



Brillo de Sol

brighter lives for children with disabilities

Brillo  
de  
Lectura

# 2018 Annual Report



# Letter from President, Brillo de Sol USA



Dear Friends of Brillo de Sol,

*Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world.*

These wise words from South African anti-apartheid revolutionary, peace activist, and political leader Nelson Mandela are a candid reminder of the importance of the work that we do at Brillo de Sol. This past year was a remarkable year at Brillo de Sol, one where we made progress and advanced our mission in so many ways, in Guatemala and here in the US with Brillo de Sol, USA.

Although Brillo de Sol USA has only a small, all-volunteer board of directors, we are a highly engaged and active board. Jointly, we have begun to formalize our relationship between the two boards of directors, Brillo de Sol Guatemala and Brillo de Sol USA, defining mutual expectations and making joint plans for the future. The two organizations collaborated with the implementation of our long-term breakfast club dream, which was conceived and planned by board member Elisa Udaskin, and implemented in Guatemala with the help of board member Carly Reiser. The breakfast program is up and running now through the ever so generous donation of the food by Danny Lopez and generous donations of the additional costs for equipment and salary by Ellen Maxfield and Gary Nagel, and Francis Gray. We continued our educational collaboration with Brillo de Sol Guatemala this year, with providing training to the teachers on writing measurable annual goals. We recently launched a new amazing website, designed by board member Joe Phebus. We are also more interconnected with our donors and volunteers through a monthly newsletter that we hope you have enjoyed reading.

Brillo de Sol has remained a small school since its founding 13 years ago, limited primarily by the building we currently rent. The student population has grown by 200% over the past 5 years, however. The educational program is directed by the Guatemalan ministry of education and uses its educational standards, which allows the teachers to provide a strong foundation in academic skills with a growing program for the arts and expression of creativity. Of course, the core values of the education of children at Brillo de Sol are the glue that holds all together: unconditional love, acceptance, and respect for individual differences. These continue to provide a positive learning environment for the children that allows them to grow self-esteem and develop individual talents. In August, Brillo de Sol Guatemala celebrated its 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Brillo de Sol USA is proud to have provided the financial and educational support for this unique school in the past 7 years.

None of this would have been possible without our sponsors and donors. You have made a fundamental difference in the lives of the children and the existence of the school. This past year, 47 generous donors, individuals and couples, sponsored 44 children with half-time or full-time tuitions. I cannot thank you enough for your generosity. Thank you, in particular, to those sponsors who have doubled their impact by recruiting their friends and family members to allow us to help more children than ever this year. Indeed, Brillo de Sol USA could not have envisioned seven years ago, when we formed the USA organization to support the efforts of founder Letty Lopez and her school for children with disabilities that so many generous people across the world would come to share our dream for this school.

*Christine Jacob*



# Letter from Executive Director, Brillo de Sol Guatemala



Dear Friends and Supporters of Brillo de Sol:

13 years ago I started talking about inclusive education in my country, convinced that it is the best way to educate in an environment of respect for differences and individuality. The real world is like that, diverse and that diversity enriches us as humanity.

Every year we discover that there are more things to be done, as children who learn differently are still misunderstood in many schools and in society. Educating children who grow up among machismo, poverty, violence and discrimination is a great challenge.

But, Brillo de Sol is an inclusive environment where children are formed by learning respect, positivism, perseverance, critical thinking and more! It is the most wonderful way to do our bit for a better world. I love that we are forming happy children!

My heart feels very grateful for the staff, the members of the board of directors in the United States and Guatemala, the trainers from different countries, the donors, the sponsors and for all those who visit us and give me a frank hug, a kiss of empathy, words of encouragement and perseverance. Truly, we could not do it without each one of you.

The best gift for my life, are the smiles of the children, their recovered self-esteem, their first writings, their first words, their opinions, reflections and their genuine expressions of affection. Let's continue putting together that little grain of sand, in this school that takes care of academic achievements, and feeds the soul of every child who knocks on our doors.

Nothing happens by chance ... all of us who are united by these bonds of dreams and realities ... we come here for some very big and special reason!

Change lives! Let's move forward.

Blessings,

Alma Leticia López Contreras  
Foundress, Executive Director





# Our Mission

To transform lives of children through education and rehabilitation by attending to the humanity of each child in a way that respects their individuality and unique learning needs.

By adapting to their needs, Brillo de Sol strives to promote the recovery of self-esteem, discovery of talents and abilities, and the development of thinking skills in each student.

Acting within the guidelines of the education laws, our trained staff adapts the curriculum and evaluation guidelines to the specialized needs of individual students.

We strive to place each student on the road to success in life through education, socialization and by teaching them the values necessary to lead productive lives.







# Our School

Our school is unique. In the Guatemalan Public Education System, there are just a few schools for children with special needs, but they lack training for teachers and educational resources. Our teachers are trained in special education teaching methodology. We have the resources to provide not only academic instruction but rich learning experiences and hands-on learning in physical education and the arts.







# Brillo de Sol USA – 2018 Highlights



- **New Lighting in the School** - In January, we installed new, brighter, and energy efficient lighting in all of the classrooms. Research clearly shows that good lighting helps students learn better. A special thank you to Enrique Morales, a long-term supporter and volunteer, for lending his talents and expertise to the project and to John Dayton for his providing the majority of the funding of this project.
- **Brillo Breakfast Club** – With the establishment of the new Brillo Breakfast Club, the children now receive breakfast every morning. Everyone lends a helping hand – three mothers of students cook the breakfast every morning and the students help with the cleanup. With a full stomach, students can concentrate better on their studies. Thank you to Pastor Danny and Kim Lopez for your generous support in providing the breakfast food.
- **Volcano Support** – After the devastating eruption of the Fuego volcano in Los Lotes, the Brillo de Sol community aided in the support of some families affected. Several Brillo de Sol families were helped with supplies and home repairs in the aftermath of the eruption of the Fuego volcano by funds generously donated by Brillo de Sol donors.
- **New Website** – In October we launched a new improved Brillo de Sol website. The new site was developed to strengthen engagement with supporters of Brillo de Sol, making it very clear and easy for people to learn how they can support the school, via donations, sponsorships and volunteer opportunities.







# Sponsorship

Our students have sponsors from all over the world – the United States, Canada, Australia, Guatemala, the Netherlands, Spain, and Singapore. A sponsor pays for the annual tuition of a child, either upfront or in monthly installments. The children write to their sponsors every so often, and some sponsors write back. Tuition sponsorship changes the life and emotional confidence of a child, in addition to providing the opportunity for an education and a future. A child with an education is also an investment in his or her family and community.







## Acknowledgements

**Sponsors** | Children with disabilities have few options in Guatemala. Children from poor families have it even harder to obtain schooling and occupational training. Sponsors give our children the gift of an education and a chance in life. We gratefully thank each of you.

### Full Year Sponsorship (\$700/year)

Azlia Irny Amin  
Janice Badder  
Maryann Bullett  
Dafna Carr  
John Dayton  
David Cruz  
Christiane Dechert (2 Students)  
Chris English  
Amy Fox  
Michael Fraas  
Francis Gray  
Heidi Harm & Abby Wolford  
Nessa and Martin Hefferon (3 Students)  
Mary Jo Hidecker  
Barbara Hunter  
Ian Raizi Johari  
Chris Kirshbaum  
Ellen Maxfield & Gary Nagel (2 students)  
Sandra & Leo Olper  
Erin Perez

Brian & Colleen Phebus  
Joe Phebus  
Patricia Phebus  
Sharlene Reynolds  
Suja & Ravi Srinivasan  
Elisa Udaskin  
Ira Udaskin  
Kathy White  
Robert and Mallory Zeilstra and Oscar



### Half Year Sponsorship (\$350/year)

Maite Casas  
Ellen Christenson  
Jean-Sebastien Clement (2 Students)  
Julia Navarro Espinal  
Jacob Gates  
Blaine & Stephanie McBurney  
Brian Nocella  
Nancy Pajak  
Joe Phebus (3 Students)  
Carly Reiser (2 Students)  
Irene Saletan  
Jenny Simms  
Rachel Stanky  
Sara Stanky  
Marina Vargas

### Group Sponsorship

Jennifer Fisher  
Jeff Fackler  
Lorne & Lisa Plener  
Payton Thompson







## Acknowledgements

**Donors** | We are grateful to all who support us through their contributions and support. Your donations and support help us to purchase instructional materials and equipment, maintain our facilities and help provide uniforms and other assistance to children whose families could not otherwise afford them.



### Donors \$1000 +

Jane Benson  
Cathy Bentley  
Kathy Davis  
John Dayton  
Network for Good  
Joe Phebus

### Donors \$500 to \$999

Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund  
Letty J. Manne

### Donors \$250 to \$499

Maxime Blaise  
Steve & Adele Considine  
Nina Lorch  
Karen Stewart  
Kathy White

### Donors \$100 to \$249

Janis Badder  
Roberta Deboard  
Matthew Epstein  
Michael Fraas  
Estee Garfin  
Mary Kate & Jim Hannah  
Douglas Jarquin  
Christine Jau  
Sanjay Jolly  
Bill Mackey  
Kathy Murphy  
Brian Phebus  
Patricia Phebus  
Caroline Price  
Tracy Saia  
Kevin Shiplett  
Barbara Mathers-Schmidt  
Ravi & Suja Srinivasan  
T. Rowe Price Foundation  
Katina Watson

### Donors \$10 to \$99

Annette Auerbach  
Kathleen Belzer  
Steve Brazel  
Karen-Margrethe Bruun  
Cecyle Carson  
David Cruz  
Terrie-Lynne Devonish  
Christiane Dechert  
Lisa Domby  
Chris English  
Julianne Ghiglieri  
Alan Hamilton  
Payton Raine Hager  
Zoe Hernandez  
Nicole Korenovski  
Douglas Landsman  
Jennie Lebowitz  
Mandy Maresky  
Judy Odland  
Leo Olper  
Tiana Petrini  
Noelle Pingree  
Karen L. Simpson  
Tom and Winifred Shoul  
Emma Strombom  
Elisa Udaskin



# About Our Students

We serve children from Kindergarten to the equivalent of middle-school in the United States. Grade and classroom placement is not age dependent. Instead, we assess skills levels and assign children to particular classrooms to optimize individual learning needs. This way we can group children of similar skills levels together, while allowing the children to leverage instruction and benefit from their collective strength and talents.

Special “reinforcement” classes serve children who have completed the Guatemalan elementary school requirements, but are unable to find placement in a traditional public school after completing their primary education.



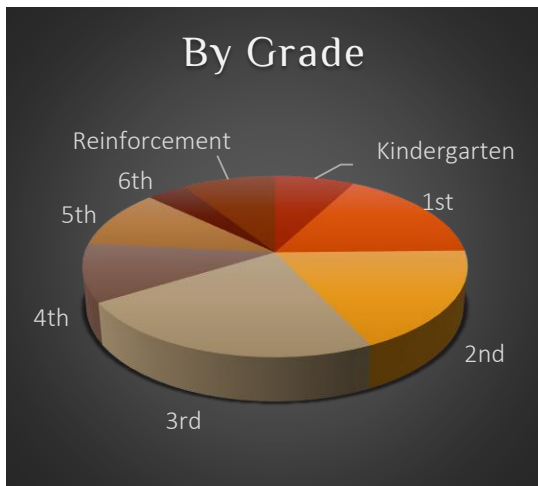




## About Our Students

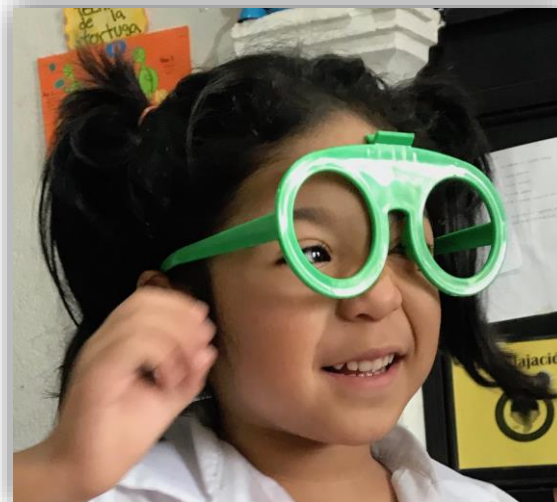
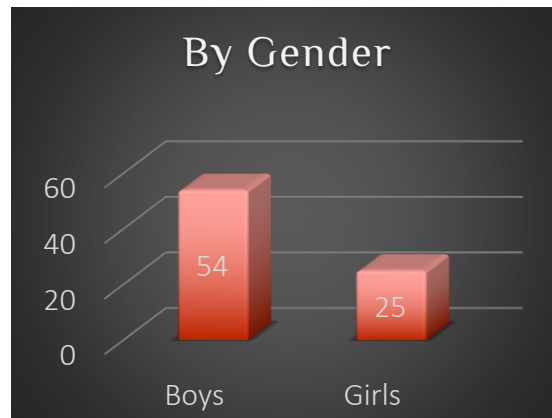
What sets our students apart from other schools is the mutual support, encouragement, and care they show for each other. From the day they arrive at Brillo de Sol, the children are taught that every person possesses his or her unique gifts and talents, and that everyone has something to contribute, regardless of their intellectual or physical abilities.

Some of our students previously experienced ridicule and bullying in a traditional classroom setting. Brillo de Sol offer a safe space where the culture of love, caring, and mutual support allows the children to recover their self-esteem, begin to trust, and recognize their individual potential.



### Grade

Kindergarten	6
1st	13
2nd	14
3rd	18
4th	8
5th	8
6th	3
Reinforcement	7



# Curriculum

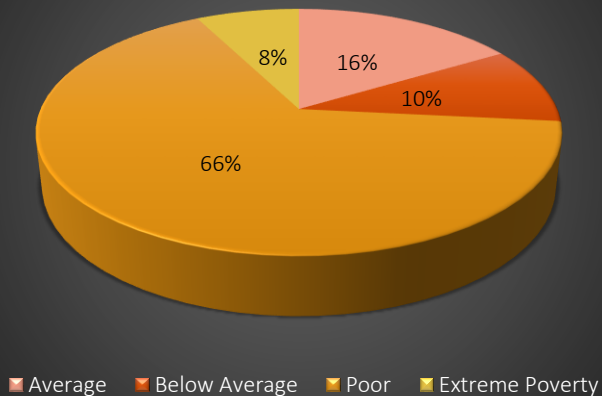
Brillo de Sol follows the curriculum of the Guatemalan Ministry of Public Education. We also provide hands-on learning experiences to accommodate students' learning needs, and individualized and specialized instruction for the children who need it. In addition to academic learning goals, our students learn life skills, such as cooking and how to plant and maintain a vegetable garden. The students are also exposed to art education, can participate in occupational training, are taken on field trips, and are guided to participate in citywide extracurricular learning opportunities.



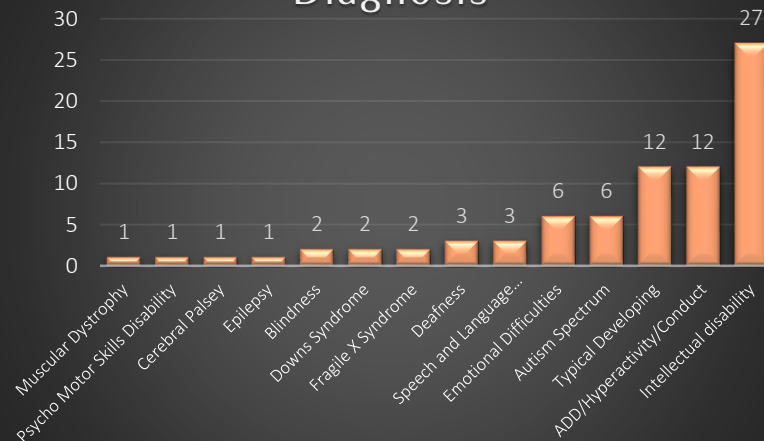
## About Our Students

84% of the children attending Brillo de Sol are from economically disadvantaged families. The vast majority of them live in poverty or extreme poverty. Without sponsorship or other financial assistance, these children would be unable to attend school and receive the therapies and specialized education they need to make progress on their curriculum and goals.

### Economic Status



### Diagnosis



The students at Brillo de Sol have a variety of medical and educational diagnoses, and many have more than one. Our population represents a broad spectrum of cognitive, physical, and emotional disabilities - all requiring specialized teaching methodologies. Many children have intellectual skills within the normal range, but nutritional deficits, or delays in starting school due to family situations have prevented them from learning in traditional classroom settings. Teachers in public schools are not trained to identify children in need of special education in the Guatemalan public education system and they are often teaching classes of 50 students.



# Faculty & Staff

The teachers at Brillo de Sol have completed the Guatemalan teacher training curriculum. Two of the teachers are speech therapists by training.

Brillo de Sol also employs a teacher with a university degree specializing in teaching students with disabilities.

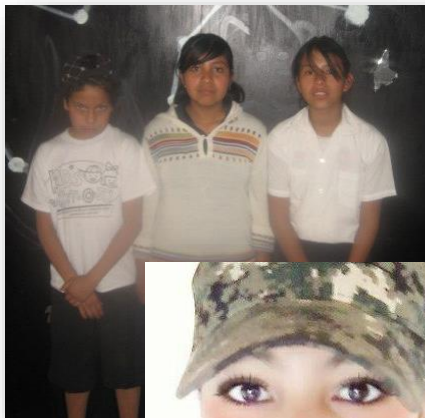
As part of their ongoing continuing education, teachers receive additional training at Brillo de Sol and from international faculty and university students providing workshops as part of their volunteer activities.



# Success Stories



Juan Miguel Moreira, a student at Brillo de Sol ten years ago, had been bullied in his previous school. Now he is a successful musician, who has formed his own band, Fue Tete.



Ericka Perez, who is deaf, attended Brillo de Sol when she was a child (middle, top picture). Now she works as a chef and is independent.



Cibely Garcia started attending Brillo de Sol in 2nd grade. She had a learning disability in math. Now she is a teacher and is studying to become a speech therapist. Her sister Melany (left) also attended Brillo de Sol. She had a learning disability in writing and ADD. She is studying electronics.



# Volunteers

Volunteers are a central part of our educational program. Not only do they bring professional expertise across a wide range of disciplines, the one-on-one tutoring many of our volunteers provide allows us to tailor our program to each child's unique strengths and needs.

We also provide short-term opportunities where volunteers can work on special projects, such as painting and maintaining the school, organizing activities, arranging the library, or assisting teachers in the classroom.







# Brillo de Sol USA

Brillo de Sol, USA, Inc. is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes, supporting and advancing the education, health and quality of life of children with special needs and disabilities in Guatemala, including:

- Fundraising, educational and other support to:
  - Provide scholarships and other direct tuition assistance to children attending Asociación Brillo de Sol School, a registered Guatemalan non-governmental organization operating a school for children with special needs located in San Gaspar Vivar, in the municipality of La Antigua, Sacatepéquez, Guatemala.
  - Provide funding to Asociación Brillo de Sol for capital expenditures, instructional expenses of the school, and for administration of other programs designed to promote and foster special education teacher training and services.
  - Educate and provide information to the general public about the educational, social, and health needs of families and children in Guatemala.
- To recruit and coordinate the efforts of volunteers and professionals from the USA and Canada to assist Asociación Brillo de Sol and its partner organizations in providing educational and health services to children and families in Guatemala.
- To promote and improve the Education and Health of indigenous communities in Guatemala and to cooperate with other agencies or groups delivering education and health services that augment or support Asociación Brillo de Sol's programs.



# Brillo de Sol USA

## Profit and Loss Statement

Fiscal Year Ending 6/30/2018 (Cash Basis)

### INCOME

General	\$ 5,089	11.2%
Restricted Purpose	13,902	30.5%
Sponsorship	26,534	58.3%
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>45,525</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### EXPENDITURES

#### Disbursement to BDS Guatemala:

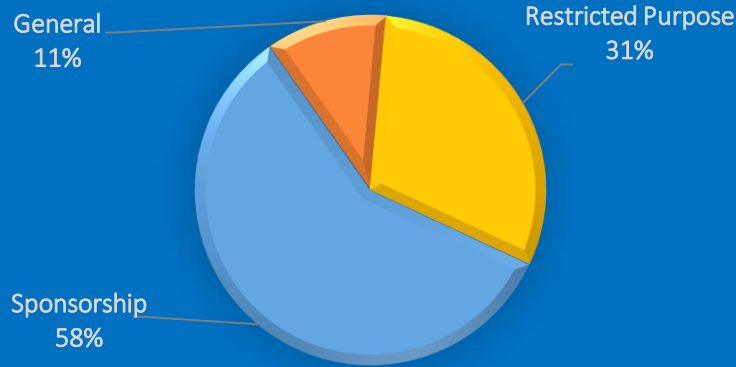
Discretionary Funds	2,320	5.1%
Designated Purpose - Computers & Other	15,102	33.2%
Sponsored Students - Tuition and Fees	26,534	58.3%
<b>Total Disbursements to Brillo de Sol Guatemala</b>	<b>43,596</b>	<b>96.6%</b>

Fundraising Expenses	386	0.8%
Service Fees and Other Expenses	1,139	2.6%

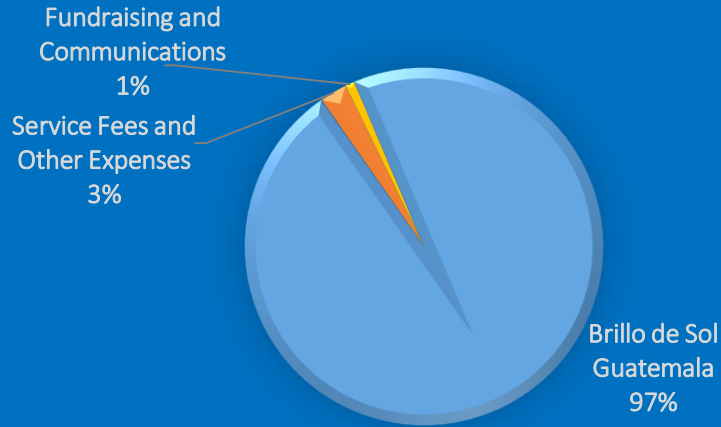
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>45,481</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
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<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 44</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
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*96.6 % of our income went directly to Brillo de Sol Guatemala*



Income



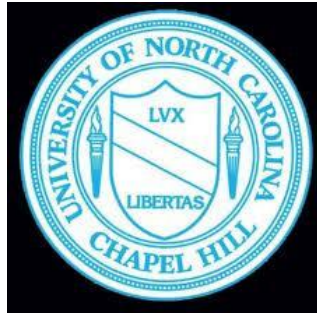
Expenditures



# University Partnerships

We are fortunate to have the support of the faculty and students from universities in Guatemala, the United States, Canada, and Spain. Professors and professional staff with expertise in special education, therapies, and other academic disciplines provide training and other expertise to our teachers and staff.

Student volunteers provide tutoring, assistance to the teachers in the classroom and help with other special projects. Brillo de Sol provides opportunities for students to put what they have learned in the classroom into practice.

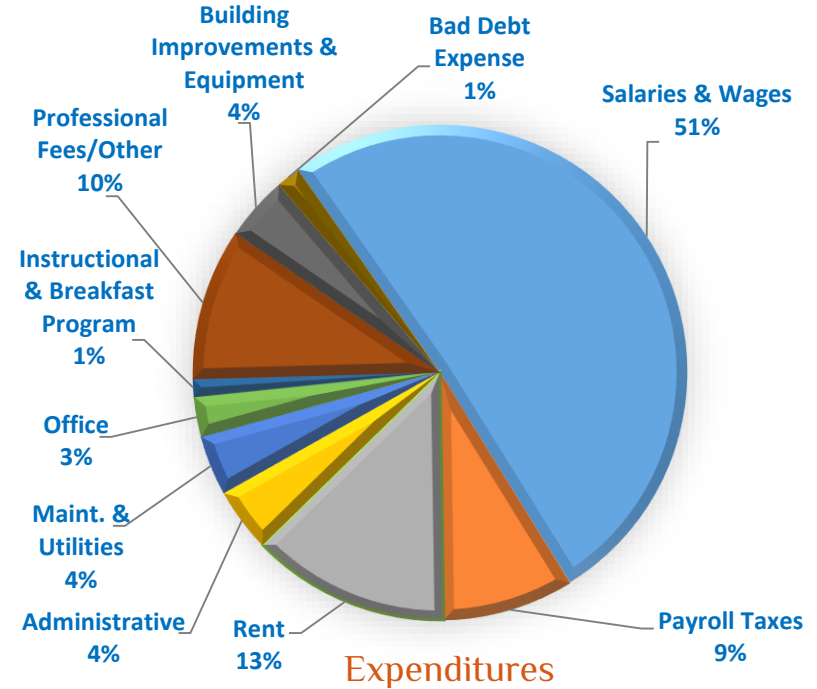
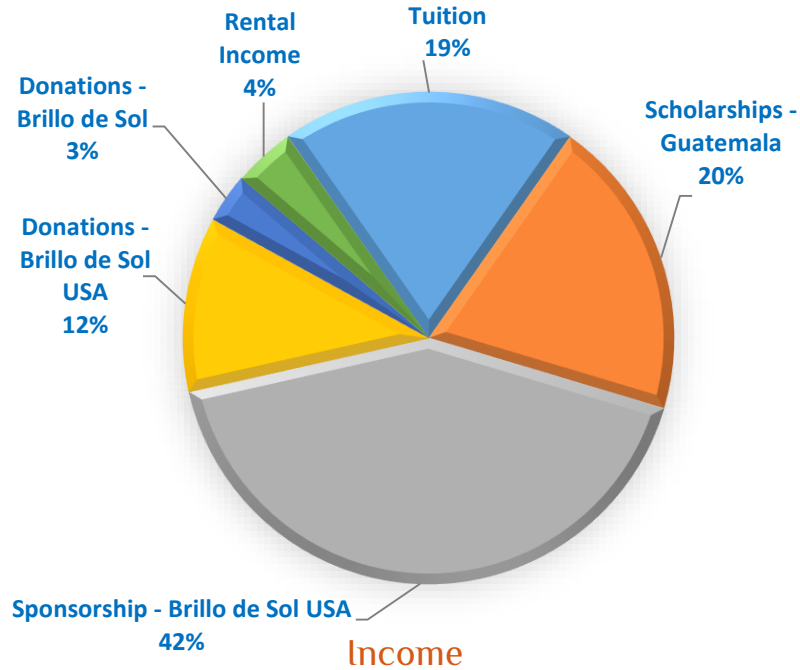


UNIVERSIDAD  
DE GRANADA





## Brillo de Sol Guatemala 2018 Projected Income & Expenditures



# Stewardship

## 2018 Brillo de Sol USA Board of Directors

### **Christiane Dechert**

Board President  
Speech-Language Pathologist,  
Washington State University

### **Joseph Phebus**

Treasurer  
IT and Accounting Systems Professional  
Joseph Phebus Consulting, LLC

### **Elisa Udaskin**

Board Secretary  
CEO, CaringOrganizer.com

### **Carly Reiser**

Board Member  
Speech-Language Pathologist, WA State  
North Central Educational Service District

### **Letty López Contreras**

Board Member  
Executive Director, Brillo de Sol Guatemala

## 2018 Brillo de Sol Guatemala Board

### **Letty López Contreras**

Board President & Executive Director  
Brillo de Sol Guatemala

### **Lorenzo Sipac**

Secretary & Technical Director  
Director, Colegio Interamericano

### **Evelin Arreaga:**

Board Member  
Industrial Psychologist,  
M&A Group Solutions

### **Jorge Alejandro Arriola Benitez**

Board Member  
Disaster Prevention Director, Antigua GT

### **Carlos Alberto López**

Board Member  
General Manager, BOMASA S.A.

### **Cristian Reyna**

Board Member  
Professional Announcer, Radio Guatemala

### **Luis Fernando Sipaqué Roman**

Board Member  
Civil Engineer, Self Employed



## Contact

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