



A co-operatively run NGO driven by the enthusiasm of its staff and volunteers to promote sustainable development in marginalized communities throughout Ecuador and to promote Cultural Exchange for mutual benefit in our increasingly globalized world

Stay up to date with all the news at Yanapuma!

A bimonthly newsletter

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Introduction

To all our students, volunteers and supporters WE WISH YOU HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

As 2012 draws to a close, overall we can look back on a successful year for Yanapuma, and we count ourselves lucky to have survived and even grown a little over the previous year!

The end of the year means it is time to begin writing our annual report, and we hope to have this ready for presentation by the end of February or beginning of March, although the financial statement will have to wait until April, once it has been prepared.

In brief, each year brings new challenges. For the first 3 years we struggled to survive month to month, not quite knowing at times where the next month's rent was going to come from, but managing to carry on with our development work in two or three communities. In our 4th and 5th years we felt a little more secure and managed to achieve a higher level of external funding for the foundation, using the profit from the Spanish school more to fill in the funding gaps where necessary.

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This year, 2012, saw us further consolidating the organization as a whole, but with fresh challenges brought about by changes in regulations by the government in Ecuador. We separated the Spanish school from the foundation, setting it up as a limited company, but with the same vision and mission. This process involved legal and other costs and will incur higher operating costs from now on, but it takes us out of the grey area we were in before of not quite knowing if it was legally acceptable to be running the Spanish school within the framework of the foundation. Now the foundation exists as an independent entity, wholly dependent upon external funding for its continued existence.

We are grateful to our supporters who have provided encouragement and resources over the past 6 years that have allowed us to continue realizing the vision and mission of Yanapuma Foundation.



A new "Yanapumita" - Vinicio became "Papa" in November!

Yanapuma joins AECEE!

In December Yanapuma joined the "Asociación Ecuatoriana de Centros de Enseñanza de Español." This association represents the best of the Spanish schools in Ecuador, dedicated to improving the quality of Spanish teaching and maintaining the highest standards of instruction among its members.

We are proud to join this group that represents the best in Spanish education in Ecuador, capable of competing on an international level with schools in any of the nearly 20 countries that speak Spanish as a first language.



Christmas Fundraiser

It is still not too late to contribute to our Christmas Fundraiser!

Each year we raise funds to continue supporting the youth of Estero de Plátano to study at high school. Currently we have 13 students, including two from nearby Quingue, who study at the colleges in Galera or Tonchigwe.

We have 3 interns from Union College in New York who have been working with the scholarship recipients this year, helping them with homework and generally keeping them on course with their studies. They will be in Estero until April of 2013.

It is particularly exciting this year for us as the first scholarship student will be graduating in January!

For 2013 it will cost us \$340 to support each student for one academic year. Please consider donating what you can for this worthwhile cause. Click here for more information: <http://www.yanapuma.org/en/EdePScholarships.php>



Project News . . .

During the last two months of the year our focus has been on our work with the Tsa'chila on the project funded by the Inter American Foundation. We have continued to sow more of the up to 26,000 cacao plants that we will eventually plant, and create more of the 87 vegetable plots on family farms and local schools in the Tsa'chila communities. In addition we have continued to offer cooking classes so that Tsa'chila women can learn to prepare and incorporate vegetables into the daily diet of their families.

In November our agricultural expert, Giovanni Toapanta, left us to take up a new post in Santo Domingo after working with us and with the Tsa'chila for the past 4 years. We were sorry to see him go and wish him the best in the future! The continued complications of working with the Tsa'chila can become overwhelmingly tiresome, and finally Giovanni decided that a change of beneficiaries was necessary.

But his departure opened up a new opportunity for two of the Tsa'chila cacao promoters that he has spent almost 3 years encouraging. Rafael Machin and Wilson Calazacón, already working on the IAF project, jumped at the chance to take on more responsibility, and we were delighted to offer them this opportunity. It has always been the aim of Yanapuma to encourage local participation and ownership of the projects, with the eventual aim of making them totally self-sufficient. So over the next few months we will be assisting them as they settle in to their expanded roles, monitoring the growth of the cacao plants and teaching the Tsa'chila farmers new techniques for improving their cacao yield.



At the same time we are delighted to be working with Christina Aguavil. Her role in the project as a nutritionist and cook is to visit each family in turn and help them to prepare nutritious meals, educating them as she goes about diet. Being Tsa'chila herself, she can talk to the women in their own language, which

facilitates the learning, as for many Tsa'chila Spanish is still their second language.



In the village of Estero de Plátano our 3 interns have been busy setting up a computer center with reconditioned PCs. We had some trouble at the start as the extremely variable current in the village quickly damaged several of the computers. So we bought battery regulators and repaired the computers, loading on to them a wealth of educational software. The aim is to teach the children and the adults who are active in community affairs how to use a PC.

Donation News . . .

As of writing, our annual Christmas Fundraiser has raised \$1490 to continue offering scholarships in Estero de Plátano and Quingue. **See the front page if you are interested in donating!!**

Our sincere thanks to **Klaus Boas, India Prince, Brogitte Goetz, AndyWright, Anne Francis and Maria Marone!!!**

We received a donation of \$400 from **Jennifer Wilson and Lisa Hoffman** for the repair of computers in the village of Los Naranjos and the purchase of regulators to control the voltage.

A donation of 2 laptops and a variety of stationery was made by **Annie Steward** to the Sinchi Aqua project in the Amazon. Annie also donated the change of \$14.75 to Yanapuma Foundation.



School News . . .

The last two months of the year see a gradual tailing off in the number of students studying Spanish with us. This year was no exception, and over the Christmas and New Year period we dropped down to around 6-8 students. Some of those were traveling on the various Study and Travel programs that we offer, notably to Yachana Lodge, the Ruta del Sol and the Ruta de los Volcanes.

We have been re-working some of our Study and Travel programs for 2013, adding new ones and altering others, with the twin aims of making them as appealing as possible and reducing the prices where possible. We now have teachers in different parts of the country who can receive students and lead the programs, thus avoiding some of the associated costs of accommodation, travel and food for the teacher. These savings are passed on to the student, with better prices overall. We will continue to work on this process during 2013, expanding our offerings.



We have also dedicated the last two months to the development of our teaching methodology and the development of methods, with regular workshops for the teachers in which they have to do research and present new ideas to their fellow teachers. Our aim is to develop the most effective teaching methods and the best prepared teachers to offer our students the best Spanish education possible.

In tandem with these efforts we have continued to develop our administrative capacities, creating an efficient system for recording student progress throughout their study period. We believe that what we offer in terms of assessment of students' learning program and progress is far in advance of any other school in Ecuador. **That is just one more reason to study Spanish with Yanapuma!**

Remember . . . You can continue to study Spanish online with Yanapuma through our Online Spanish Classes. Click on this link to learn more:

<http://www.spanishonlineclass.com>

Volunteers and Interns . . .

Just as in the Spanish school, the volunteering activities quieten down towards the end of the year. With the departure of the last volunteer group in mid-November and only a few individual volunteers to place until the end of the year, we had time to catch our breath and begin to plan for 2013 and beyond.

Emily Branan, formerly working in the Spanish school, is now working alongside our other volunteer coordinator Angela Winston. Our plans for 2013 include seeking more partnerships for Study Abroad and Service Learning programs with international universities and colleges.

In addition we will be working to receive more individual volunteers in our Volunteer Ecuador program.

During 2012 we began the process of adapting the foundation website to represent the volunteering more directly. The information and updates on the work of the foundation will still be there, but the volunteering will take a more visible position. In addition we have begun a process of optimizing the website for volunteering and internships with the goal of raising our profile in the major search engines.

We are also delighted to welcome **Kimberley Mancell** to the Yanapuma team. Kimberley arrived as a Spanish student, but will be staying on to work in the Spanish school, helping with the administration as well as working with students, excursions, and tourism-related activities.

At the start of November we welcomed **Cherry Stovall** from Hawaii. Cherry has been working on GPS/GIS mapping of parts of the Tsa'chila communities, helping to map new cacao plots, vegetable gardens and other features of the Tsa'chila comunas. She also lent a hand in the construction of the vegetable plots, working alongside other staff in the field.

Alicia Abendroth arrived as a Spanish student and ended up volunteering with the foundation, helping in the construction of the vegetable plots in the Tsa'chila communities and in El Poste school during December.



November and December Photo Gallery

