



2019
Annual Report





From the President, Brillo de Sol USA

Dear Friends of Brillo de Sol,

As we are entering the holiday season, I fondly look back on 2019. In August, we celebrated the 14th anniversary of our beloved school, and the 8th year of the Brillo de Sol, USA partnership with Brillo de Sol Guatemala. In this spirit, we have continued our successful fundraising efforts to support the operations of the school. In 2019, thanks to the extraordinary generosity of US and Canadian donors, we were able to fund tuition sponsorships for 49 children. In addition, Brillo de Sol USA has supported the breakfast program through donations by US sponsors Francis Gray and Ellen and Gary Nagel that pay for supplies used for cooking and the extra salary costs for the custodian Olga for the daily clean-up. The food is donated by pastor Danny Lopez in Guatemala and is cooked by mother volunteers. One of the unplanned benefits of the breakfast program has been that the stealing of food out of the school refrigerator has almost completely ceased because the need for filling empty stomachs has been eliminated. Brillo de Sol USA also has paid for a number of school supplies, the donation of over 30 books for the library, 6 new computers for educational use, funding for an awning for the back recess area so that the children are protected from the sun, as required by the Guatemalan Ministry of Education, a camera to take pictures at school events, access to software used for financial management, and we also funded the lodging for our teachers and staff so they could participate in an educational workshop at Centro Maya Servicio Integral in San Juan la Laguna in March. A couple of our donors fund the salary of our special education teacher.

In Guatemala, the executive director Letty Lopez has recruited several new board members, including a new treasurer, which allowed the transfer of this position on the Guatemalan board from Joe Phebus to Javier Gaitán, an important step for the Guatemalan board. In March, both boards met in Guatemala for a joint 2-day strategic planning event, where we decided to engage in human and managerial capacity building activities before in the a little more distant future beginning capital fundraising activities for our own building (as our needs for room has already exceeded the building we currently rent).

All of these activities are only possible because of the commitment of our sponsors and donors. You are making the quintessential difference in the lives of our students and we cannot thank you enough for your generosity. As a result, the very special children of Brillo de Sol are educated in a loving and supporting learning environment and flourish as soon as they begin to attend the school. They have a chance to learn information and skills that will allow them to be more independent economically when they grow up. The hope that these prospects provide helps them and their families retain stability in a political system that offers little assistance to them to pull themselves out of poverty. We are forever grateful for all that you do!

Brillo de Sol USA



...y otros muchos a preparar y atender la
necesidad. De esta manera, cada uno y por
sí mismo, en su propia forma, en su
forma diferente, tienen la oportunidad de
construir, superar y vivir transaccionalmente
esta digna e independiente. Todo esto es
importante en su vida, capacidad, autonomía,
reflexión, independencia, etc. etc.
...fuerza de aprender, habilidades, etc. etc.



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NUESTRA FILOSOFÍA

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From the Executive Director, Brillo de Sol Guatemala

When I started Brillo de Sol, everything was like when a baby is born, there were many things to know, many fears, everything was to experience and learn. A baby only knows that he wants to survive and learn. And so I was, the school had to survive, find its way and its mission in this world ... I fell many times, and I got up ... I learned to walk, to be cautious about unexpected things and much more. Now that Brillo de Sol is 14 years old ... it is a teenager, with new challenges, new dreams, new goals!

But before I want to say twice thanks: the first one to that man who one day came as a volunteer when we only had the accounting in a small notebook and an old computer. This man believed in what we do and helped us a lot! And he founded Brillo de Sol USA to help my little school that was so full of love and economic sorrows. Thanks to Joe Phebus and the great board of directors you have today.

Thank you also to the donors, volunteers and all the people who receive the newsletter, who love the school, who believe in a better world, who had been here once or who only had heard from us. You are my allies. I could not realize this dream without you who support us with your opinions, suggestions, good energy, time at the school, training, and financial support.

About our new goals and dreams: We want to show the world that children with behavioral problems, who are angry at the world for their hard lives, and children with extra energy who are always punished in their schools, can improve when we accept them. We work with them in a formal way with meditation and teaching them to accept positive messages and love.

We have plans to collaborate with organizations in Guatemala, most notably Viamistad, to offer the continuation of middle school classes for some of our students. We are also moving forward with the planning for our very own school building, in collaboration with UnoMas, our Dutch partner, and of course, with Brillo de Sol USA, our USA partner.

Granito - We can all contribute our own grain of sand!

Thank you all for existing!

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.

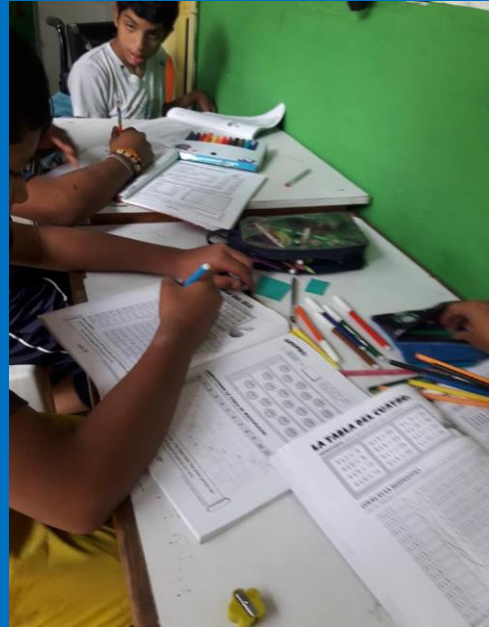


Our School

We have a very special school – a school where the children, who have a variety of disabilities, come from low income families. There are several other schools in the private school sector specifically for children with disabilities. But our parents could not afford to send their children to these schools. There are very few schools in the public education system for children with disabilities. Our school provides a loving learning environment. Our teachers are trained to adjust the curriculum for children with special needs. Our classrooms are small with 15 children per classroom. And our education is supported by volunteers who serve as classroom helpers and tutors.



The 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 planting a vegetable garden. The students are also exposed to occupational training, are taken on field trips, and are guided to participate in citywide extracurricular learning opportunities.



Our Students

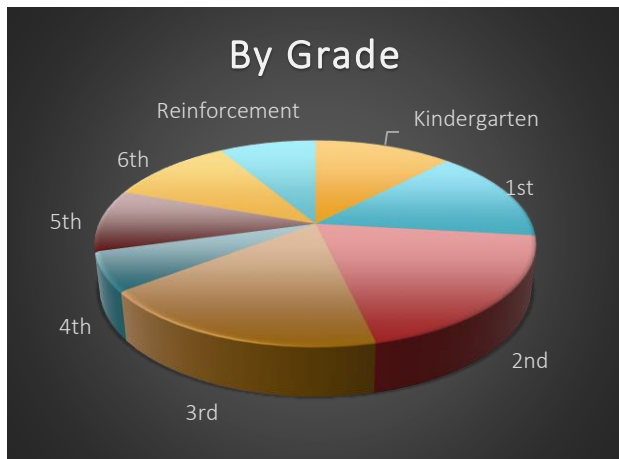
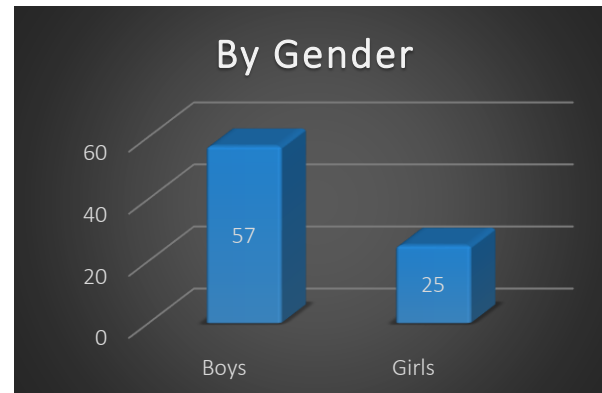
We serve children from Kindergarten to the equivalent of middle-school in the United States. Grade and classroom placement is not age dependent. Instead, we assess skills levels and assign children to particular classrooms to optimize individual learning needs. This way we can group children of similar skills levels together, while allowing the children to leverage instruction and benefit from their collective strength and talents. Special “reinforcement” instruction serves children who have completed the Guatemalan elementary school requirements, but are unable to find placement in a traditional public school.



Our Students: Grade and Gender

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.



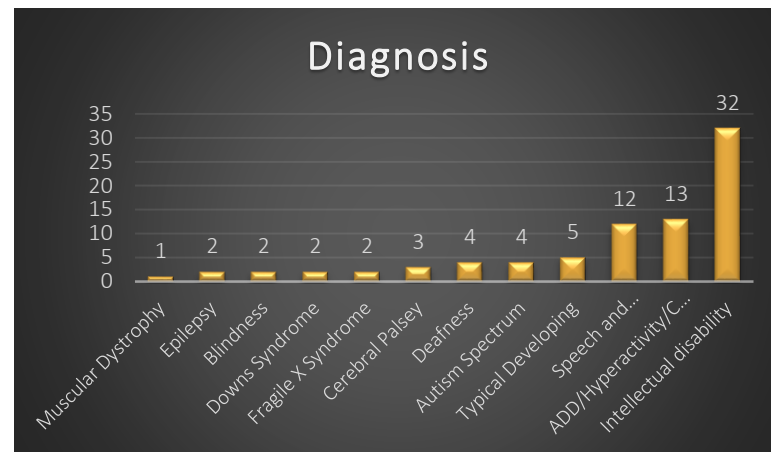
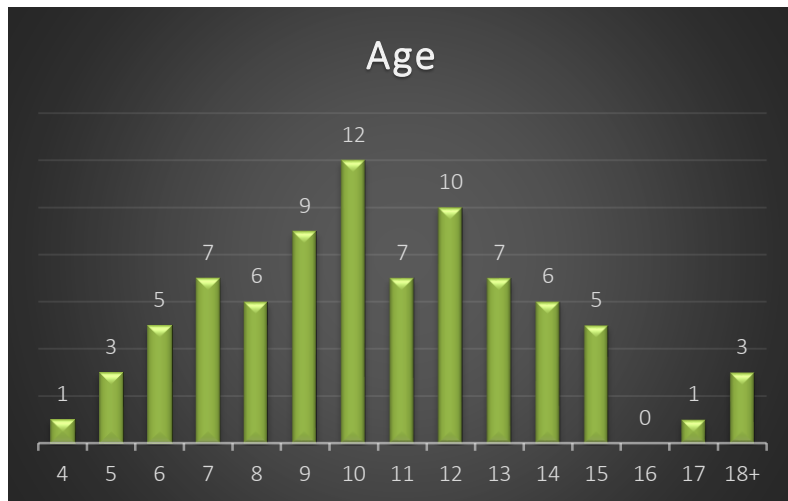
Grade

Kindergarten	10
1st	12
2nd	16
3rd	15
4th	5
5th	8
6th	9
Reinforcement	7



Our Students: Age and Diagnosis

84% of the children attending Brillo de Sol are from economically disadvantaged families. The vast majority of these families live in poverty or extreme poverty. As the children get older, it's often a challenge to keep them in school, as they are needed to care for younger siblings or work to help supplement the family income. 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.



Our students have a variety of medical and educational diagnoses, comprising 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.



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 for volunteers to 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 2019 Highlights

- ✓ **Joint Strategic Planning Meeting** – In March we held a joint strategic board planning meeting between BdS Guatemala and BdS USA in Antigua, Guatemala where we discussed long-term planning for a new building and debated and aligned the goals of our two organizations.
- ✓ **Brillo Breakfast Club Year Two** – Our Breakfast Club continues to feed our students every morning. Everyone lends a helping hand. With a full stomach, students can concentrate better on their studies. Thank you to Gary and Ellen Nagel and Francis Gray for your generous support in providing the funding for the breakfast program.
- ✓ **Your Support Has Made an Impact** – In addition to sponsoring the students' schooling, your combined donations have enabled us to purchase books for the library, 6 new computers, a camera, and a new awning for the recess area. We also funded the teacher's lodging for their professional development session with Centro Maya.
- ✓ **Increase in Number of Students Sponsor** – We now have a total of 49 students sponsored thanks to the generosity of our sponsors!



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 for their education 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	Sandra and Leo Olper
Janice Badder (2 Students)	Erin Perez
John Bullett	Brian and Colleen Phebus
Maryann Bullett	Joe Phebus (3 Students)
Dafna Carr	Patricia Phebus
John W. Dayton	Sharlene T. Reynolds
Christiane Dechert (2 Students)	Nicole Robbins
Chris English	Jenny Simms
Amy Fox	Suja and Ravi Srinivasan
Michael Fraas	Elisa Udaskin
Francis Gray	Ira and Vimi Udaskin
Heide Harm & Abby Wolford	Kathy White
Nessa & Martin Hefferon	
Mary Joe Hidecker	
Barbara Hunter	
Chris Kirshbaum	
John McFadden	
Ellen Maxfield Nagel and Gary Nagel (2 Students)	

Half Year Sponsorship (\$350/year)

Ellen Christianson	Rachel Stankey
Sabrina Cooper (2 Students)	Sara Stankey
Christiane Dechert	Marina Vargas
Jacob Gates	Shannon Waters
Molly Gregory	
James Horwitz	
Tessa Moeckel	
Julia Navarro Espinal	
Blain McBurney	
Brian Nocella	
Noe Quezada	
Nancy Pajak	
Joe Phebus (2 Students)	
Michelle Powell	
Carly Reiser (2 Students)	
Kevin and Suzie Roche	
Lily Roselyn	
Irene Saletan	
Riley Scott	



Thank you also to all the generous sponsors who give directly to Brillo de Sol in Guatemala.

The Breakfast Program

The Breakfast Program feeds all the students, many of whom would otherwise come to school on an empty stomach.

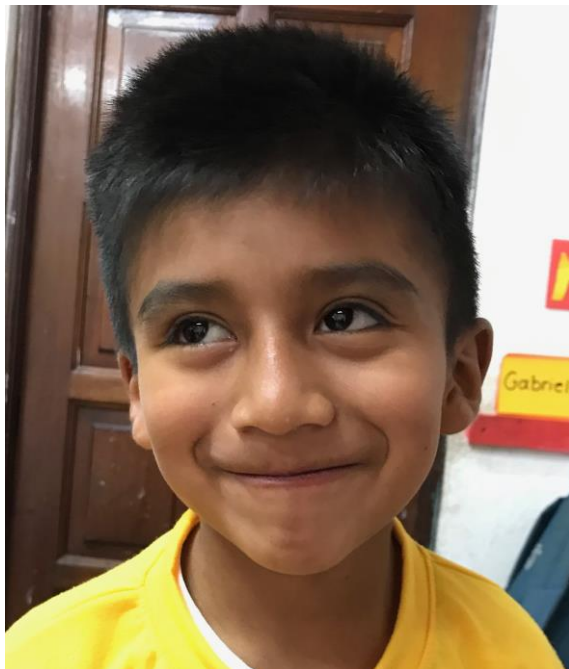
The program is run a few parents, and by volunteers and teachers. The food is provided by a generous donor. Other donors pay for the supplies and extra wages.





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, fund the Breakfast Club and provide transportation and other assistance to children whose families could not otherwise afford them.



Donors \$2000+

Jane Benson

Donors \$1000 to \$1,999

Kathy Davis
Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund
Network for Good (Facebook)

Donors \$300 to \$399

John Dayton
Nina Lorch
Ellen and Gary Nagel

Donors \$200 to \$299

Maxime Blais
Komala Challappa
Steve & Adele Considine
Roberta DeBoard
Francis Gray
Caroline Price
Kevin Shiplett
Karen Stewart
Kathy White

Donors \$100 to \$199

Marian Bissonnette
Lidia Chernichenko
Jennifer Fisher
Linda J. Jacques
Christine Jau
Bill Mackey
Elyse Poller
Katina Watson

Donors \$1 to \$99

David Cruz
Kristen Farmer
Julianne Ghiglieri
Roberta A. Jackson
Douglas Jarquin
Paula J. Messamer
Lou and Connie Nocella
Joe Phebus
Carly Reiser
Payton L. Thompson
Stan Udaskin
Renee R. Zamora

Brillo de Sol USA

Profit and Loss Statement

Fiscal Year Ending 6/30/2019 (Cash Basis)

INCOME

General	\$ 5,175	12%
Restricted Purpose	5,495	13%
Sponsorship	33,203	76%
TOTAL INCOME	43,873	100%

EXPENDITURES

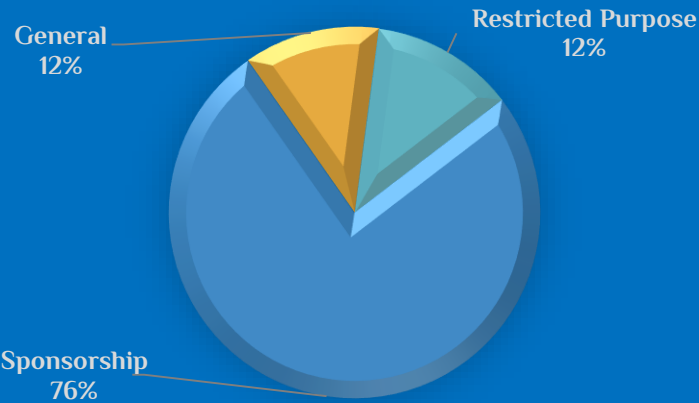
Disbursement to BDS Guatemala:

Discretionary Funds	1,784	4%
Designated Purpose - Computers & Other	6,008	14%
Sponsored Students - Tuition and Fees	33,255	76%
Total Disbursements to Brillo de Sol Guatemala	41,047	94%

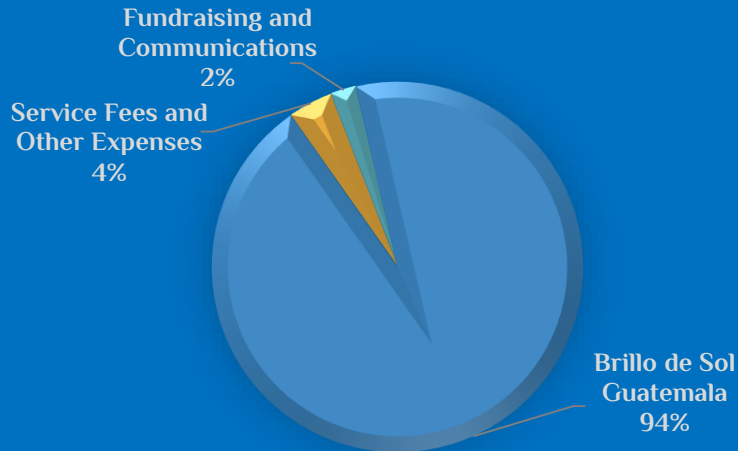
Fundraising Expenses	972	2%
Service Fees and Other Expenses	1,700	4%

TOTAL EXPENDITURES	43,718	100%
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NET INCOME	\$ 155	0%
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Income



Expenditures

94 % of our income went directly to Brillo de Sol Guatemala



Brillo de Sol USA Website

If you haven't had a chance to visit our website, www.brillodesol.org, we encourage you to check it out.

On the website, you will find detailed information about the school, our program, the teachers, our staff, and the board of directors. You can also find ways to support the school and give our students a chance in life. In addition to information on students in need of sponsorship, we provide information on volunteering and answers to frequently asked questions about Brillo de Sol.

University Partnerships

This past year we had relationships with universities from the United States and Guatemala. Faculty and students from the Dept. of Special Education at Southern Connecticut University supported us in July. Students from Universidad Rafael Landívar, the University of North Carolina, and Washington State University supported us with visiting faculty and students in speech-language pathology. Eastern Washington University sponsored faculty and students in occupational therapy to work with our students in July. Sacred Heart University sent faculty and students in physical therapy and audiology. Students from the psychology department at Universidad Mariano Gálvez de Guatemala conducted several workshops.



Sacred Heart
UNIVERSITY



Universidad
Rafael Landívar
Tradición Jesuita en Guatemala





Board of Directors

2019 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

Founder, caringorganizer.com

Michael Fraas

Board Member

Brian Nocella

Board Member

Marketing & Events Manager
London Academy of Music & Dramatic Art

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

2019 Brillo de Sol Guatemala Board

Luis Fernando Sipaqué Roman

Board President

Civil Engineer, Self Employed

Letty López Contreras

Founder and Executive Director

Brillo de Sol Guatemala

Lorenzo Sipac

Secretary & Technical Director

Director, Colegio Interamericano

Javier Gaitán

Treasurer

Auditor en Consejo de Conservación de La
Antigua Guatemala

Sarah Peller

Board Member

EdD School Psychology
Founder and Director of Viamistad

Cristian Reyna

Board Member

Founder of TOKE CHAPIN
Professional Announcer, Radio Guatemala



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