

Las Libres Bulletin

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Verónica Cruz Sánchez, is the Director of the Las Libres Center of Sexual Health Information Central Region. She is a social worker by profession. Also, in her home state of Guanajuato she is a defender of human rights for women, and has been a feminist and social activist for the past 20 years. She enjoys giving workshops with women and girls in rural communities, lectures at universities and to give sexuality workshops with young Mexicans and foreigners.

Her most significant contribution in 2011 for Las Libres was developing two success stories that have now

Testimonials of our Workers and Volunteers

Las Libres Center was founded in 2000, in response to the urgent need within the central area of Mexico, to have a civil organization that focused on the promotion and defense of sexual and reproductive rights and access to legal abortion.

The focus of this bulletin is to share our recent achievements and our future goals through the personal testimonials of our dedicated workers and volunteers. Our team



would like to share the most important accomplishment they were a part of in 2011 and their most important

plan for 2012. Without their hard work, Las Libres would not be capable of serving those in need.

Director Verónica Cruz's Services

transitioned to help other organizations and women's groups in other states of the republic, which included: a) constructing integral support networks for access to safe abortion for poor women, and b) investigating, documenting, defending and litigating cases of women criminalized for abortion. Through her work, Veronica has prevented women from dying due to unsafe, illegal abortions while preventing more women from going to jail for making decisions about their own body, reproduction or motherhood.

The most important thing Veronica has been developing in 2012, is to promote women's political participation and the right for women to make their own decisions about their own bodies, including women in rural communities. Both indigenous and urban women from marginal areas are connecting their everyday life decisions with the public and are gaining interest in having "public" access to political rights. She is achieving this by starting to redistribute the time available for women's unpaid domestic work in exchange for political participation that influences the political, economic and social development of Mexico.

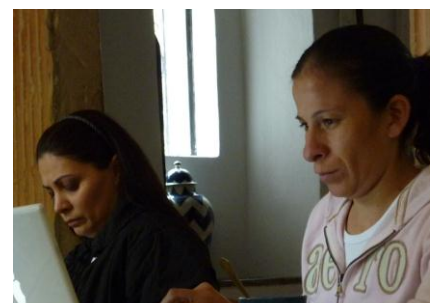
Presenting Margarita

Margarita Mora Cantoral is the psychologist for Las Libres. The function she plays in the organization is to provide psychological services to women and youth who need help. Also, she provides workshops in the rural communities, schools and colonies. Throughout this year with Las Libres, she had learned about the political rights of women and mainly on how to strengthen the organization. She learned the importance of documenting and systematizing various processes with her serious,

self-evaluative team. Her work at Las Libres has impacted her personal life. As she mentions, "It is a responsibility to be consistent with my statements, sexual health, and decisions about my body, my citizenship, etc. Issues that we share with women and youth are issues that cross through our lives and we must confront them."

In 2011 with Las Libres, Margarita participated in the systematization process of bringing work from the office into a new community. For 2012,

she intends to continue working on her current projects, in addition to carrying out the project of IFE (Federal Voting Institute), which serves to educate and advocate for women to participate in the electoral process.



Margarita and Rosy

Mónica's Contribution

Mónica Maciel Méndez is the lawyer for Las Libres. She is responsible for providing legal advice to women who have had their rights violated and come to the organization. She also works with women in the community by providing legal literacy and human rights workshops. Through her experiences with Las Libres, Mónica says that she has learned several

effective ways to work with women and every woman that she provides legal advice to leaves a special feature of their experiences within Mónica. Her work in the organization has affected her personal life in a way that now she can say that she feels capable of making the most of her decisions and that there has been a huge shift in her life, because among other things, she has learned to be responsive in the face of situations in which you have to defend your thoughts and beliefs.

Her most important work in Las Libres in 2011, was accomplished with the indigenous women in the communities of Juanica in Tierra Blanca. These women taught her a new way to view life since they were always willing to learn new things and reassess what they learned. For 2012, Mónica wants to continue meeting with women that need legal help, especially indigenous women.



Mónica with the girls.

Rosy Cruz Sánchez has contributed to Las Libres since 2007, as promoter of sexual health for youth. Currently, she is in charge of the financial and administrative activities of the organization.

Rosy is a presenter, trainer and facilitator of workshops aimed at educating adolescents and women. She also accompanies and supports women who decide to terminate their pregnancy. She studied Computer Systems Engineering as a career, but her passion is to contribute to the advancements of women's rights. Rosy says, "At Las Libres we dream that women can live in a better world, so

because of that we fight every day and believe that one day we will be successful."

Her most significant work in 2011 was giving sexuality workshops for adolescents and young adults in schools from different cities in Guanajuato and she will continue this important work into 2012.

Rosy's Work

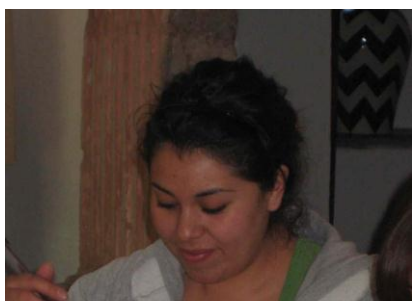
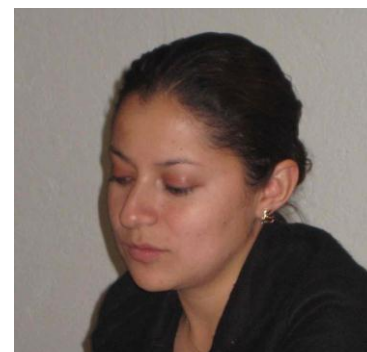
About Lupita

Maria Guadalupe Garcia Rodriguez has a degree in Education Intervention and is a teacher in Educational Innovation. She has worked at the center since 2009, and her main role in Las Libres is in the area of intervention within the community. She works mainly with boys and girls around the theme of children's rights and violence prevention through a gender perspective. She also collaborates on projects and proposals for work, which are evaluated and

implemented to determine if they have the desired impact on the target population of children.

Throughout this year she is working with boys and girls on projects about their sexuality and life within urban and rural communities. This work is done with this population through fun workshops that enhances learning while facilitating the work with children. This year she is also working with the electoral observatory 2012, which is collaborating with Las Libres, this

project's main objective is to identify the participation of women in the 2012 Mexican elections.



Rebeca Rios is an educational interventionist. Her work focuses on workshops on violence prevention for women and building equitable relationships between sons and daughters. Rebeca says that the most

important thing that she has learned is to convey to all the women information about their rights and what is necessary to adopt and pass on gender equity in their family and social surroundings. She considers that Las Libres has had a great impact on how she views things and her own connection with her family.

Her most important activity during 2011 was working with the women from Silva.

Presenting Rebeca

For her, trying to help their living situations in such a short amount of time was a challenge. In this year, her project is to work with a population of older adult women in the colonies of Guanajuato. It will be challenging for her to offer a sufficient amount of information around the issue of sexuality.

Pedro's Contribution

Pedro Chavez Bárcenas, who studied educational intervention, realized when he was very young that our society has so many foolish injustices and for that reason he is a revolutionary social activist. With Las Libres, he conducts various activities with children that include social assessments, project development, workshop design, and assisting in the preparation approving project reports.

Pedro began working on children's rights with preschool children from the municipality of San Francisco del Rincon, in the community of Silva. He also participated in workshops that were held in the municipality of San Luis de la Paz with young children from the community of Mission Chichimecas. Pedro participated in the preparation of two CDI (Commission of Indigenous Towns) projects, one of which was approved, and he is participating in its implementation in



Pedro working with the boys.

the municipality of Tierra Blanca, in the communities of Juanica and Cieneguilla. Personally for Pedro, his work with the children in these communities has been a very good experience.



*All rights for all women
all of the time.*



María del Carmen Rosas Rendón is a woman from Guanajuato, originally from the city of Dolores Hidalgo. She earned her professional degree from the National Pedagogical University Unit 111, Guanajuato (UPN), where she obtained the degree of Bachelor of Educational Intervention in the area of Educational Guidance. In July of 2012 reached the degree of Master in Educational Innovation.

In 2011, Carmen had developed preventive action-training with adolescents in some urban and rural communities of the state of Guanajuato. She participated in two projects connected with the INDESOL organization (National Institute of Social Development), for children,

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Rebeca, Lupita and Carmen working with the children in the community.

Carmen's Experience

women, and school teachers in five urban and rural communities of the state of Guanajuato. Also in 2011, she participated as one of the managers of the project development organization IMJUVE (The Mexican Youth Institute) that specifically focused on care and counseling to females and males between 12 and 29 years old from urban and rural communities of Guanajuato. She also trained future teachers to develop skills and raise awareness to the higher standard of information on sexuality and violence prevention.

She reflects on her experience, "I think about the issue of sexuality currently in the state and how it remains a taboo subject with a number of myths, which only serve to magnify the risk for adolescents and young people who are raised by fears or lack of information on sexuality. They maintain this invalid belief that less information equals less risk."

In 2012, Carmen is taking action through preventive education for

teenagers in some urban and rural communities in Guanajuato, with the organization Institute for Women. During the training process she identified that the value of young women's sexuality is not limited to only reproduction, but that sexuality encompasses a number of sensations and feelings that are unique to human beings, who develop their sexuality along of their lifetimes.

Also in 2012, she had the opportunity to participate as one of the managers with the organization UNDP, helping the women of the state identify and exercise their political rights for themselves, thereby learning what it means to be a Mexican citizen.

*This bulletin was created by
Carlina Ramírez, Volunteer*