

**Doing the Kindness Thing Across Borders -
An Comprehensive International Project**

**Nomination for
Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun International Relations Award**

June 26, 2020

**Altrusa International, Inc. of Richardson, Texas
P.O. Box 832101
Richardson, Texas 75083-2101
USA**

**District Nine
2019-2020**

Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun International Relations Award Entry Form

District: Nine

Name of Altrusa Club: Altrusa International of Richardson, Inc.

Address: P.O. Box 832101

City: Richardson State/Province: Texas

Country: USA Zip/Postal Code: 75083-2101

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Date: 26, June, 2020

Club Membership: 86 Members plus 1 Emeritus Member

Project Title: Doing The Kindness Thing Across Borders



2019—2020 Club Theme
Altrusa International
of Richardson, TX, Inc.

Award Synopsis: This project extended Altrusa kindness across multiple international borders. Thousands of refugees in the Rio Grande area benefited from the donation of more than 1,100 items of leggings, undergarments, feminine products, clothing, household items and toys. Hundreds of disadvantaged and hungry people were fed and enjoyed increased literacy in twelve countries around the world by this Club's project.

Selection of Project:

Altrusa International of Richardson, TX Inc. has sponsored annual donations to Mike's Kids as an on-going project for ten years. Mike's Kids is a program in partnership with the Good Samaritan Ministries of the Southwest in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. The purpose of the project is to assist this organization in supporting families and children in Mexico, particularly families who have been forced out of their homelands because of political strife and war, who are currently living in refugee camps along the Texas border town of Matamoros, Mexico. The project regularly provides needed household items, clothing and toiletries (and toys at Christmas). More than 60,000 women, men, and children live in squalid conditions of living in makeshift tents tied to wooden stakes in mud,. Over 3,000 people currently live in refugee camps in Matamoros, Mexico, while waiting weeks or months to request asylum in the U.S. The conditions and squalor in these camps in Mexico are so great forcing women and children to go without the basic necessities.

Development and Implementation of the Project:

At the November 2019 Altrusa club meeting, an Altrusa member who is the wife of the organization's founder, the late Mike Slaight, brought the club's attention an urgent need for leggings, toiletries, clothing, and other items for the women and children residing in refugee camps in Matamoros, Because of sexual violence against women who reside in these makeshift refugee camps, we were alerted by a representative of Mike's Kids in the Rio Grande area, to a very dire need for leggings. The leggings are used by girls and women for additional protection against sexual violence. Other woman's necessities requested were undergarments, and feminine products. Outraged by the idea of this particular need, members of Altrusa Richardson International Committee met and decided to expand our support by providing leggings, toiletries, and undergarments, which amounted to over 1,000 individual items. In addition to the donated items, Altrusa Richardson also awarded \$350 to Mike's Kids.

Another facet of the project, our International Choose Kind Library committee funded \$500 for a new international Choose Kind Library. Almost fifty Spanish language books were purchased to be installed in the Casa Bethel orphanage, in Matamoros, Mexico.

To expand the impact of the project even further, several Richardson Altrusans introduced the idea of participating in the legging collection to other organizations, including Altrusa of Dallas, Altrusa of Lewisville and Altrusa of Garland, that all participated, too. Additionally, at the request of three Richardson Altrusa members, their churches contributed hundreds of additional women's items to the Mike's Kids project.

On December 11, the collected items were delivered to Mark Slaight, current board member and facilitator for the Mike's Kid's organization. Our donation was added to the 1,500 boxes of clothes, toys, and books loaded into two semi-trucks that were used to deliver to Southwest Good Samaritan Ministries in Los Fresnos, Texas. Five of our members assisted preparing last minute boxes and loading the trucks on December 11th.

All Altrusa Richardson members are required to participate in Outstanding Women of Today, our annual luncheon fundraiser which raised funds for our Foundation. The Foundation provides the funds for the committee service budgets. Approximately 90% of our members participated one way or another in the facets of the international project, and over 300 volunteer hours were contributed.

During the 2019-2020 year, the International Relations Committee worked on several additional international projects. We continued to sponsor the education of a fourth-grade girl in Port au Prince, Haiti, through TeachHaiti; and a sixth-grade girl in Santa Avelina, Guatemala, through HELPS International. Additionally, Altrusa gifted a woman's empowerment donation of \$300 to HELPS. Our International Choose Kind Library project added 2 other new Choose Kind Libraries in addition to the one in Matamoros, Mexico; one at the Vima Children's Home in Gbedhome, Volta Region, Ghana, Africa; and one at the El Puente Orphanage in Bogota, Columbia, These three make a total of seven international libraries created since 2015. Eight Altrusans packaged 243 meal packets during a "Feeding

Children Everywhere” project in September.

Evaluation of the project:

The objective of our International projects is to make a positive difference in lives outside of the borders of the US. In evaluation of our projects we are able to verify that our donations go to the people and places that are intended because we work with reputable organizations, such as Mike’s Kids, Helps International, Think Kindness and TeachHaiti, that communicate the results to us in thank you letters, newsletters and photos. We receive letters and photos from our sponsored girls twice a year. We have also received photos from our Choose Kind Libraries.

We know that Mike’s Kids project has successfully enabled hundreds of women and children who live in the refugee camps to receive much needed leggings, feminine products, and clothing. Our other international projects contribute to the basic needs, education, literacy and provides food to at least a thousand adults and children in several third world countries. Altrusa Richardson is committed to “Doing the Kindness Thing” Across Borders.

Supplemental Pages

Mike's Kids

Altrusa International of Richardson



A display promoting our Mike's Kids project.



A shot of some of the 1500 boxes packed into one of the semi trucks bound Mexico



Four Altrusans proudly show off some of our boxes of to be packed on the truck



An Altrusan packs up some last minute donations to be loaded onto the truck



Another Altrusan helps with the loading.



One of the two trucks leaves the parking lot bound for the Rio Grande.



The children of the Casa Bethel Orphanage in Matamores. They received some of the donation to Mike's Kids and a new Choose Kind Library to assist in their education.



The Choose Kind Library in the El Puente Children's Home in Bogata, Columbia. They serve 65 children and this is their only library.

From: [Jimmy Gleich](#)
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2020 4:26 PM
To: janetuck@swbell.net; brian@thinkkindness.org
Subject: Book Donation

Hi Jane,

Here are some pictures of the kids with the books in Ghana! They love them. Our building that will be our library/tech center is still under construction. But the books will have a great home soon, but they already have some very excited kids reading them.

[Download all attachments as a zip file](#)



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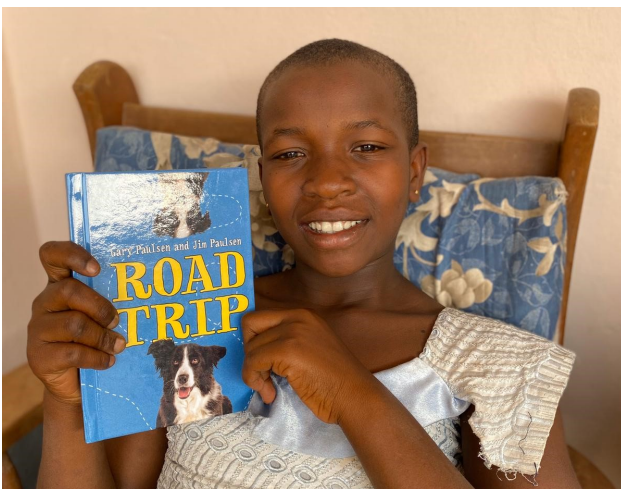
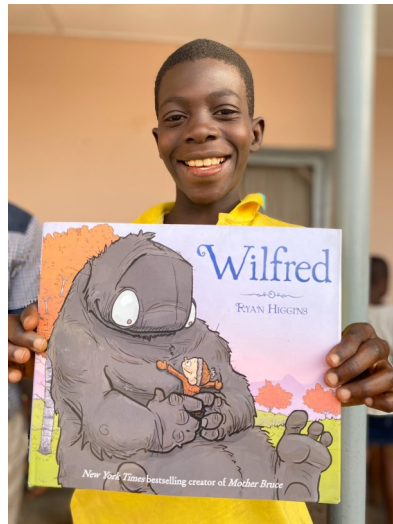
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Top of the page: An email from Jimmy Gleich of Think Kindness, in gratitude of the donation of books to create the library in the Vima Children's Home in Gbedome, Volta Region, Ghana. They serve almost a hundred children as well as more than a thousand villagers in a village community.

Middle of the page and right: Enlargements of the photos sent from the Vima Children's Home.



This is Shepathia Herwine Joseph. She is the fourth grader whose education we continue to sponsor in the School of Hope, in Port au Prince, Haiti



This is Senyada Isabel Torres. We have sponsored her education since the third grade. She graduated from sixth grade this year in Santa Avelina, Guatemala and we will continue to sponsor her as she goes on to high school.



Eight Altrusans with other volunteers help pack 303 meals at an organized packaging day for "Feeding Children Everywhere". 25,000 meals were packed that day.