



# The Empowering Times

December 2020



Mariposas' Annual  
Newsletter

## COVID-19 Will Not Stop Us

A Note From Our Founder, Tessa Eckholm

2020 has been a year like no other and just like you, Mariposas has had to adapt and maintain flexibility as we closely monitoring the local impact of the COVID-19 outbreak. While this situation is constantly changing, Mariposas continues to maintain our focus on how we can support our young women and the five communities we serve in central Mexico.

Although we have not been able to conduct our annual programs in-person, the Board has been working hard to develop solutions to deliver virtual trainings, seminars, and activities. We have conducted virtual trainings for our Environmental Service Adventure (ESA) participants, assisted with arming the young women with tools to continue their education in a virtual world, and are planning a series of seminars for spring 2021. We are eager to return to in-person programs but the health and safety of our Board, participants, communities, and volunteers is always our top priority.

We hope that everyone remains safe and healthy as we work together to address this public health challenge and as always, we thank you for joining us to ensure these young women have the educational opportunities they deserve!

# THE MARIPOSAS' VIRTUAL WORLD

## VIRTUAL LEARNING

COVID-19 will not stop Mariposas from reaching their dreams of obtaining an education. In May, we set up "**Mariposas' Houses**" in two of our communities to ensure the girls had access to reliable internet and a computer, since most are using cell phones for their classes and homework. Each house received internet as well as a computer kit: laptop, mouse, backpack, and cleaning supplies. We setup a schedule and guidelines for the girls to follow to create a safe learning environment while maintaining their social distance. In order to expand this program, we completed a successful fundraiser in June, which allowed us to continue the program and expand to additional communities.

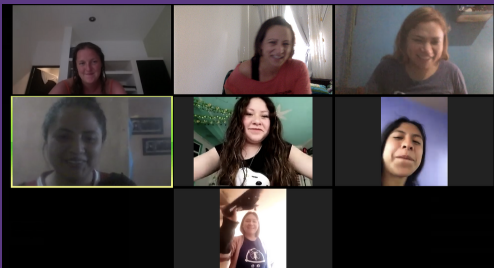


## CLUB ACTIVITIES

One of the pillars of the Mariposas' mission is **SERVICE!** Each Club and scholarship recipient is required to conduct community service. Although COVID-19 has created several obstacles to engaging with the community there are ways to do it safely, and that is exactly what Club Mariposas Las Cuevas did. They conducted project "Green Wings." Complying with all COVID-19 social distance regulations they cleaned a recreational area, dividing all garbage into organic and inorganic categories. Their goal, which they achieved, was to create a safe and clean space for the community to play sports and enjoy the outdoors! **Well Done!**



## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICE ADVENTURE (ESA)



The Mariposas' ESA team, extended an offer to all the six young women and two college students, who were selected to participate in the 2020 program to participate in the 2021 program. This past fall, the ESA team successfully conducted three virtual sessions and, in an effort, to keep them connected and to provide educational opportunities. These included:

- Resume development
- Event organizing and implementation
- Job interview training and practice



The training will help in the young women's professional life as well as during the ESA program when they are challenged with organizing a beach cleanup in as little as 10 days. Additionally, the ESA participants will be giving back by organizing three social service projects in their communities over the next year, complying with all social distancing guidelines.



"The training helped me a lot in my professional development, I now have a perfect resume, which will help me to apply to various jobs."

- Dulce, 2020 ESA Participant



# FUNDING THE EMPOWERING

## MAJOR MILESTONE



Mariposas' received their **FIRST** major grant from the **U.S. Forest Service International Programs, funding through USAID**. These funds were initially to be used to fund the 2020 Camp, some ESA activities, as well as a new community engagement program, Yes, We Can: Mariposas in the Community! This is a series of one-day workshops to be held in the communities Mariposas serves. Each workshop consists of sessions designed around Mariposas' core values of empowerment, leadership, community service, and environmental stewardship geared towards the specific needs of each community. Due to COVID-19, we have had to pivot and are working on bringing virtual programs to the young women this spring, developing program kits, increasing access to the internet, and supporting the 2021 Camp, which will look very different this year.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



We should be showering Shayna, our Camp Mariposas' Director, with presents for her 40th Birthday, but instead Shayna has **generously offered to match up to \$2,000 USD raised until January 12th!** The Camp is an intense week and Shayna says it is both the most exhausted and happiest she can ever remember being and is totally worth to see the young women learn, grow, and gain confidence. She always seems to find the right workshops and presenter and knows how to bring the fun and a smile! Help us celebrate Shayna by clicking here to give her the only thing she wants for her birthday: donations to empower young women!!

## LAPTOP DONATION

Do you live in Puebla? Do you want to make sure that everyone has access to an education in the new virtual learning environment? If the answers to these questions are yes, then donate a new or used laptop to Mariposas. **Contact [volunteria@mariposasmexico.org](mailto:volunteria@mariposasmexico.org) for more information.**

## AMAZON SMILE

We understand that COVID-19 has placed many individuals and families in tight financial situations. One way to give back while shopping year-round is to use [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com). Through this program Amazon donates a percentage of your shopping to the non-profit of your choice. Over the past few years, we have received **over \$500** from Amazon Smile, so think of Mariposas when it's time to stock up on toilet paper!!

## CARES ACT\*

To our U.S. donors, in this year of uncertainty, Congress has given us another reason to donate, the CARES Act. Passed on March 27, 2020, the Act provides an additional **tax deduction of up to \$300 to non-itemizer filers**. This "above the line" adjustment to income is available for gifts to charities, including Mariposas.

*\*Mariposas does not claim to be tax experts and encourage all donors to consult with their tax advisors to determine how these changes will impact their own situation.*



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WITH MARIPOSAS PLEASE FOLLOW US  
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**MARIPOSAS WISHES  
EVERYONE A SAFE AND  
HEALTHY HOLIDAY SEASON  
AND NEW YEAR!**

**WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT MARIPOSAS  
OR DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION EMAIL OUR  
FOUNDER, TESSA ECKHOLM, AT  
TESSA@MARIPOSASMEXICO.ORG**

**THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR  
SUPPORT!**

