



Andean Aid – The Case for Financial Support

The Challenge

Andean Aid is in the business of changing lives by developing the bodies, minds and souls of poor children in the South American Andes. These children struggle mightily in school and the parents do not have the resources to help them succeed. Most children do not even have a place to study and do homework in their small, crowded homes in most cases. Imagine trying to study in a home the size of a two door garage, with walls of mud and a dirt floor, no running water or electricity, and eight other family members going about their business. Now you have some idea of the challenges faced by these children.

Many of the children come from Colombia refugee families. Colombia has the world's third largest refugee population. Approximately 280,000 Colombians seek refuge in Venezuela. These children may have many problems to overcome to succeed in school and in life.



The Solution

Our solution is the Help and Hope Center - a haven where children receive a clean nurturing environment to study and thrive. Each Center provides a clean, well lit place to study with books, references, computers and teachers to provide guidance and assistance. The Center staff also acts as advocates for the children in the public school system. Bible study is offered by local pastors to provide spiritual grounding for children. To date the Centers have been in the larger urban areas of Rubio, Venezuela and Cúcuta, Colombia. Due to changes in the economic and political environment it makes sense to have many smaller Centers located in community churches.



About Us

Andean Aid is one of the only organizations serving in the frontier states of Venezuela and Colombia. We strive to level the playing field for poor children while keeping them in the home setting. Our current strategy, which is to offer Help and Hope Centers right in the local community church, makes this even more achievable. We minister to children and communities that are not serviced by larger organizations such as Compassion due to low population density or the migrant status of the children.

Our highly qualified Venezuelan staff understands the culture and needs of the children and their families. We have learned that for children to take advantage of increased opportunity we must sometimes reduce misery. We have built and repaired homes, assisted a family when the father was jailed, provided Christian counseling, given free dental care, and provided medicine and special medical care.

We also give the children and opportunity to explore, develop and utilize their special gifts and talents. This is above and beyond leveling the playing field. Also, the children are expected to serve and improve their community.



Other Accomplishments

Andean Aid worked alongside the International Kids Fund to bring a Venezuelan boy with fibrous dysplasia to the United States for extensive medical treatment. We arranged all documentation for visas and travel and International Kids Fund arranged for all medical treatment. Two years and seven surgeries later Bladimir is back in Venezuela attending school and doing fine.

We have established two Christian radio programs in Rubio. One program reaches young children (Conversando con los Niños – Conversation with the Children) and the other reaches teenagers and young adults (Juventud Productiva – Youth Production). Children and staff at our Help and Hope Center play key roles in each program.

At the request of the local government and school system in Rubio, Venezuela we have provided programs to local schools on topics related to health (AIDS prevention) and social issues (teenage pregnancy).



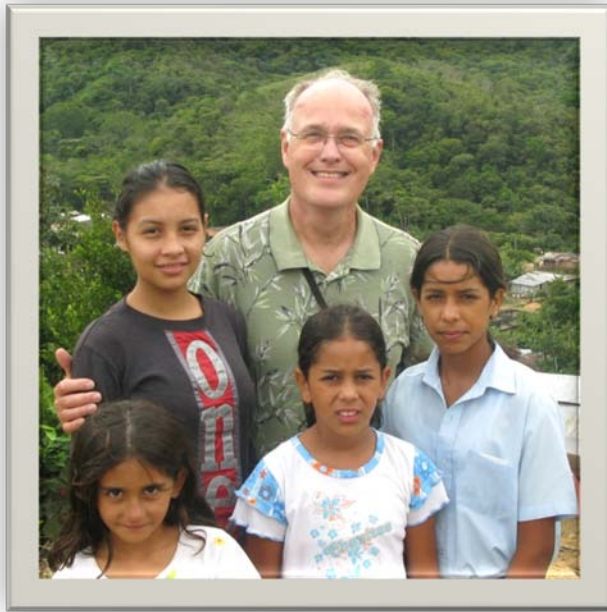
Philosophy and Strategy

In July 2000, Wayne and Susan Cramer moved to a mountain community in Venezuela for what they expected to be a one-year assignment at a school for missionary children. While there, though, the real purpose of their assignment to Rubio became increasingly evident through their involvement with the local community and a fondness for the people and culture of the Venezuelan Andes. As the Lord captured their hearts, for the children especially, they were made aware that many were too poor to afford even the most basic necessities for survival in school (5 cents for the daily homework assignment was out of the question for many). This led to establishing the non-profit organization Andean Aid in October 2003 and setting up the first Help & Hope Center to provide an after-school place where a variety of resources are available to supplement their schooling. Venezuela and the Andes was a destination in itself and not a stepping stone elsewhere.

Andean Aid is funded mainly by individuals led to contribute to our ministry. We also receive funding from churches and have invested in a Venezuelan business to provide a level of earned income in Bolivares, the national currency.

Our philosophy is that all children are gifts from God and deserve the best chance to grow and utilize their gifts. God has a special plan for each of them.

Andean Aid has done much good, continues to do good today and will continue to do even more good in the future with your help. This December our first Help and Hope Center student graduates from the university. Also, a young girl on the fast track to a career selling garlic cloves in the open market ran headlong into our Help and Hope Center five years ago and the direction of her life has changed dramatically. Today she leads a ministry to youth in the high schools and is a key on-air personality in our radio programs for teens. She wants to earn a degree in communication from the university and become a reporter. Andean Aid is petitioning the governor of Tachira state to provide a scholarship to facilitate this dream. We have barely scratched the surface and our ministry could benefit thousands of communities in the Andes and tens of thousands of children such as these.



**Sincerely yours,
Wayne Cramer, President**