



# CIELO de Amor Newsletter October 2022



## Exciting update from Ecuador

Kit Frank and Ruth Weinberg, two occupational therapists, equally passionate about providing appropriate wheelchairs and building the capacity of local staff, spent four weeks together joining forces in Ibarra Ecuador. It was an action-packed time, filled with meeting stakeholders, setting up our new workshop, hiring a local physical therapist, identifying and meeting children in need of wheelchairs, fitting and repairing chairs, and planning future trainings. **Before leaving, an order was placed for 100 wheelchairs specifically chosen for each child according to their needs!**

## Meet some of the children and families



It is typical for mothers to carry their children with motoric needs and many mothers came carrying their children on their back. Ecuadorians often live on steep cobble stone roads on the sides of the mountains all around. Rough terrain wheelchairs provide stability so that the children can be comfortably taken to school, therapy and community events.



Sherri's mother told us that her daughter likes to choose her own clothes. With a wheelchair that folds Sherri will be able to go shopping, go to the park with her loving siblings, and to her weekly physical therapy. We will provide a chair that provides supports to stabilize her body and a tray that can be attached. These adaptations will make it easier for her to communicate, play, study and feed herself.

Micaela is 11 years old and has brittle bone disease. When asked what she wanted from the wheelchair, she replied "**Independence**" What a delight to see her self-propelling and playing chase with her sister for the first time in her life. Micaela will be able to enter high school independently getting to classes on her own. She is learning to transfer from her chair to other seats. **A well fitted chair is making her dreams come true.**



Jordy is 7 years old going on 13 and has spina bifida. He has outgrown the chair he received three years ago. As Kit made adjustments Jordy held on to the chair fearful she would damage it. From this evaluation, he will be able to choose from two chairs that will be suitable for the steep dirt roads to get him to public school. **Choice and empowerment are key**



## BREAKING NEWS!!!!

We just received a donation of an additional 30 wheelchairs and 40 pressure relief cushions, so have increased our order to fit a 40 foot container, with double the amount of chairs!!





## Meet Jessica, our new physical therapist in Ecuador



We are delighted to introduce Jessica our newest physical therapist in Ecuador. Jessica has a lot of initiative and in her first three weeks she quickly learned about our evaluation tools, different types of wheelchairs, how to repair brakes and make pressure relief cushions. Jessica helped gather information about each child, finding out about their home environment and taking measurements for wheelchair fitting. Jessica is eager to learn and is excited to have this new position. She has great relationship skills and we are thrilled to hire a local Ecuadorian that can support her community.



### Many new partners

We are partnering with several government branches in Ecuador: the ministry of health, special education clinics and medical clinics. We are also excited to partner with Prosthesis Imbabura, a wheelchair basketball team and physical therapists at private rehab centers. These partnerships are helping us identify the children most in need of wheelchairs and supporting in the logistics of wheelchair provision. These collaborations increase the effectiveness of support for wheelchair users, families and the training of staff in Ecuador.

Christina, physical therapist in a public clinic introduces us to many children needing wheelchairs



### Building Capacity

We have collaborated with the Patronato, a government branch that serves vulnerable populations. In the next year we are planning wheelchair trainings to support wheelchair users, their families and staff

**Together we are stronger.**

Nicaragua news: If you'd like to hear updates re our friends and family in Nicaragua, please contact us directly at [info@cielodeamor.org](mailto:info@cielodeamor.org)

### Thank you...

to all our donors and supporters for continuing to stand with us as we expand to providing mobility in Ibarra, Ecuador. You give us strength and hope in a time where kindness and compassion are needed more than ever!

—Ruth Weinberg, Kit Frank and the CIELO de Amor Family

**Become a monthly donor by visiting us online at**

***cielodeamor.org***

***Donations can also be made by credit card at [cielodeamor.org/contribute/](https://cielodeamor.org/contribute/) or send a check to CIELO de Amor, 107 Ash St, Eugene OR 97402 USA***