



NEWSLETTER

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Look out for our next issue in
July 2006

MARCH 2006

SUE AND WINGS CELEBRATE AN ENCOURAGING YEAR

Dear Donors:

I've never communicated directly with you via our newsletter, but I am now moved to do so. The past year was a fantastic one for WINGS, principally due to three factors: (1) your donations, which grow ever more generous; (2) having Meira Neggaz the full year as our Executive Director; and (3) having had a most successful board meeting with a very engaged board tethering us with their guidance and support. Our statistics of services provided in 2005 did not increase as much as in previous years. There are two reasons for this: firstly, our Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) study took our staff away from their usual work; and secondly, Meira used the year to bring strength, order, credibility, and evaluation to our programs (naturally no one should blame ME for the somewhat haphazard and chaotic way she found things!). Our focus was on quality, which did impinge on our quantity. We now feel well situated,



The WINGS team: (left to right) Francesca, Carmencita, Pilar, Carmen, Meira, Luis, Sue, William, Emma, and Lucky

both financially and with the appropriate staff, to be able to resume our expansion during 2006. (for full details see page 2)

And expand we will. With the help of Dr. John Cheatham and a Mayan Q'ek'Chi' woman, Irma Botzoc, whose salary he will be paying, WINGS will become active in Alta Verapaz, a region about six hours north of Antigua, where the need is huge. In addition, working with a Swiss-based organization, Vivamos Mejor, we plan to begin working in Nahuala, to the west above Lake Atitlan, piggy-backing our reproductive health work onto

their more basic rural health work. And with luck, we will also begin to work along the Pacific Coast region, partnering with the sugar-growers' foundation, using their infrastructure to increase services so they include family planning and cervical cancer screening.

A recent notable development here in Guatemala was the Congress passing a new law requiring schools to provide

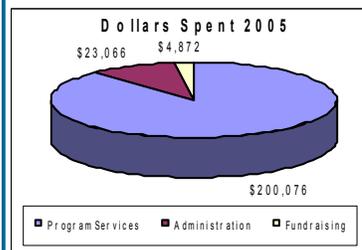
sex education and the government to provide free family-planning methods throughout the country. The law even identified where the money for this would come from (a portion of the alcohol tax). The law took the country by surprise, including the Catholic Church, the President, and the public at large. Alas, under pressure from his wife, the Catholic Church, and some of the evangelical churches (but not all, by any means), the President vetoed the law after Christmas and returned it to Congress. The future of the law is now tied up in procedural questions, so the end result is still unclear.

However, the law started a lively debate about family planning and population growth in the media and in personal conversations, much of which was very favorable to the idea; a recent poll indicated 77% of the population was in favor of the law. Some people even made the explicit connection between providing family planning methods in order to reduce the number of abortions (which are illegal). It's the first time I've seen this in my 13 years of living here.

Stay tuned! Our budget for this year looks like it will exceed \$300,000 – quite a far cry from 2001, when WINGS didn't even have to file an IRS return as we had less than \$5,000 in donations. With your continuing support, we anticipate our best year yet.

Sincerely, Sue

WHERE YOUR MONEY WAS SPENT



The total budget for 2005 was \$237,472, almost double that of 2004. And of this, approximately \$200,000 was spent on increasing WINGS' programs.

This figure accounted for 88% of 2005's budget, with just 10% on administration (even with an increase in administration staff), and 2% on fundraising.

WINGS' efforts to increase revenue from private foundations was very much evident in 2005 too, with foundation money accounting for over half (54%) of the total, up from only 36% in 2004. And donations from all our committed individuals account for almost half of WINGS' revenue.

Another area of increase was revenue obtained from fundraising events and craft sales. In 2004 \$1,115 was raised, but thanks to the popularity of Sue's regular talks in Antigua, and sales of Guatemalan *tipica* with WINGS' logo both here and in the States, this rose to \$5,342 in 2005.

(For further information, see our Financial document, accessible via our webpage.)

WINGS EXPERIENCED GROWTH AND STRENGTHENING DURING 2005

For the fifth year in a row, WINGS has experienced growth in almost every program area.

Tubal ligations (which along with vasectomies make up the voluntary surgical contraception column) are by far the most popular service subsidized or provided by WINGS, with over 6,000 in 2005.

Temporary methods provided by WINGS have more than doubled over the past year, from 1,627 in 2004 to 4,405 in 2005. Similarly, WINGS distributed over 50,000 condoms during the year. In part, this increase is due to a new initiative, which trains community-based family planning providers who dispense advice, temporary methods, and referrals for more

permanent methods, to interested clients at subsidized prices. WINGS trained and supplied eight such providers during 2005.

The number of **Pap smears** is also up from 4,113 in 2004 to 4,756 in 2005, despite the fact that WINGS is limiting the number of Paps we do in order to provide improved one-on-one family planning counseling and better follow up. The demand for cervical cancer detection and treatment services continues unabated due to the lack of an effective

government-sponsored screening program. Many of WINGS' Pap smears during 2005 were provided in conjunction with a short project developed and implemented by WINGS, which provided Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) testing and treatment services to 1,160

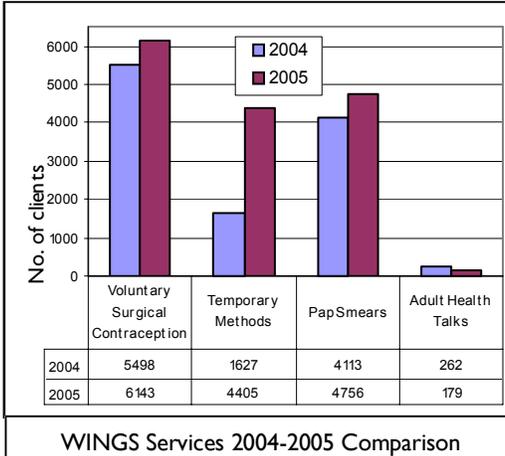
adults. Throughout 2005, WINGS-trained Youth Multipliers gave a total of 984 health talks reaching over 7,000 men, women, and adolescents.

Since its inception, WINGS has been growing at a rapid rate, leaving little time for institutional analysis. During 2005, however, WINGS' Board and staff assessed its institutional strengths and addressed its weaknesses. This has led to vital changes.

The staff size has more than doubled from five to 11 employees, with recent recruits including: Emma Jane Sunderland as Program Director, Lisa Olason as US-based, part-time Development Director; and Lucrecia (Lucky) Guzman, as Office Manager. Our

office has therefore had to expand greatly. The WINGS Board also welcomed two new members in 2005: The Rev. Peter Casparian and Barbara Cernikovsky, and then last month Sue Wheeler also joined.

While this process has been time consuming and, on occasions, detracted from increasing program opportunities, the changes have fortified the organization. As a result, WINGS has vastly strengthened its sustainability and is prepared for even greater future growth.



women in eight low income, rural and/or indigenous communities.

This STI initiative, on which WINGS' staff focused for a four-month period, is also the reason that WINGS provided just 179 **health talks** in 2005, down from 262 in 2004. Despite this, WINGS was able to reach an even greater number of people in 2005 through its Youth WINGS project, which trained 92 youth aged 14-19 to provide sexual and reproductive health information to their peers and to

FACES OF WINGS Ana Maria (31) was



diagnosed with cervical cancer in November 2005 after her second cancer-related miscarriage. Ana Maria, who is illiterate and whose husband has been out of work for a year, was unable to pay for treatment.

WINGS confirmed the diagnosis and through a generous donor, paid for radiotherapy, which Ana Maria needed on a daily basis for

five weeks. She and her husband have two young children and it is hoped that with this possibly life-saving treatment, Ana Maria will be around to see her children grow up. "I am so thankful that you are helping me. Without your help I don't know what I would have done. I want to be here for my children, but we have no money even to buy food, let alone pay for this treatment."

Victoria (26) lives with her husband and four children. She and her husband work together, looking after a

house in their town. Victoria has wanted to have a tubal ligation for a long time, but has never had enough money to pay for the operation. She even went to her employer to ask for help, but was met with disdain and disapproval. Victoria heard there was going to be a WINGS-sponsored voluntary tubal ligation clinic nearby, and she discovered that WINGS could subsidize her tubal ligation at this mobile clinic. So, finally she had the surgery she had so longed for. "I feel so much happier, knowing that my life is going to change as I will not have to have any more children. It means that my family's and my life can now improve. Thank you."

Gloria (30) came to one of WINGS' clinics held during the Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) study, because she was very worried that she might have HIV/AIDS. Her husband is without work, so he makes her have sex with his friends for money. These men are generally drunk and she is often forced to be with two at once. These men do not like to use condoms and her husband says that is fine. Thankfully her result was negative, and we provided her counseling and condoms.



READ WHAT HAPPENS BEHIND THE DOORS OF WINGS

Throughout the year we will be featuring WINGS' staff and their work. You can read these stories on our updated webpage: www.wingsguate.org



Would you like to organize a local fundraiser for WINGS through your company, church, school, or women's group?

We appreciate help at every level. If you would like to organize an event (including selling Guatemalan handicrafts), we have detailed information about WINGS and our work, we can put you in touch with other supporters living near you, and we have a DVD documentary we can mail you.

If so, please: **EMAIL US NOW!**

WINGS (Women's International Network for Guatemalan Solutions) is a non-profit organization
Please send donations to: 793 Ashbury Street, San Francisco, CA 94117, USA
To donate on line: www.wingsguate.org For more information, email: info@wingsguate.org



MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO A GUATEMALAN FAMILY

(PLEASE WRITE IN CAPITAL LETTERS. THANK YOU)

All donations are tax deductible

I (name) _____ would like to help WINGS.

- I enclose a check for \$ _____
 - I would like to give a gift in the amount of \$ _____, in honor of (name) _____
- Address: _____

Please send your check and this tear-off slip to: WINGS, 793 Ashbury Street, San Francisco, CA 94117

Thank you for your support.

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