



**University
Of Victoria**

School of Nursing



April 11, 2013

Dear members of the USCC Cultural Interpretive Society:

Thank you so very much for your steadfast support for the nursing students and the people of Guatemala since the beginning of our international nursing practice experience in 2006. Each year we are graced with your prayers, kind wishes for a safe and fulfilling learning experience, and the generous donations of beautifully handcrafted quilts, pillow cases, and stuffed animals for the children.

Fourteen students, the largest group to date as well as two nursing instructors and a local accompanier participated in the Selkirk College international practice experience to Guatemala last year. They worked closely with long established Guatemalan partners who are involved in grassroots initiatives to address the environmental, social, and physical harms related to the mining practices of Canadian companies, human rights violations against women, and extensive poverty and racism arising from centuries of unjust political and economic policies.

Specifically, the students listened to people share their stories of pain but also of hope and resilience, accompanied community members as they worked together to determine how best to care for their families given limited economic resources, and collaborated with nurses, doctors, social workers, health promoters, and community workers to provide relevant health education. The donations that you lovingly made were donated to the health workers affiliated with two of our partners, both of whom will ensure that they are given to families as a symbol of solidarity rather than charity. In each case, our partners view the quilts as a symbol of peace, of working or toiling together for the betterment of humanity honouring our collective work to bring about justice for all.

The students graduate within a few weeks from the University of Victoria @ Selkirk College baccalaureate nursing program. Each of them will care for their patients in ways that reflect a moral imperative to act justly and ethically. They will provide competent and safe care to patients in both community and acute care settings that will include education, direct care, research, and policy development to ensure that we have water, employment, housing, education, and health care necessary to support our health. This work is critically important as we encounter growing pressures to privatize healthcare services making them more accessible to people who can afford them. Healthcare services need to be safeguarded against this for health is a basic right that is enshrined in both national and international documents that must not be sold to the highest bidder, much like a luxury purchase.

We value working with you for together we share a vision of health for all and a willingness to act for peace, peace as justice where there is a place for everyone at the table of life.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Ann Morris".

Mary Ann Morris, RN, MScN
Nursing Instructor
Health & Human Services Dept.
Selkirk College, Castlegar, BC
250-365-1383
mmorris@selkirk.ca