

Local Hope Guatemala Earns Highest Rating from Charity Navigator

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SUNSET BEACH, Calif., Sept. 19, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- Local Hope Guatemala has earned the prized Four-Star Rating from Charity Navigator, America's largest independent charity evaluator to better inform donors. Local Hope (known in Guatemala as Xela AID Partnerships for Self-Reliance) has provided a range of services to largely indigenous, underserved populations in Guatemala for the past 32 years, empowering individuals and communities to become healthy, educated and self-reliant so they can beat poverty and thrive. Last year, the organization served more than 15,000 people in communities in the Guatemalan Highlands.



A Four-Star Rating, Charity Navigator's highest, designates Local Hope as an official "Give with Confidence" charity, based on four key indicators: Impact & Results, Accountability & Finance, Culture & Community, and Leadership & Adaptability. This rating is bestowed only on the top 25% of nonprofits, the most fiscally responsible organizations.

"We are delighted to provide Local Hope with third-party accreditation that validates their operational excellence," said Michael Thatcher, president and CEO of Charity Navigator. "The Four-Star Rating is the highest possible rating an organization can achieve. We are eager to see the good work they are able to accomplish in the years ahead."

"We are honored to have received a Four-Star Rating from Charity Navigator," said Leslie Baer Dinkel, CEO of Local Hope. "Our dedicated staff and board of directors are committed to best practices in governance and stewardship of the support we receive, and this accreditation further validates that for our supporters."

Local Hope's empowerment programs span health care, pre-K through college education, economic development, and numerous social services including a program serving those with special needs. As a snapshot of impacts, since 1993, the organization has increased the percentage of girls in school in the region from just 4% to more than 75% and the number of years students remain in school from four (ages 6-10) to 12 (ages 6-18). Local Hope programs have made possible more than 700 high school graduations in a region where no high school graduation of an indigenous child was recorded prior to Local Hope's arrival. More than 50 indigenous youth have now graduated college, with 50 more currently in college.

However, there is much more to do, according to Baer Dinkel. "The lack of economic opportunity in the Guatemalan Highlands continues to fuel despair and propel waves of young migrants to seek hope for the future in the United States. This mass exodus is destroying families, hurling them into debt, and causing communities to lose the best and brightest young people who would otherwise represent the future hope for their communities."

Determined to do more to break this destructive cycle, Local Hope recently launched "Empowering Hope," an ambitious three-part initiative to create a significant number of jobs in the region, prepare young people for the workplace and careers, and fuel entrepreneurship aimed at changing the overall economic outlook for the region.

"To help support their families, a generation of young people have felt compelled to make the dangerous — sometimes fatal — journey north," Baer Dinkel noted. "In this next phase of our work, our focus is partnering to create fair-wage jobs and career paths that will make it possible for young people to prosper safe at home in their communities and with their families."

About Charity Navigator

Charity Navigator is a 501(c)(3) organization that guides intelligent giving with the nation's largest, most comprehensive charity evaluation tool. The organization helps donors easily identify U.S.-registered charities making a difference on the issues they care about most while helping charities better understand their donors, deliver on impact, increase awareness, and build trust. <http://charitynavigator.org>.

About Local Hope Guatemala/Xela AID


Founded in 1992, Local Hope Guatemala, known in Guatemala as Xela AID (Agency for Integrated Development), is a not-for-profit organization that empowers individuals and communities to be healthy, educated and self-reliant. Its proven programs span health care, education, career development and wrap-around services serving largely indigenous populations in a poverty belt in the Guatemalan Highlands. Because earned income from social enterprises in the United States and Volunteer Trips that utilize a 12-room eco-lodge and area tours covers all administrative expenses, 100% of all donations are applied to fuel the empowerment programs that provide direct assistance. <https://xelaaid.org>

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