

## Why is she smiling?



Because donor Karen Ohmans' gift to Mano a Mano is working triply hard. Each dollar she donates releases \$3 in matching funds from an anonymous donor. Every dollar for community based projects like schools and public baths releases another dollar. Put your money to work for Mano a Mano and you, too, can triple your investment in better health, education and prosperity for Bolivia

### Here's what your donation (plus matching funds) buys:

- Your \$500 purchases all fixtures for a community bath house.
- Your \$250 pays a nurse's salary for one month in one of our community clinics.
- Your \$100 pays for a week of a doctor's salary.

### Send your tax-deductible gift to:

Mano a Mano, 774 Sibley Memorial Highway, Mendota Heights, MN 55118  
Or, call us at 651-457-3141 to learn about additional giving opportunities.



### Current Needs

If you can help with any of these pressing needs, please contact Mano a Mano at 651-457-3141.

Matching funds for clinic construction

Fetal monitors and ultrasounds

Wound care supplies (tape, gauze, bandages)

Gloves

**Thank you!**

**Shop Mano!**  
 Ask about Bolivian weavings in subtle colors and traditional patterns. Priced at \$60-\$100, they're a great bargain, a perfect gift, and an excellent way to support Bolivian artisans. For details, call (651) 457-3141 or stop by the Mall of St. Paul at Selby and Fairview.

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# Boletín

SUMMER 2005

OUR TENTH YEAR!

## What Comes First: Clinics or Roads?

*Mano a Mano Bolivia begins by paving a road to good health*

What should be built first in a poor community—A clinic? An elementary school? Clean bathrooms? The answer, in rural communities where Mano a Mano works, is often “none of the above.” Clinics, schools and sanitation facilities can't be built in a village unless you can get there. The answer to “what comes first?” is often: “a decent road.”



**Connecting communities: Mano a Mano heavy equipment at work**

Like much of the rest of the country's infrastructure, Bolivia's transportation network is inadequate. Many parts of the country are simply inaccessible by motor vehicle. What this means is that Mano a Mano increasingly finds itself operating bulldozers, front-end loaders and road graders. These are essential steps in paving the road to health.

Take the community of El Palmar for example: a hamlet buried deep in the “yungas”, Bolivia's cloud forest. Although the land is fertile, supporting the cultivation of livestock as well as

peanuts, corn and a variety of fruit, El Palmar's 3,500 community members are desperately poor, even by Bolivian standards. Why? Largely because they simply have no way to ship their produce to market. “The only marketable products we have are the ones that can walk out,” jokes community *dirigente* (leader) Manuel Cardozo.

In April 2005, community leaders from El Palmar came to the Mano a Mano office in Cochabamba to ask for help with road construction. As is standard, Mano a Mano staff first made a site visit before agreeing to

work with the community. The trip took 24 hours, by bus, by truck and finally on horseback.

“We rode on horseback all the way along the 49 kilometer trail,” recalls Ivo Velasquez (brother of Mano a Mano co-founder Segundo Velasquez), who is in charge of new construction projects. “We

went through thick jungle, crossing numerous streams and rivers. Often we were in water up to the horses' saddles, or plodding through mud. By the time we were done, I never wanted to see a horse again, but we were convinced that this community needed a road, and that we had to help.”

El Palmar already had a blueprint from a private engineering firm for a road that would have cost the community \$853,000—an extravagant, impossible sum. According to Ivo Velasquez, Mano will build the road for \$273,00,

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## About Our Work: Why and How

Mano a Mano Medical Resources is a non-sectarian 501©(3) non-profit organization with over ten years' experience bringing health care into impoverished Bolivian communities. Mano a Mano, Spanish for "Hand in Hand," operates on principles of volunteerism, frugality, competence, accountability, empowerment, flexibility, respect and partnership with communities.

### Our Mission

To create partnerships with impoverished Bolivian communities that improve health and increase economic well-being.

### Our Core Strategies

- Obtain donations of needed medical supplies and equipment that are surplus in the US and ship them to Bolivia for distribution to non-profit health care programs that serve the poor.
- Partner with communities that have no access to health care to build, equip, operate and staff community health clinics.
- Empower community residents to manage their own clinics and related projects that meet local health, community development and educational needs.

For more information, to request a brochure, or to make a donation, please contact Mano a Mano's office at (651) 457-3141, or visit our web site at [www.manoamano.org](http://www.manoamano.org).



**Community leader Manuel Cardozo on the path to El Palmar.**

### Roads, Continued

receiving a \$100,000 contribution from funds the regional government has offered. Completion is set for early 2006, to avoid washouts from seasonal rains.

"By building this road, Mano a Mano is opening the gates to the outside world," exults *dirigente* Cardozo. "Now we will be able to bring in materials to build our houses, and improve our schools. We can finally sell our products at a market."

As manager of Mano a Mano's heavy equipment operations, Ivo Velasquez has a job that would be the envy of many a small boy obsessed with dump trucks. The Mano a Mano garage now houses a backhoe, bulldozer, front end loader, road grader, low boy trailer and two dump trucks. All were bought in Bolivia, and all are operated by skilled Bolivian drivers. "We've been using our own heavy equipment for the past three years," Velasquez explains. "Funding from our major anonymous donor allowed us to buy the vehicles. A gift

from the Wagner Foundation will help us purchase a second, bigger bulldozer. These gifts and our own *ganas* (will power) help us lower costs tremendously for communities where we work."

The equipment is used most often to level and grade roads. But sometimes Mano a Mano's heavy equipment operators spend time creating airplane landing strips. These can also be life changing—in a matter of hours. "A woman in labor with complications does not have to be carried out on horseback, but can be airlifted out to a hospital," explains Velasquez.

Mano a Mano has completed road construction in 16 communities and airstrips in 13 more. Fourteen other projects, ranging from regrading bridge access points to clearing community playing fields, have also been completed. The demand far exceeds organizational capacity. "We have requests for roads and airstrips to keep us busy for the next ten years!" Velasquez says.

# Rotary Funds More Clinics

## *Bolivia trip inspires a new round of fundraising*

Four Rotary clubs in the Duluth Superior area have once again come through for Bolivian communities, delivering critically needed matching funds for the construction of clinics in rural parts of the country.

Rotary's generous association with Mano a Mano began several years ago, when members of the Harbortown, Skyline, Club 25 and Superior

Wisconsin clubs provided enough funds to support a community clinic in Chiro K'asa, a remote town in the high plains.

In March, 2005, representatives from three of the four clubs traveled to Cochabamba to attend the inauguration of the Chiro K'asa clinic. They were treated to speeches, dances, flower wreaths and the heartfelt thanks of

community members.

"We returned from Cochabamba even more determined to help out as best we can," said Rotarian Dave Michelson, a member of the Skyline Club.



**Rotarian Dave Rutford, left.**

That determination led to a second, larger donation a mere three months later. In early June, Rotary club officials presented Mano a Mano with checks for more

than \$35,000 — enough to fund a clinic and two health posts.

"Rotary funds augment other individual donations and prove to our anonymous donor that we will be able to meet the matching challenge they have set for us," explains co-director Segundo Velasquez. "Every dollar we receive is matched by \$3 from the donor."

## Social Workers Award Goes to Mano a Mano

Mano a Mano USA's volunteer directors, Joan and Segundo Velasquez, were honored as Public Citizens of the Year by the Minnesota chapter of the National Association of Social Work-



ers, at the NASW's annual conference in early June. Longtime volunteer Gloria MacRae was honored with a "Lifetime Achievement" award. "It's great to recognize these exemplary folks and the work Mano a Mano does," said Alan Ingram, Minnesota chapter director. Longtime friends of Mano a Mano will recall that Gloria's 70th birthday gift was to ask friends to donate funds to support Mano a Mano. She raised enough money to start construction on two of Mano a Mano's earliest clinics — Clinica Gloria I and Clinica Gloria II.

**Segundo and Joan Velasquez, with Gloria MacRae.**

## This Just In...

**Volunteer picnic:** Mark your calendar for a highlight of the Mano a Mano year, our annual volunteer appreciation picnic, on Saturday, August 27, in the afternoon. If you are on the Mano a Mano mailing list, look for a special invitation in the mail later this summer. Directions and details will also be available on the website, [www.manoamano.org](http://www.manoamano.org).

### **Needed: gloves, gauze... and a motorcycle:**

Like any health care facility, a Mano a Mano clinic uses dozen of latex gloves and boxes of dressings, bandages and gauze in a week. Since Mano a Mano now supplies over 50 clinics, we can always use more basic supplies. We're also seeking a donated motorcycle, so clinic docs in remote areas can get to their patients without a long walk. An off-road motorcycle with a 200-250 cc engine would be perfect. Let us know if you can help by calling Segundo at 651-457-3141.

**Special thanks:** Volunteers Judy Reisman and Jane Levin recently put their garage sale habits to especially good use for Mano a Mano: For the past couple of months they have scoured the spring sales, collecting piles of heavy winter coats, caps and gloves for Mano a Mano work crews. Temperatures in high altitude Bolivian communities can dip below freezing, and our workers from temperate Cochabamba are often underdressed for the cold. Judy and Jane also collected scads of hammers, saws and pliers for carpenters. We can always use more of these hand tools; call us at 651-457-3141 to arrange a donation.