

**Thurston-Santo Tomás
Sister County Association**

PO Box 561
Olympia WA 98507



Please note: This will be our last postal mailing. A reminder for the TSTSCA Celebration and Remembrance next summer on July 13th will be emailed, so be sure to send your email address to tstsc@gmail.com if you are unsure whether we have it.



Beth Doglio, Alice Nelson and Marcela Abadi enthusiastically supporting one of our spring plant sales that benefitted university scholars in Santo Tomás.

Members of the 2018 delegation from Santo Tomás with Olympia community members, thanking all of the farmers and gardeners who donated to that year's plant sale.



Thurston-Santo Tomás Sister Community Association

Save The Date:

TSTSCA Celebration and Remembrance

Saturday, July 13, 2024 at Squaxin Park Rose Garden, 4-8 pm

(previously known as Priest Point Park in Olympia)

Please join us for a party to honor the 35-year legacy of solidarity and cooperative volunteer work with our partners in Santo Tomás, Chontales, Nicaragua and to celebrate the contribution each of you has provided to make that work possible. We'll provide good eats and drinks, as well as stories, images, and music!

Since 1989, community support for our relationship with Santo Tomás has been phenomenal. A relationship that began during the US funded Contra War deepened further with each educational and cultural exchange we hosted:



1997 visitor Luis Enrique Miranda Báez (2nd from right on bottom), agro-economist student from Sto. Tomás, with '96 TESC student delegation members, profs and friends



Cesar Castillo (on left), 2018 visitor to Olympia, and other traditional folk dancers in Sto. Tomás

twelve delegations from our sister town (1990-2018), twelve student delegations from The Evergreen State College (1996-2017), and numerous community delegations from the Olympia area. Together, we supported over 50 Nicaraguan university five-year scholarships, a children's free lunch and library program, an elementary school sister project, repairs and equipment for a health clinic, construction of a preschool and the second floor of a technical skills school, new roofs on several community buildings, and the conversion of the women's sewing

coop building (Olympia Const. Brigade project of 1988) into a beautiful rehabilitation center for persons with disabilities. Such an amazing and positive impact on both of our communities!

For all this support, we want to thank you. Over the past 35 years, you have participated in so many ways: by buying plants during our annual spring plant sale; contributing to or purchasing from our winter rummage sales; giving a monthly pledge; contributing to the Combined



2004 community delegation from Sto. Tomás, flanked by the 2003 TESC student delegation and TSTSCA supporters at Lincoln Elementary

Fund Drive; giving a one-time donation or annually. Or you may have attended one of our many events over the years, been a part of the Lincoln Elementary-Rubén Darío sister school exchange, hosted a visitor from Santo Tomás, or traveled and spent some time in our sister community.

We want to celebrate with you and pass along the gratitude extended by the community of Santo Tomás. We have, over these many years, taken our cues from the Committee for Community Development (CDC de Santo Tomás) and responded to their requests for support for projects that they have then successfully implemented on the ground. This doesn't even begin to touch on the many friendships nurtured through delegations North and



Milagros (3rd from left), Director of the Children's Free Lunch and Library program with library users and books donated by West Olympia Rotary Club

South, and now more sustainable with video and audio chats on the internet. The life-long friendships will continue...

However, with heavy hearts, we announce that the active core of TSTSCA volunteers is winding down and will be ending our organization's non-profit status at the end of 2025. With the intention of preserving all the good work and allowing our partners in Santo Tomás to develop a strategy for the continuation of these successful programs, we have developed a plan for the gradual withdrawal of our financial support. Our goal is to raise sufficient funds by November 2024 to carry the current university scholars through to the completion of their studies and the conferral of their diplomas (the last students graduate in 2027) and to fund the *Comedor Infantil* through 2027 as well. This will require a budget of \$124,000. Fortunately, we have nearly half of that amount already in hand as well as a substantial amount in pledges for much of the balance.



Juana Rodríguez (1998 delegate), Grace Cox (Olympia), Facunda Zeledón (2006 delegate) and three university scholars touring the Escuela Hermandad (read the sign!)

Please help us honor our commitment to Santo Tomás with one final contribution!

- ✿ You can make a donation through Paypal on our website: oly-wa.us/tstsc
- ✿ You can mail a check to: PO Box 561, Olympia, WA 98507
- ✿ You can also still donate to TSTSCA through the WA State Combined Fund Drive
- ✿ If you'd like to spread your donation out over two years, please just let us know the amount you're pledging to contribute in 2024 by emailing: tstsc@gmail.com

All donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law.



Kids eating free lunch at the Comedor Infantil

Donations in excess of our goal will be directed to extend our support for university scholars and the *Comedor Infantil*/Children's Free Lunch and Library program in Santo Tomás.

Thank you, again, for the many years of support for this extraordinary international exchange that has meant so much to all of us and to our sister community in Nicaragua.

We look forward to seeing you at the TSTSCA Celebration and Remembrance party on Saturday July 13, 2024 from 4-8 pm at the Rose Garden in Squaxin Park in Olympia!

With much appreciation from Alan M-V, Alice N, Audrey L, Beth D, Bill Z, Catalina O, Diane D, Dirk H, Dixie H, Eddy C, Emily P, Gordon W, Grace C, Harriet S, Jane M-V, Jean E, Kathy S, Lee M, Maureen H, Megan H, Michi T, Mike H, Nels J, Russ F, Seamus P, Stephen B, Tom N, Wyatt W



Some of the kids at the free lunch and library project in Sto. Tomás



Marily Aguilar (2nd from left), scholarship graduate from the 2018 delegation, and her colleagues at the public daycare center in Sto. Tomás



Holiday Celebration in 2019 with teachers from Rubén Darío elementary school, serenaded by a wonderful local band. Yessenia Solís (far right) and past principal at Lincoln's sister school was on delegations to Olympia in 1998 and 2018



2008 delegation (Gladys, Griselda, Bernys and Wilfredo) visiting the WA State Capitol with past TESC student delegates and Olympia community members