

Happy 2024! Here's the latest news & updates from Simply Smiles



Children's Village

Oaxaca, Mexico



The children and staff had a busy winter break, filled with celebrations for Noche de Rábanos (Night of the Radishes), Christmas, and Three Kings Day. As you can see from the photos below, lots of fun was had by all, including Helen and Leni from Germany who are joining us for the year as part of a special program. Thank you to our donors for helping to provide a magical holiday season for the kids!



Learn more about our Children's Village in Mexico

🌐 *Are you a school, community group, or congregation interested in fundraising for Simply Smiles and helping to raise awareness about our Children's Village?*

Whether it's a one-time fundraiser or a way to give on a recurring basis (including birthdays, which we always have a lot of in Mexico!), let's start the conversation. [Email us!](#)



Pictured: A recent creative fundraiser done by the student

Explore some of our sponsorship needs

*members of the Roots & Shoots
Club at Burr Elementary School*

Things to Watch, Read & Learn:

- [Read Globally: 14 Beautiful Books That Introduce Mexican Culture and History to Kids](#) (via *Brightly*)
- Watch this [short segment from Oaxaca Travel](#) on the artisans of San Bartolo Coyotepec who make pottery from regional black clay

Recognizing our board members:

Renée Burger-McMichael, Ivan Lucuk & David Nurnberger

Since 2003, Simply Smiles has recruited pillars of the community to serve on our Board of Directors. Their dedication, experience, and expertise are invaluable. Every few years, members of our talented, generous board reach their term limits and cycle off. At the end of 2023, three individuals ended their terms: Renée Burger-McMichael; Ivan Lucuk; and David Nurnberger.

Thank you to Renée, Ivan, and David for lending their many years of time, **incredible generosity**, professional expertise (including their extensive backgrounds in social work, finance, human resources, and so much more!), and for helping us to strengthen our programming and organization.



From left/top to right/bottom: Former board members Renée Burger-McMichael; Ivan Lucuk (with wife Marisa); and David Nurnberger

Learn more about our current Board of Directors



An update from our Reservation Village

We previously shared that we were in ongoing conversations with the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Chairman LeBeau, and its tribal council about the potential to transfer ownership and operational responsibility of the village to the tribe. The transfer has not happened yet, but we are very pleased by the progress being made on this transition. **We are hopeful that we will have more definitive, and historic, news to share soon!**

Thank you to our supporters, volunteers, advisors, and advocates who have helped to make the Children's Village a reality and create a model that empowers our tribal partners to implement a path to strengthening its child welfare system. We're excited to see the impact that this vital infrastructure will have now and for future generations. *Stay tuned!*

A reminder on our volunteer programming

A new year often calls for ways to make a difference. While we appreciate the interest in and enthusiasm for our volunteer program, **we are not yet able to bring back our volunteer opportunities, and we likely won't be able to do so for several years.** On-the-ground volunteer efforts formed a cornerstone for what we have built in Mexico and on the Reservation. As Simply Smiles expands and our needs change, we look forward to exploring how we can implement and provide meaningful volunteer opportunities again.



[View more milestones & accomplishments](#)

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In addition to cash, check, credit/debit card, and ACH, we also accept one-time and recurring donations from these digital wallet options:



Thank you for helping to provide bright futures since 2003!



📷 : Kids in the courtyard at our Children's Village in Oaxaca.



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