander through the cobblestone streets of this 475-year old city, wondering what’s behind the high walls and ornate doors of so many 16th century architectural treasures. Opulent courtyards with gardens and fountains beckon, but are just out of reach.

Feed the Hungry’s “Autumn Magic” excursion will host a small group of at most 30 visitors, who will spend seven magical days in the city voted “Best City in the World” in 2017 and 2018 by *Travel+Leisure*, and declared American Capital of Culture 2019 by the International Bureau of Cultural Capitals.

This very special event is designed to introduce you to San Miguel as an insider—not as a tourist. We’ll visit unique locales where you can step into the rich past of this enchanting city.

### UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCES OFF THE TOURIST TRACK

Your week will be filled with culture, history, music, and phenomenal food—the colors and flavors of this colonial gem, designated a World Heritage of Humanity site by UNESCO. Plus, we’ll venture out to the countryside to visit a Feed the Hungry school kitchen and meet some of the children helped by our program.



### “YOUR” SCHOOL KITCHEN



While feasting on the rich sights, sounds, and traditions of our stunning city, you will also be contributing to the health and future of children in San Miguel’s poorest communities. Feed the Hungry provides hot meals to nearly 5,000 children in 36 communities, as well as food for seven local charities.

Proceeds from this year’s tour will be dedicated to Feed the Hungry’s kitchen in the community of Alonso Yáñez, 18 km from San Miguel centro. We’ll visit the school where 198 kindergarten and elementary students receive a nutritious lunch every school day (36,600 meals per year), thanks to our generous supporters.

*“Our visit was an eye-opener in many ways. We’ll never forget this experience or the people we met. We saw places we would never have seen if we had come by ourselves. We especially loved visiting the school. Staying in private homes added so much to the trip. The food was amazing and you found such beautiful venues. We are so impressed with Feed the Hungry and the work you have done.”*

– Autumn Magic 2018 guest

Please visit our website for full details: [feedthehungrysma.org/2019/02/25/announcing-autumn-magic-2019/](https://feedthehungrysma.org/2019/02/25/announcing-autumn-magic-2019/)



View videos of the weekly packing process, visits to schools for health assessments and nutrition workshops for mothers, and more!

[fthvideos.org](https://fthvideos.org)



## Friends Join Forces to Make a Difference

Early last year, long-time Feed the Hungry volunteers Jonna Stratton and husband Raymond Fairchild wanted to expand their involvement with FTH by sponsoring a specific school kitchen, thus becoming "Kitchen Angels." Upon learning that the kitchen at Casa Hogar Mexiquito orphanage was without a sponsor, they agreed it was the perfect fit for them, as the orphanage is near to their home in San Miguel.

For help shouldering the expense, they reached out to and joined forces with fellow FTH volunteers, Bonnie Moss and Pam Jessen. The friends decided to pool their resources and sponsor the kitchen at Mexiquito together. According to Jonna, "Because Kitchen Angels make a three-year commitment of anywhere from \$5,000 to \$20,000 US dollars a year, and we could not afford that, we reached out to our friends who had expressed interest in the past. Now, with four of us in the mix, we are thrilled and excited to be the Kitchen Angels for Mexiquito."



The Mexiquito Kitchen Angels group



Christmas Magic Show at Casa Hogar Mexiquito (December 2018)

Casa Hogar Mexiquito is a sanctuary dedicated to the care of orphaned, neglected, and abandoned boys. Their mission is to provide a solid education, support, and protection to the children under their care. Currently, the sanctuary hosts 32 boys. Since 2000, Feed the Hungry has supplied food to serve three meals a day to the children and to the nuns and employees who work at the facility. A total of 134 meals are served every day of the week, not just on school days.

Wanting to be even more involved with the community, this group found additional ways to help these needy children. They not only sponsor the meals program, but they bring joy in other ways as well. Last year, they hired a magician who delivered a full hour of fun and laughter to the children. They also organized a toy drive for Christmas. This summer, they are co-sponsoring a garage sale to benefit the orphanage.

This group of Kitchen Angels provides a great example of how people can pull together and share the monetary commitment to support a school kitchen. This is a wonderful new trend! The Kitchen Angel for our kitchen for the Nuevo Pantoja primaria is a group of six friends. The kitchen at Alcocer is supported by 10 people, a group that was formed by local realtors.

Please contact our office at if you would like to learn more about our Kitchen Angel program. Sponsorship of a currently unsponsored school enables us to extend our reach to open new kitchens in areas that are waiting for our help. It is a great way to do something meaningful as a family, groups of friends, or coworkers, plus it provides you with a more personal relationship to a community and the grateful families that benefit from your generosity.

  
**KITCHEN ANGEL**  
**feed the hungry**  
san miguel

## Feed The Hungry Attracts Volunteers from Querétaro



Earlier this year, Feed the Hungry was pleased to welcome sisters Julia and Marcela Echenique Chavez as new volunteers. Originally hailing from Mexico City, they now reside in the city of Querétaro. Being recently retired, the sisters were motivated to use some of their newfound time to get involved in charitable work. They took to the internet in search of volunteer opportunities and came across Feed the Hungry's website. Upon researching the history, vision, and mission of FTH, they decided to visit the Distribution Center to make an introduction. According to them, one of their main motivations to get involved specifically with Feed the Hungry was that the board of directors was made up of retirees such as themselves.

Upon their first visit to the Distribution Center, Julia and Marcela were amazed by the efficiency of the organization and marveled at the way they were received by Volunteer Coordinator Jonna Stratton. According to Julia, "We were welcomed with open arms. We just came in to see what it was about and learn the requirements to volunteer, but they made us feel at home and part of the group." They now make the two-hour round trip from Querétaro to San Miguel every Monday to pack food for delivery to FTH school kitchens. For them, the sacrifice is worth it because their motivation is to selflessly volunteer their time without expecting anything in return, other than the satisfaction of knowing they've made a positive impact. For the Echenique Chavez sisters, it has been very enriching to be able to serve others. And they have fun doing it!

Julia and Marcela would like to encourage others to introduce themselves to the Volunteer Team and not be afraid to meet new people, emphasizing that language should never be a barrier when it comes to helping others. "When you have a set objective and act with heart in hand, language is not an obstacle," shares Marcela. They recognize what a great cause Feed the Hungry is and the dedication required to provide thousands of nutritious meals every school day.

### HOW TO VOLUNTEER

Feed the Hungry couldn't function without our staff of dedicated volunteers, filling needs in a variety of ways and in many different capacities. One of our biggest needs is for **regular and substitute drivers** to deliver food every Tuesday of the school year to our FTH schools and charities. Our drivers wouldn't have anything to deliver were it not for the corps of **food handlers and packagers** who donate their time on Saturdays and Mondays getting food ready to be delivered.

If you're interested in any of these volunteer opportunities, please contact Volunteer Coordinator, Jonna Stratton at:

[jonnainmex@gmail.com](mailto:jonnainmex@gmail.com)





## Ways to Donate

In spite of the rising costs of food and fuel, our operational efficiencies and strong local relationships enable us to maintain the cost of a fresh, well-balanced meal at just around 50 cents.

- ❖ \$20USD feeds 2 children for a month
- ❖ \$100USD feeds 10 children for a month
- ❖ \$250USD feeds 2 children for one school year

By donating to Feed the Hungry, you are contributing **health, hope, and opportunity** to disadvantaged communities in the San Miguel de Allende municipality.

### For a US tax deduction:

Donate by check payable to Feed the Hungry San Miguel, Inc.  
Mail to Feed the Hungry at either of the following addresses:

Feed the Hungry San Miguel  
c/o La Conexión, Aldama #3  
San Miguel de Allende 37700  
Guanajuato, Mexico

Feed the Hungry San Miguel  
Box 636  
220 N. Zapata Hwy, Suite 11  
Laredo, TX 78043-4464, USA



Or make an online donation: [feedthehungryisma.org](https://feedthehungryisma.org) (click on the orange **DONATE** button)

### For a Mexican tax deduction:

Donate by check payable to Feed the Hungry, A.C. Mail to Feed the Hungry at either of the addresses listed above.

### For a Canadian tax deduction:

Donate by check payable to Amistad Canada and note "Feed the Hungry Project" on the memo line. Mail to Amistad Canada:

Amistad Canada, c/o The Tax Management Centre 14  
2530 Sixth Line  
Oakville, Ontario  
CANADA L6H 6W5

Or make an online donation: [amistadcanada.org/donate](https://amistadcanada.org/donate) (be sure to select Feed the Hungry San Miguel as your charity of choice).

## Make a Legacy Gift

Please also consider Feed the Hungry as a beneficiary when planning your will. Through Planned Giving, you can make a lifelong impact on the lives of children in economically disadvantaged communities. Visit [feedthehungryisma.org/how-to-help/planned-giving/](https://feedthehungryisma.org/how-to-help/planned-giving/) to learn more.

## Sponsor a School Kitchen

We encourage individuals, families, friends, coworkers, and businesses to consider the incredible good that can be done by becoming a Founding Donor or a Kitchen Angel. Sponsorship of a currently unsponsored school enables us to extend our reach to impoverished communities that might otherwise remain on our waiting list for years.

Sponsorship of a specific school kitchen also provides donors with a more personal connection to where their donations go. Founding Donors and Kitchen Angels receive regular updates on progress at their sponsored schools and, if they like, tours of the schools as well. Visit [feedthehungryisma.org/how-to-help/school-kitchen-sponsorship/](https://feedthehungryisma.org/how-to-help/school-kitchen-sponsorship/) to learn more.

## Make an In-Kind Donation

Consider opening the door of your home or facility for our events, or to host a visitor attending our fundraising excursions. We also welcome auction items such as art, products, tours, and gift certificates. **If you wish to donate any of these items please email [contact@feedthehungryisma.org](mailto:contact@feedthehungryisma.org) or call 152-2402, ext 103.**

Feed the Hungry San Miguel, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) U.S. non-profit corporation guided by a dedicated Board of Trustees, supported by a small, professional staff and a corps of exceptional volunteers.

Feed the Hungry San Miguel, Inc. raises funds and provides guidelines to its Mexican operating entity, Feed the Hungry A.C.

Amistad Canada is our partner for donations from Canadian residents.

**Donations are tax-deductible in the U.S., Mexico, and Canada.**