

Visiting Chajul with Limitless Horizons Ixil





LIMITLESS

H O R I Z O N S I X I L

Transforming a community through education



Creating opportunities for the indigenous youth, women, and families of Chajul, Guatemala, to develop the academic and professional skills needed to effect change in their lives and community.



San Gaspar Chajul

- Traditional indigenous community, preserving Maya Ixil customs, culture, and language
- Nearly 6,000 feet elevation, isolated by mountains
- Corn-based agricultural economy
- Tragic center of the Guatemalan Civil War (1960-1996)



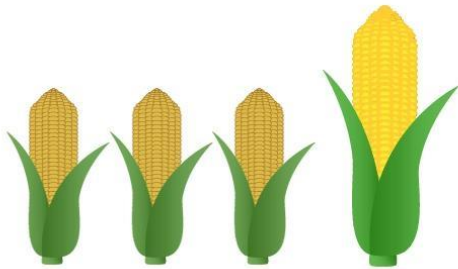
Life in Chajul

\$2

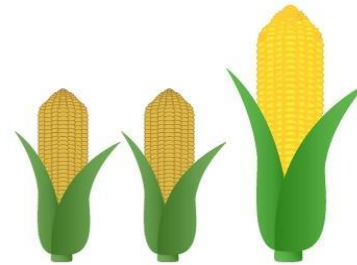
93% of the population lives in poverty defined as income less than \$2/day



5.6% of households have someone who earns a salary in the formal economy



77% of first graders have stunted growth, suggesting extreme malnutrition



67% have high risk of food insecurity

Less than 11.5% of students in Chajul graduate from middle school.



Less than 3% of students graduate from high school; it's less than 1.5% for girls.



In the department of Quiché, only 13% of youth complete middle school, compared to the national average of 33%.



Background on Limitless Horizons Ixil

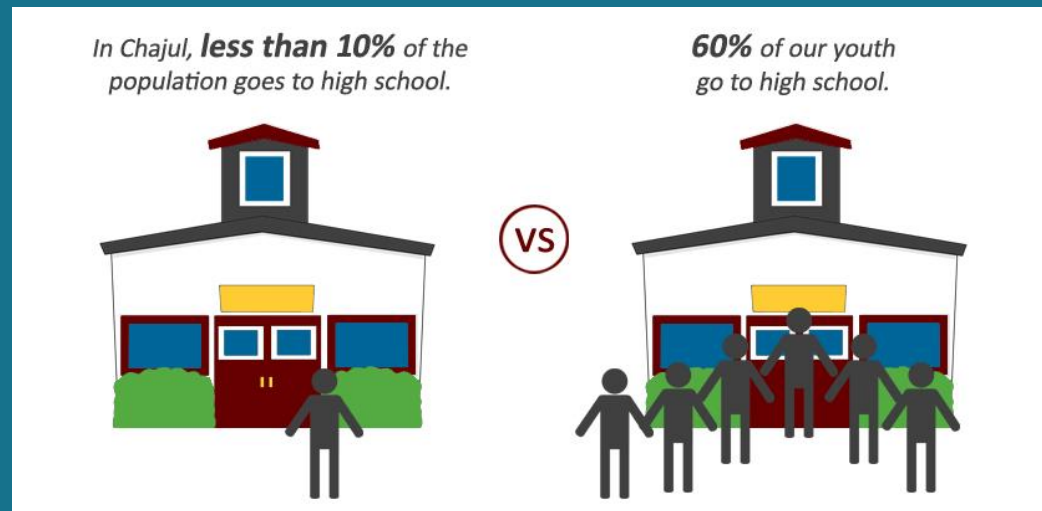
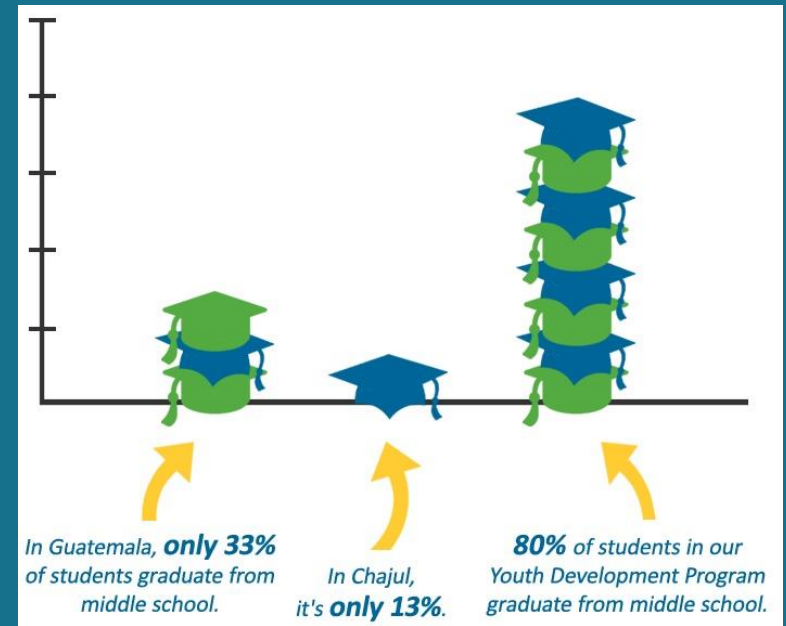
- Celebrating ten years of success in Chajul
- Official US 501(c)3 nonprofit and Guatemalan NGO
- Staff combines local and international skills and knowledge
- We focus on opening educational opportunities for Chajul's youth, the future leaders in their community



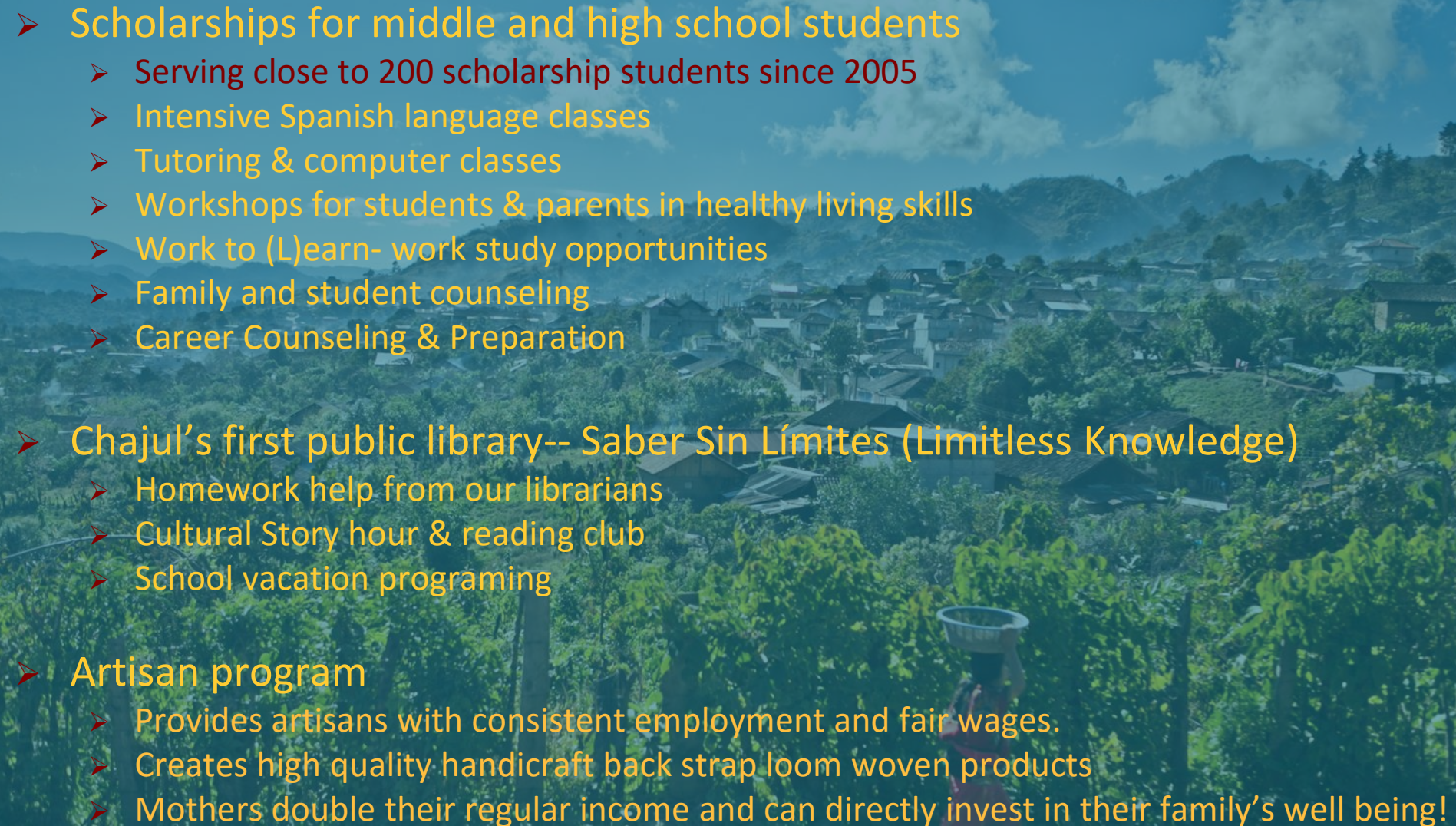
© Sue Rissberger Photography

Major Accomplishments

- Our Youth Development Program annually provides over 50 students with scholarships and wrap-around academic services.
- In 2010 we founded Chajul's first public library, Saber Sin Límites (Limitless Knowledge). Today, it serves 1,600 users with 5,000 titles.
- Our Artisan Program *has* provided more than 50 women with opportunities to earn a fair paycheck.



Limitless Horizons Ixil's Programs

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- Scholarships for middle and high school students
 - Serving close to 200 scholarship students since 2005
 - Intensive Spanish language classes
 - Tutoring & computer classes
 - Workshops for students & parents in healthy living skills
 - Work to (L)earn- work study opportunities
 - Family and student counseling
 - Career Counseling & Preparation
 - Chajul's first public library-- Saber Sin Límites (Limitless Knowledge)
 - Homework help from our librarians
 - Cultural Story hour & reading club
 - School vacation programming
 - Artisan program
 - Provides artisans with consistent employment and fair wages.
 - Creates high quality handicraft back strap loom woven products
 - Mothers double their regular income and can directly invest in their family's well being!

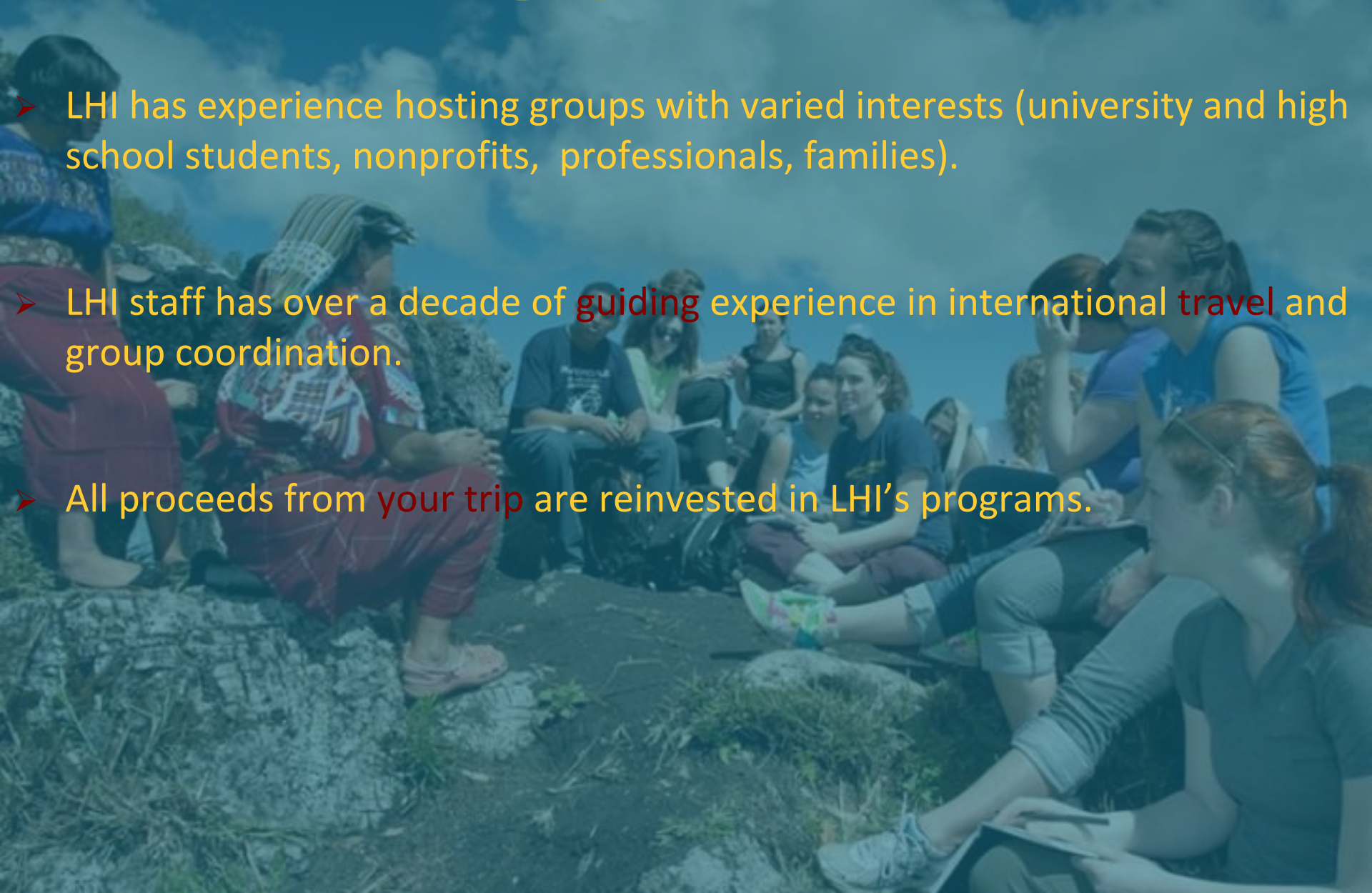
Community Engagement Travel with LHI

- Be immersed in the unique culture of Chajul.
- Meet LHI youth and families, learn about their lives, and visit their homes.
- Make a difference by engaging in needed service projects.
- Help create needed jobs in Chajul! Your visit stimulates the local economy and puts our families to work.
- Engage in cultural exchange. Learn about ancient Maya Ixil history & culture while sharing with children, youth and families of Chajul.



Community Engagement Travel with LHI

- LHI has experience hosting groups with varied interests (university and high school students, nonprofits, professionals, families).
- LHI staff has over a decade of guiding experience in international travel and group coordination.
- All proceeds from your trip are reinvested in LHI's programs.



What LHI Offers

- Experienced guides
- Safe and reliable transportation services
- Hotel and meal coordination
- An array of cultural and educational activities.
- Meaningful service work
- Daytrips
- Translation services (English, Spanish, Ixil, and Quiché)
- Extensive emergency and medical plans
- An unforgettable and eye opening experience of a lifetime

Accommodation in Chajul

- Lodging
 - Local hotel fully equipped bathrooms and kitchen
 - Friendly hotel staff that make you feel like part of the family
- Meals
 - Breakfasts prepared in hotel by LHI youth
 - Lunches prepared by local families (trained in hygienic cooking practices)
 - Dinners prepared in hotel kitchen by trained hotel staff
 - Vegetarians and other special diets easy to accommodate

Activities for Visitors

- A range of educational activities
- Cultural exchange activities
- Community service work opportunities



A Range of Educational Activities

- Take in daily life in Chajul with local families
- Study Ixil with an introductory language lesson
- Hear from an ex-guerrilla about his experiences in the Guatemalan Civil War
- Experience class in a local middle school
- Visit sacred sites and learn about Maya traditions with a local guide
- Learn about traditional dress & weavings from local women.
- Hike some of Guatemala's most scenic trails

Cultural Exchange Activities

Experience real life in Chajul by participating in activities with families in their homes, learning firsthand about customs, traditions, and **cuisine!**

"My favorite aspect of the trip was the overall feeling of community, generosity,... and optimism by all the people in Chajul—from the locals to the people working at LHI. ...because although I changed their lives, they changed mine even more."

-- Anaka Morris, Catlin Gabel, 2011



Activities with Families

- Make and eat a typical lunch.
 - Tortillas, eggs, beans, and traditional salsa
 - *Boxbol*, the Ixil region's most traditional food
- Learn to weave.
- Learn local about local household customs: using a mortar and pestle, carrying water on your head, firewood collecting techniques, local dress and more.



Activities with LHI Students

- Field day
- Games afternoon
- Language exchange
- Hike to a local waterfall
- Arts and crafts afternoon
- Library Party
- Story Hour in the library

*"Culture, language, history, education,
and amazing people!"*

*-- Lindsay Hayden, Educator Trip
Participant, 2012*

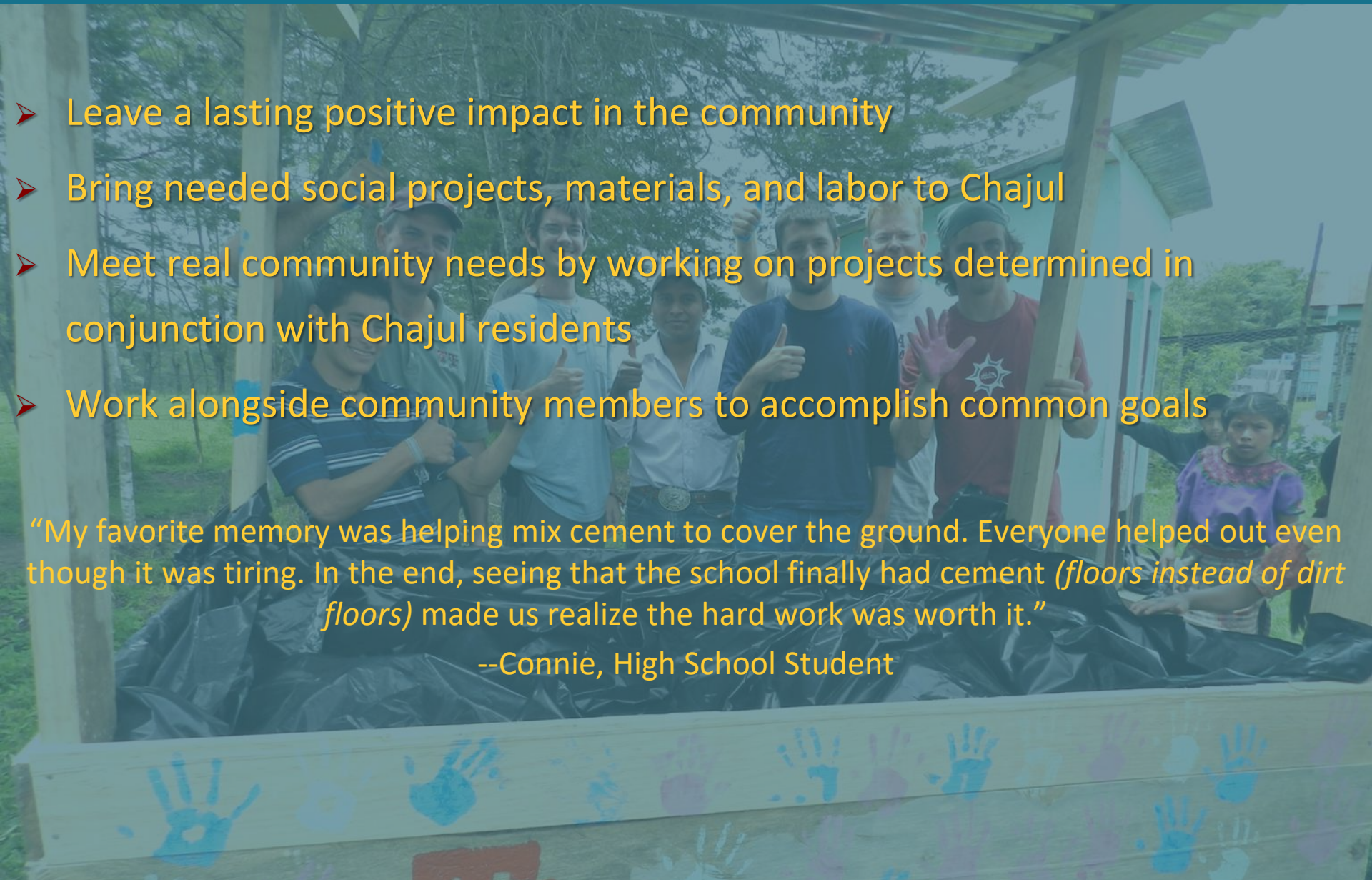


Community Service Work

- Leave a lasting positive impact in the community
- Bring needed social projects, materials, and labor to Chajul
- Meet real community needs by working on projects determined in conjunction with Chajul residents
- Work alongside community members to accomplish common goals

“My favorite memory was helping mix cement to cover the ground. Everyone helped out even though it was tiring. In the end, seeing that the school finally had cement (*floors instead of dirt floors*) made us realize the hard work was worth it.”

--Connie, High School Student



Community Service Work Opportunities

- Projects may include
 - cement-laying
 - construction
 - painting
 - training local staff and teachers in your specialty
 - Learning activities or lessons with local students



Reflections

“A once in a lifetime experience that could only be provided by an organization like LHI who is professional, entrusted, entrenched and respected in the community.”

-- **Educator Trip Participant, 2012**

“Being in the homes of people who want to make a better life for themselves, experiencing the cooking, being part of a very much needed patio work project, running centers for the children and experiencing their excitement for learning were highlights for me..”

--**Lee, 2015 trip participant**



Contact Us

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