**Brief History**

“Steaua Calauza” NGO for Children with Disabilities began its activity in 2005, founded by Viorica, inspired by her son Nicu, a beautiful child who was born with Spina Bifida and who passed away in 2013. To improve Nicu’s quality of life and because of the lack of facilities that could provide the necessary treatment for him, Viorica looked for rehabilitation services outside of her hometown. What she found was that there weren’t any reliable facilities that would be able to provide proper rehabilitation services to her child. Nicu’s condition was so serious, compared to other cases, that his disability was not easy to work on and rehabilitation centers were not able to help him. As a result, of not having adequate access to care, her son’s life was full of pain and isolation. This experience gave her the idea to create a nongovernmental organization in her town to provide support and advocate for disabled children and their families. She succeeded at getting a room in a government building where this NGO began its operations as a place to gather. In 2012, through the interest of some private donors, Viorica and the new team began to raise funds to renovate these facilities and open a center that could provide rehabilitation therapy to the children of Gratiesti and its surroundings. Together they managed to raise enough funds, over $30,000 to renovate the building, and to purchase some equipment and furniture. The new NICUSOR Center opened for children and youth in the village of Gratiesti in May 2016. This was Nicusor’s and Viorica’s dream and they managed to make it a reality. This effort was greatly assisted through a GlobalGiving funds raising campaign, project # 21434. This campaign led to the establishment of rehabilitation practices for children with disabilities and their families, effective recovery programs, appropriate treatment methods and counseling for over 80 children annually.

This center has the capacity to increase the number of patients but it is necessary to secure further funding to ensure the center has the necessary staff to meet the needs of all the patients and their families. Today, the NICUSOR Center is beginning to be recognized in the surrounding villages and the number of patients is increasing. The main goal of the center is to never turn a child away but as the numbers increase, it is becoming increasingly difficult to sustain due to a lack of a steady stream of income. If enough funds are not raised, the center will be forced to decrease operations or shot down completely. This is the alternative and not a good option for the children. The effect of this closure would be that these children will return to their homes and become completely marginalized again, as they were before. Of course we will not let this happen but we need your help.