We accomplished so much in 2019...

- We work with 2 different indigenous Mayan people groups: the Ixil and the Quiché.
- NFE scholarships served 91 junior & senior high school students from 8 different villages. 100% of NCS seniors graduated on time.
- 44% of NCS’s 2019 student body were female.
- 6 university students receiving NFE “Ten Talents” scholarships volunteered as tutors working with 5th & 6th grade students in 8 villages to help prepare them for successful entry to 7th grade at NCS.
- 10 students graduated from high school (called bachillerats).
- 17 students graduated from junior high school this year.
- 67 students in 4th, 5th and 6th grade are being tutored in 6 different villages. Tutoring includes math, language, social studies, natural science, technology, engineering and citizenship. Tutors are encouraged to create “learning by doing” experiences for students to reinforce material taught. 56% of tutoring students are girls.
- Through our tutoring alone, tutored students increased their words per minute reading an average of 15%.
- Tutoring is also taking place at NCS to help prepare seniors to apply for specialized university programs.
- NFE opened a bilingual Early Childhood Education Center & Preschool in the San Nicolas village serving 32 children. These Quiché-speaking children are learning Spanish! Expanding access to bilingual education programs in the early grades reduces grade repetition and dropout among Mayan primary school students. Currently, only 1/3 of rural children in Guatemala have access to such programs.
- Our annual Teacher Professional Development workshop in July served 150 regional teachers and is becoming a much-anticipated event for networking and new teaching concepts. We also added a December workshop for teachers.

2020 Nicolás Fund Education Goals

- Improve students’ Spanish language fluency and literacy
- Develop a plan to assess and address possible learning disabilities in our students.
- Develop comprehensive strategies for sustainability at Nicolás Christian School
- Continue our work to design, build and fundraise for a new school with capacity for up to 300 indigenous Mayan students

Your donations are changing lives, and there has never been better proof of those changes than in 2019! This November, nine Nicolás Fund for Education students graduated from university and many will be certified to teach primary school and junior high. Who could have ever imagined the day when the toddlers we played with during our Agua “Journey with a Village” days would become university-educated professionals?

It is especially thrilling to see the accomplishments of our university students majoring in education. During the year, some have had one to two years of teaching experiences as tutors for fifth and sixth graders in village primary schools. They will graduate having had practical experience in their field that will serve them well. Some of our graduates from university majoring in education may choose to continue their education to obtain advanced literature that will permit them to teach high school or to be principals in schools. Others will be looking for employment as local primary school teachers.

One student, Pedro David, was hired professionally to translate a video documentary into English for Agua International for their annual fundraising event: Agua Fund for Education preschool opened in the village of San Nicolas in July 2019 and is allowing Quiché toddlers and preschoolers to learn Spanish for the first time. Studies show that the easiest time to acquire another language is between infancy and age 7, but traditionally Spanish is not taught in the local primary schools until third grade. We know from our own junior and senior high school program that the lack of Spanish fluency is a major barrier to reading comprehension and understanding mathematical questions posed in a story problem.

These young students will start primary school already speaking some Spanish and that will allow them to be more successful in their academic careers. The preschool also helps children to learn classroom behavior, how to cooperate with others and other important social skills. They pray and sing about God’s love daily. The preschool is such a great place to visit because it is full of laughter and fun and the excitement to learn.

I have often heard that being a Board member of Nicolás Fund for Education is like being on the best roller coaster ride you can imagine!

Watching God execute his plan to lift the next generation out of poverty is thrilling, fascinating and awe-inspiring. Just when you think something is impossible, God makes the impossible happen! It is our privilege to come alongside God in His work in the world. Won’t you jump on the roller coaster ride of your life by contributing to Nicolás Fund for Education?