**Gustavo Adolfo Caal Reyes**

Gustavo is a 19-year-old Maya Q’eqchi’ man who lives in Cobán, one of the cities with a lot of natural resources in the north of the country. This year, Gustavo began the third year of the engineering degree in environmental management at the University of San Carlos de Guatemala, based in Cobán.

Gustavo’s family is quite simple. His parents had 4 children, of which he is the second. Gustavo's father is a day laborer working in the fields or other informal tasks. His mother is a housewife and she does some chores to earn some money. With much effort they were able to provide secondary education to their older children. Then Gustavo’s older brother began to work, with which he was able to start his studies in agronomy and support Gustavo to start his studies in environmental management. Unfortunately, his brother lost his job and he hasn't gotten a new job for several months now. This has caused both brothers to have many financial problems to continue their studies.

Even though the family has many financial needs, Gustavo has passed the first 4 semesters of the degree and has shown good academic performance. When we talked to him, we realized that he is a very intelligent young man, with very interesting ideas for his future and that of his community. His major is a branch of agronomy that specializes in sustainably managing natural resources to maintain ecological balance. Gustavo lives in an area of the country with a lot of natural wealth such as forests, fertile land and great biodiversity. However, in recent years, this ecosystem has been gradually destroyed due to issues such as deforestation and monocultures. Open pit mining has been another big problem in the area, especially because there has been a lot of corruption in the government, and they have provided licenses without fulfilling all the environmental requisites for that practice. Gustavo wants to work educating small farmers to seek environmentally friendly agricultural practices, so that Cobán’s ecosystems are not destroyed. He would also like to be able to work with young people to educate them on environmental issues.

As for his expenses: because he lives and studies in Cobán at the public university, Gustavo does not need as much money and with $800 per year he would have an important support for his studies and alleviate a little the financial situation of his family.

Please tell me if you accept Gustavo's proposal, if you prefer a different proposal or if you can no longer continue as sponsors. Whatever your response is, I am deeply grateful to the Meeting for all the support you have provided and continue to provide to our program.

Yours respectfully,

Michael Costop