



## **ABOUT PASSION FOUNDATION AND GLOBAL SORORITY**

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Passion Foundation's mission is to help young women achieve personal success in life by supporting each other. Through hands-on workshops, we teach girls and young women leadership training, positive role modeling, and community building skills to help them realize and live out their full potential.

Passion Foundation partners with community organizations and schools both locally and internationally, and since 2007, has worked with over 400 girls in five countries. In order to continue this global movement and have even more sustainable impact, Passion Foundation created the Global Sorority. Global Sorority's mission is to promote awareness around gender equality, provide young women with sustainable leadership education, and facilitate a global sisterhood that mobilizes change, inspires action and creates economic opportunity.

In January 2014, in partnership with Mission of Friendship, Global Sorority will start a chapter in Mérida, Yucatán, Mexico, and help 20 girls become peer leaders in their community.

## **PROJECT SCOPE, GOALS & DESIRED OUTCOMES**

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The girls in the south of Mérida often come from families with quite limited educational backgrounds and financial resources. In many cases, they are exposed to particularly unhealthy ways of relating in a culture that is, in general, very "macho". The girls often feel the need to have a boyfriend to be valued and loved, get pregnant when they are in junior high or high school, and drop out of school to support their children. Since this pattern is common in their world, the girls may not understand that there are other options for their lives that are within their power to choose.

Our program will accommodate approximately 20 girls between the ages of 11 to 16 from Mission of Friendship's after school program, family sponsorship program, and from the surrounding neighborhood, who show leadership potential or who seem to need guidance and confidence in themselves.

## **PROJECT SCOPE**

The core of the project is to provide leadership training to the Mérida girls group that will empower them to find their own passion and direction in life. The leadership training is

based on our “Elements of SUCCESS” (self-exploration, understanding limitations, courage to change, cooperation through community, evaluation of needs, skill development, and service into the community). By engaging the girls through facilitation, dialogue, reflection, writing and art, the girls acquire new life skills, discover their goals and contribute to the community.

## GOALS AND DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Identify ways to empower girls to reach their full potential through leadership and global mentorship with a self-sustaining model that directly aims to impact their local community through their passion projects.
- Encourage girls to spread their message, share their journey with others, and become leaders in their own lives.
- Establish connections within their community and global community and be part of a movement of empowerment that can build a framework for future generations.
- Establish partnership with the grassroots groups, as well as find a mechanism for opening doors within the country to hold projects like this in other Mexican communities for girls.
- Broaden the support base for girls empowerment and girls leadership movements, with a focus on engaging new youth locally, as well as globally, especially in rural and urban slum areas.

This project will also have a documentary component that will highlight Mission of Friendship and two young women’s stories including their dreams, desires, aspirations, and challenges. We will cover what the girls need and want for their lives, and how the community might support them to achieve it. We will also cover the before and after training reflections to show what a powerful transformation the girls can experience. Using storytelling, we will deliver a powerful and simple critical truth - providing young girls with sustainable leadership can change the world.

As it stands, this project has no negative impacts. However, based on the political and societal issues surrounding women’s enhancement in the economic world, this project must be positioned in a diplomatic way that is both politically and religiously neutral, and must showcase the importance of women’s empowerment at the grassroots and policy-making levels.

## PROJECT BUDGET

Flight Vancouver to Mérida (return)	\$750.00
Flight San Diego to Mérida (return)	\$750.00
Lunapads (20 sets)	\$500.00
Transportation	\$100.00
Supplies	\$100.00
Food	\$100.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,300.00</b>

## MEASURE OF SUCCESS AND LONG-TERM GOALS

Progress and long-term success can be measured based on the following: individual participation; growing number of girls pursuing higher education; girls becoming leaders

in the community; strength of the local Global Sorority chapter; and recognition and support within the grassroots community.

## **SUPPORTING GLOBAL SORORITY'S MEXICO CHAPTER**

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For information on how to support Global Sorority and the Mexico chapter, please contact Loretta Cella, Passion Foundation Founder and Executive Program Director, at [info@passionfoundation.org](mailto:info@passionfoundation.org) or 604.395.7685.



## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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### **History of Yucatán**

The Yucatán Peninsula is a region of southeastern Mexico consisting of the Mexican states of Yucatán, Campeche, and Quintana Roo.

Mérida is the capital of Yucatán. It is located in the northwest part of the state. According to the 2010 census, Mérida is ranking 12<sup>th</sup> among the most populous Mexican metropolitan areas. Mérida has the highest percentage of indigenous persons of any large city in Mexico with approximately 60% of all inhabitants being of Maya ethnicity.

### **Mission of Friendship**

Mission of Friendship (or *Misión de Armistad*) began in 1971 as a partnership between the Roman Catholic diocese of Erie, Pennsylvania, and the Archdiocese of Yucatán, Mexico. Centered in Christ, Mission of Friendship provides over 200 volunteers with an opportunity to form Christian community, to grow in faith and love with the people of Yucatán, and to share their gifts and talents with those in need. Mission of Friendship provides opportunities for cultural exchange between the Archdiocese of Yucatán and the Diocese of Erie. Mission of Friendship coordinates and provides volunteer staff for a variety of agricultural, educational and medical programs that serve the poor.

## **Mission of Friendship's Programs**

- A childcare centre provides care for about 27 children ranging in age from six weeks to three years whose mothers must work to support their families.
- The Amigos family sponsorship program facilitates the partnership of 80 Yucatán families with 80 families in the U.S. Sponsors are linked with a needy child or family in Yucatán, and the sponsor helps to provide the child or family with education, food, clothing, medical care and improved housing.
- The Medical program provides low-cost consultations and medicine.
- A Sister Parish program partners 18 parishes in Yucatán with 18 in Pennsylvania.
- The Visiting Groups program offers groups of sponsors and universities to experience the Mexican culture and share their skills in short term work projects.
- The Nueva Vida after-school program for primary-school age girls welcomes 24 girls from noon to 7pm.

## **Local Community's Role in the Project**

Mission of Friendship is the first partnering organization that will provide support and means for successful run and completion of the project. This includes community connections; classroom; assistance with housing; transportation; food for the trainers; translation service; and follow-up after the training.

A local businessman currently volunteering at Mission of Friendship shares input about the benefits of a program like this:

“Here maybe not as obvious as you've seen in countries like India but still present. Some longitudinal studies in Mexico, in the Yucatán, have shown that patronage has had a debilitating effect on individual motivation and created a sense of apathy in the culture. The insecurity shows up mostly in the "machismo" of the gender roles that is supported (oddly) and propagated mostly by the women or mothers in a community. Girls are undervalued and so inappropriately underutilized as leaders. Clearly, young women who learn that they are not bound, however constrained, by cultural apathy and insecurity will make the biggest leadership contribution to the Mexican culture and social evolution.”

Ultimately, growing the number of connections between the Global Sorority chapter and local business and philanthropic organizations, and securing acceptance of the program, its idea, and outcome by the grassroots will determine success of the project.

Three possible partnering organizations could include the following:

- Centro Mexicano para la Filantropía is an education-oriented group that strengthens the link between civil society, the public, and private sectors to improve quality of education. This organization promotes joint efforts and awareness to act on behalf of children and adolescents in Mexico.
- Convergencia de Organismos Civiles por la Democracia is an organization that focuses on human rights.
- US-Mexico Border Philanthropy Partnership (BPP) supports a network of organizations that build prosperity through leadership, collaboration, and philanthropy in the U.S.-Mexico Border region.