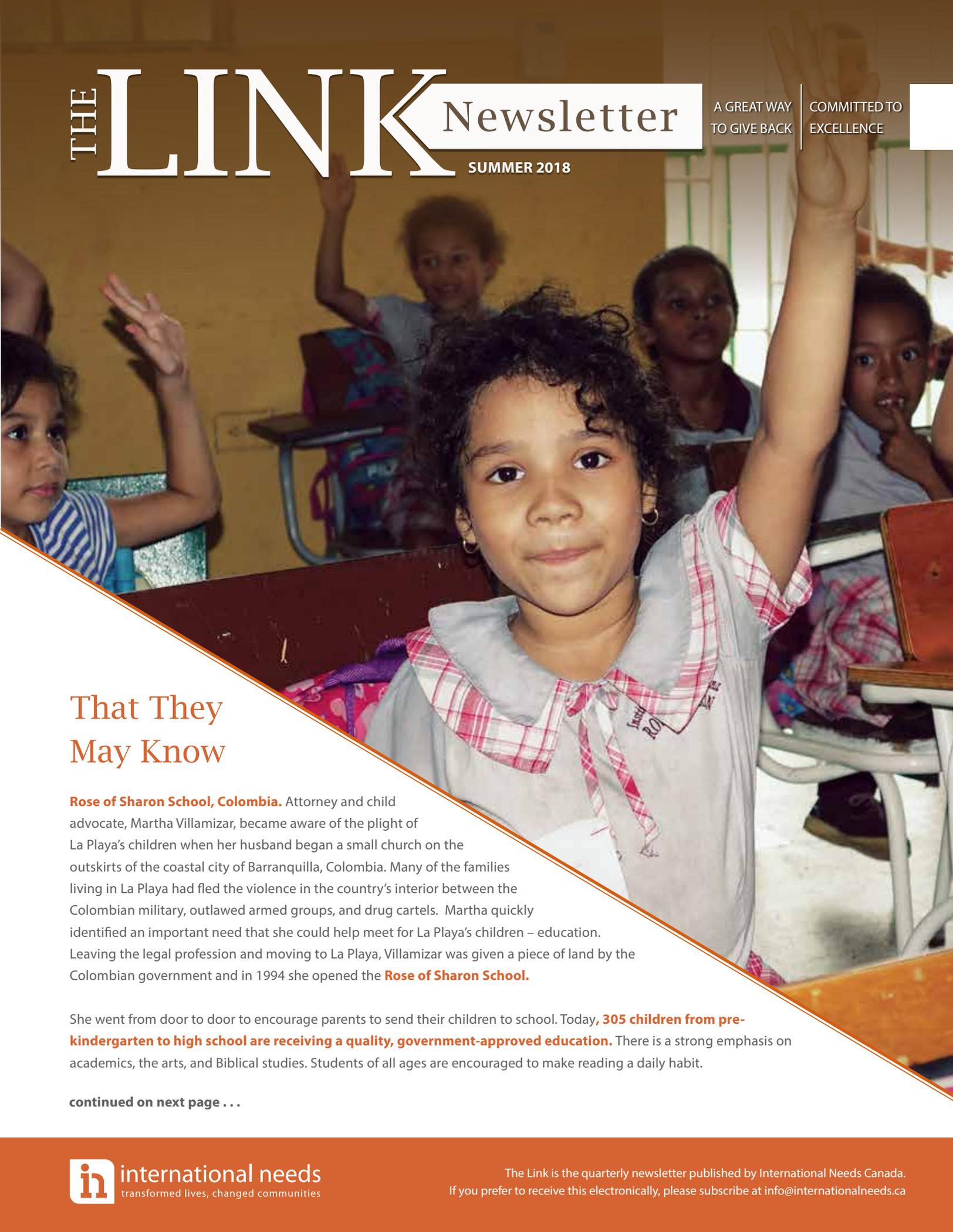


THE LINK Newsletter

SUMMER 2018

A GREAT WAY
TO GIVE BACK

COMMITTED TO
EXCELLENCE



That They May Know

Rose of Sharon School, Colombia. Attorney and child advocate, Martha Villamizar, became aware of the plight of La Playa's children when her husband began a small church on the outskirts of the coastal city of Barranquilla, Colombia. Many of the families living in La Playa had fled the violence in the country's interior between the Colombian military, outlawed armed groups, and drug cartels. Martha quickly identified an important need that she could help meet for La Playa's children – education. Leaving the legal profession and moving to La Playa, Villamizar was given a piece of land by the Colombian government and in 1994 she opened the **Rose of Sharon School**.

She went from door to door to encourage parents to send their children to school. Today, **305 children from pre-kindergarten to high school are receiving a quality, government-approved education.** There is a strong emphasis on academics, the arts, and Biblical studies. Students of all ages are encouraged to make reading a daily habit.

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The school is in its third year teaching English as a second language. Many students serve as interpreters for foreign visitors. In accordance with “The House of Culture in Barranquilla”, the school has courses in music, dance, and painting. There are many budding young artists, dancers, and musicians, and events showcasing their talents are always well attended.

Carlos John, a former student at the Rose of Sharon School, was awarded a Certificate of Excellence in music at Colombia’s prestigious North University. To show his gratitude, Carlos teaches music at the Rose of Sharon School.

Day trips to museums and other cultural places teach students about their culture, their country, and the rest of the world.

“At the Rose of Sharon School, we have a holistic approach to education. We want to develop young minds to reach their full potential but we also want to encourage their artistic expression and spiritual growth. We want them to know that they are loved by God.” • Martha Villamizar

The School has also developed programs that reach into the community. These programs include training in sewing, jewellery making, and professional makeup artistry, with the goal of assisting single mothers and older women to improve their quality of life.

The Rose of Sharon’s clothing brand “Cristal Girls” was well-received at various fairs, shopping malls, and markets, and was praised for its quality and design. In 2018, the sewing program provided the entire school with uniforms and students are presently working on Cristal Girls’ designs for the summer. This program encourages creativity and innovation and helps fund the school’s operational costs.

Many thanks for your faithful support of the Rose of Sharon School. You are impacting the lives of hundreds of children, their families, and their community. When speaking with Martha Villamizar regarding the needs of the school, her prayer is always for more sponsors. **There are 71 children on the waiting list. •**

From Dedicated Student to Dedicated Nurse

When Maria was nine years old, she walked through the front door of **International Needs’ Rose of Sharon School** in La Playa, Colombia. She was entering third grade at a new school and felt a mixture of excitement and anxiety. Thankfully, Maria was able to make new friends and quickly became a bright star at the school. From her first day until her graduation, Maria stood out as a strong leader who was dedicated, loyal, and full of joy. After graduation, she went on to study nursing at a technical institute in Barranquilla. No one was surprised when Maria became one of the top students in her nursing class.

Recently, Maria had the opportunity to give back to the school community who had embraced her as a child. She was able to assist a medical team during a week-long medical clinic in the



La Playa area and provide medical care to more than 400 people who simply could not afford it.

“I felt so much joy deep in my heart that I was able to give back to a community that gave me so much, and bless them in this way.” • Maria •



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A Great Way to Give Back

Laura Lane is the Chief Financial Officer at Maljohn Company Ltd, a plastic manufacturing company in Hannon, Ontario. In 2014, Laura attended a workshop in Toronto hosted by Jerry Roberts, a long-time supporter of International Needs. During the workshop Jerry shared some of his experiences visiting the Rose of Sharon School in Barranquilla, Colombia. Laura was impressed by his presentation of the school and when Jerry challenged them to consider sponsoring a child, he added that his company would match the number of children they sponsored.

***Laura shares,** "I knew that my company, Maljohn, could afford to sponsor 3 children and that Jerry's company would match that number, so I signed up. I was excited to sponsor 3 girls at the Rose of Sharon School because I felt that girls in today's world need all the extra help they can get. I love receiving their letters and updates. The original 3 girls, Marisela, Natalie, and Gisella have grown up and moved on and we now sponsor three new children; Andrea, Maria, and a boy named Ivan. I have a board in my office above my desk with all their photos. I think of them often and have enjoyed replying to their letters. I keep a file of everything they have sent me over the years."*

Thank you Laura for putting your compassion into action. Your support of these children will open many doors for them and greatly impact their futures. •

PRAYER CORNER

ITEMS FOR PRAYER

"O LORD, hear my plea for justice. Listen to my cry for help. Pay attention to my prayer, for it comes from honest lips." • Psalm 17:1

Please pray for International Needs' new Executive Director in Nepal, Mr. Jnyan Narayan Shrestha. May God answer his prayer by giving International Needs opportunities to reach as many struggling communities in Nepal as possible.

ITEMS FOR PRAISE

"Come, everyone! Clap your hands! Shout to God with joyful praise!" • Psalm 47:1

We praise God for the wonderful work He is doing at the Rose of Sharon School in Barranquilla, Colombia. Young lives are being changed and their future is full of promise!

LAURA LANE

Committed to Excellence



The Rose of Sharon School graduates received high scores from the Colombian Institute for the Promotion of Higher Education. This will provide the students with greater opportunities to study in public or private universities. A full scholarship was awarded to Andres Zambrano, making him the only high school student in all of La Playa to receive this honour.

Andres is a young man who worked hard to achieve his goals. During his time as a student at the Rose of Sharon School, he stood out for his friendliness and for his academic performance. His hobbies are reading and research and he aspires to become a public accountant. The scholarship he received will enable him to begin his studies at Colombia's North University, one of the most prestigious private universities in Barranquilla. His family is very proud of him and grateful to the Rose of Sharon School and his sponsors for the support and guidance they gave Andres throughout his education. Most importantly, the family is thankful to God for answering their prayers. •

Meet Nepal's New Executive Director



In January 2018, **International Needs Nepal's** former Executive Director, Esther Laxmi Thapa, passed the baton to the newly appointed ED, Mr. Jnyan Narayan Shrestha. After serving the Nepalese people with excellence and dedication for many years, Mrs. Thapa felt it was time to retire.

"I've joined my husband in retirement and am very thankful to our Canadian friends for their faithful support, their prayers, and their encouragement over the years. Now my time is spent caring for my family and I'm attempting to grow organic vegetables. I also serve the Lord as a board member on the Nepal Christian Society and am involved with Asian Evangelical Women's Leadership. May God continue to bless abundantly the work of International Needs in Nepal." • **Esther**

Mr. Shrestha was born in a Hindu family, in Tandi, 160 KM from Kathmandu. As the only son in a farming family with 9 children, Shrestha spent his childhood working in the fields with his father before and after school.

In 1991, a missionary came to Nepal and stayed in their village home. Shrestha would spend time discussing with the missionary and eventually he became convinced that Jesus was the one true God.

Shrestha received his Master's Degree in Chemistry and worked as a teacher for 7 years. Afterwards, he worked in the non-profit sector as a Community Development Coordinator, and a National Sponsorship Manager.

"I served communities in need for 14 years and when the organization went through a restructuring process, I resigned from my post. I asked God to bless me with opportunities to reach as many struggling communities in Nepal as possible so I could demonstrate Christ's love through my words, actions, and deeds."

After learning of the impressive work of International Needs Nepal and their ministry with women and children in community development and evangelism, I knew that God had answered my prayer. I am looking forward to see how God will bless and expand the work of International Needs in the coming years." • **Jnyan Narayan Shrestha, Director, International Needs Nepal.** •

INTERNATIONAL NEEDS CANADA



Upcoming Discovery Tours

Ghana Medical Tour	November 11-23, 2018
Guatemala Discovery Tour	January 14-24, 2019
Bangladesh Discovery Tour	February 20 - March 4, 2019

For more information please contact Corrie Mulder at
905.637.9411 or corrie@internationalneeds.ca

Discovery Tours offer a unique opportunity to witness first-hand the difference your contribution is making in the lives of the children and families you support. It also allows you to connect with your partners serving on the ground. Your gift is the fuel that drives their service.

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children at risk with the hope of
a better future.

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