

## *We Exist to Serve the Poor*

Our goal is to improve health outcomes in poor communities through primary healthcare, nursing services, public health, dental care, nutrition and education.



*Shoulder to Shoulder*

# UPDATE

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### Spotlight on Yo Puedo

Alba Antonia Ramos works in Intibucá Honduras on Shoulder to Shoulder's Improving Nutrition and Health Outcomes Program. At 20 years old she has achieved much, and as a health worker, she makes a direct impact on the health and daily lives of rural Hondurans.

Alba first encountered Shoulder to Shoulder through the Yo Puedo Program, a community empowerment project, when she was in 6th grade. S2S wanted to help the community of San Francisco and were looking for innovative and passionate women to direct community projects. Dr Jeff Heck and his team recognized Alba's enthusiasm and asked her to form a board of women. Alba was elected president of the board. With the help of their teachers, the board decided on three projects: cultivating corn; using manual skills to make blankets and ponchos; and making and selling churros, biscuits, chocolate and candy.

"To start the cultivation, first we found land to sow the corn. Then we bought the best seeds, cleaned and prepared the soil and sowed the seeds. We always cleared the soil and fertilized so that the harvest was good. After harvesting the corn, we sold it to



*Alba Antonia Ramos.*



*Jill, from the US who lives and works in Santa Lucia, and Nora, who is a local woman, are shown here with a group of Yo Puedo students.*

people who wanted to buy it.”, says Alba reflecting on the project. The second phase worked with 5th and 6th graders, embroidering ponchos and blankets which were sold to medical brigades from the US, volunteering or working at Shoulder to Shoulder’s San Francisco clinic. Combining this with selling food products to children at her school, Alba and her board raised enough money to buy a refrigerator for their school.

By demonstrating her community building and social entrepreneurial skills, Alba was offered a scholarship to study health and build a future for herself. She now works as a health promoter on the Mejorando la Alimentación de los Niños de Intibucá,

Improving Nutrition and Health Outcomes in Intibucá. She says, “the most gratifying and enjoyable part of my work is to promote health in different rural and urban areas, preventing illness and maintaining good health for the people of Intibucá.”

Travelling throughout Intibucá, Alba studies the factors affecting childhood nutrition. “Malnutrition is a problem that affects our country due to lack of economic resources and education,” she says. In areas with the strongest need, infants receive food supplies to prevent malnutrition. Looking ahead Alba reflects, “for my future, what I want the most, is to continue studying and specializing in health. I hope to see much success in people’s work and their daily life very soon”.

**Don’t forget the Buca Java coffee that directly supports the nutrition program of Shoulder to Shoulder. It is getting rave reviews on quality, so order in bulk to make it more cost effective.**



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