

FROM THE FOUNDER



COTA Board: (left to right) Chris Marshall, Keith & Maya Durkin, Carol DeGraff, George Wakeling, David Caldwell

I have known the Durkin family for over 10 years. I met Keith for the first time when I was recovering from a surgery. It hurt to laugh so naturally Keith made me laugh. We hit it off right away and I was ready to support a family that was sold out for Jesus. We worked on several projects, some large and some small but all successful. Maya could charm anyone (I am not sure there is a Spanish word for schmoozer but she has that gift) - and their children AJ and Misha had all the talents of their parents at a very young age.

On January 1, 2017 we started a new journey together with the Durkins and some longtime friends Carol DeGraff, Chris Marshall and a new friend David Caldwell from Colorado. We make up the board of a ministry the Durkin's are leading called COTA (Americas Children). This ministry serves around 500 meals, 5 days a week to children in the TJ area. The Durkinss will bring a lasting spiritual impact to these kids and their families. They hope to plant a church in the near future also.

I was looking at my Facebook page recently and saw photos of Keith and Maya preparing food for hundreds of Haitian refugees in TJ. They are already reaching out in new ways, being the hands and feet of Jesus to the needy. I am thrilled to be a part of this new energized ministry that will make a difference. Join us, get involved and watch this ministry grow.



George Wakeling, *Founder*

A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear friend of COC,

I LOVE spring, don't you? The vibrant colors, the awakening of all that blooms, the warmth of the sun in the day and the freshness in the air. Everything starts anew! I like to think when God created that first, perfect garden, it would have been spring time. The start of life and all things NEW. This update brings with it "newsness" for COC as well, as we announce our official partnership with Keith and Maya Durkin, now Directors of COTA (www.americaschildren.org) in Tijuana. All of us at Circle of Concern are so excited to come alongside this amazing couple and ministry with resources ranging from financial gifts, prayer and bringing teams for hands on help. The needs of Tijuana are vast, and ministries like Keith and Maya's are so needed!

According to Wikipedia, Tijuana is one of the fastest growing cities in Mexico with an average of 80,000 people moving to Tijuana yearly. This has led to the unregulated, illegal squatter homes that take place in the hills and valleys of ever expanding Tijuana. Most of these areas are yet to be served by city services, including the addition of sidewalks, paving, streetlights, public transit and other services. Squatter areas are home to displaced and uprooted people, among them the indigenous and poverty stricken, migrants deported from the USA, many of whom are also without Mexican citizenship. What an opportunity we have, living just north of this 3rd world city. These precious people need to know the God that loves them deeply. I hope you will partner with us in this journey: we already have our first two dates lined up – Saturday, July 22 and Saturday, October 21. (detailed info to come)

Thank you for your ongoing support,



Carol DeGraff, *Executive Director*

MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT : AMERICAS CHILDREN

Leading, Feeding, and Freeing Children of Tijuana, Mexico

From the Directors: Keith and Maya Durkin



Jesus said, "Feed my lambs..." (John 21:15 NIV) There is no work more important on our planet than to feed, nurture, and disciple children. Wes Stafford, author of the book *Too Small to Ignore* asserts, and we agree that, "Just know this: What you will do among children is as close to the heart of God and central to his kingdom as anything we could mention."

The *mission* of *Americas Children* is to provide the poorest children in Mexico and the Americas with their essential needs of *nutrition and spiritual discipleship*, without which they will not achieve their potential. We are also advocates, speaking out and providing a voice and presence where children are hungry and deeply in need of God's love. Our *reverse mission* is to mobilize the church and volunteers to take hold of the opportunity to meet their impoverished brothers and sisters and, through this contact, become more conscious of their suffering, and become more passionate about the Kingdom opportunity to reach these children. One of Americas Children's early founders, Paul Weiss, says, "We will never fill the empty bellies of poor, hungry children until we warm the cold hearts of the rich, those who control and distribute the world's resources."

In our roles of *advocates*, we focus on transforming the conditions that create the poverty so many of these children find themselves in. In addition to expanding our nutritional help, we also seek to disciple the children, reach their families by meeting felt needs, and sharing the love of Christ through His Gospel to them. Our dream, our vision, is to ensure that children have enough to eat, attend school and live safely, and grow up to love God. Before this can happen, large numbers of their conscious, caring, brothers and sisters must first bring the Kingdom of God to them and feed Jesus' lambs both physically and spiritually, as these children are our future.

SANTA ANA OUTREACH APRIL 29 • 2:30 - 6:00 PM

It's not too late to join! Partnering with Iglesia la Puerta.

Join us at KidWorks

1902 W. Chestnut Avenue • Santa Ana, CA 92703

Sign up at circleoc.com/parkday

HELP PURCHASE A VAN FOR THE TJ MINISTRY!

We are raising funds to purchase a 12-15 passenger van for the Durkins to use for the many teams that will be coming to TJ to help. No gift is too small!

Give online at circleoc.com/van4tj
or mark on your check memo: Van 4 TJ

WAYS TO DONATE

DONATE ONLINE

Donations can be made securely online at circleoc.com/donate

THRIFT STORE

New and used goods can be donated to the Circle of Concern Thrift Store. Call 1-800-499-5121

USED CARS

Used cars can be donated to Circle of Concern. Call 1-855-500-RIDE

 www.circleoc.com

 info@circleoc.com

 facebook.com/circleoc



P.O. Box 6592
Oceanside, CA 92052-6592
949-388-6400