

# Parramos, Guatemala

*Lauren & Kevin Sanchez*

## *Building & Blessings*

Wow—January 2026 was intense, fun, and hectic all at once. We started the year with the entire King family visiting for a week. During that time, we also decided to hike the world-famous volcano at the coldest time of the year. It was a two-day trip at nearly 13,000 feet of altitude! The neighboring volcano is active, and we watched it erupt about every 15 minutes. Two of my older adopted daughters joined us on the hike, which made the experience especially meaningful.



Friday, the week they were here, we launched our first day of English classes in the afternoon at AFL, and the following Monday, we held the very first day of classes for SEEDS, our Christian bilingual elementary school. God has been incredibly faithful to both schools.

The building has been under construction for over six months, and we have poured all of our resources into making it the best possible learning environment—one that feels safe and welcoming to every person who walks through the doors.

**The scary part of loving something and giving it 100% is that it doesn't always meet our expectations right away.**

As we wrapped up 2025 and moved into 2026, enrollment numbers were very low. We had committed to paying our staff for the entire year regardless of enrollment, and at one point, we had only five students registered.

I believed deeply in this project, but I worried that if other parents didn't see the value of SEEDS or didn't want to risk trying something new, the school might fail before it truly began. I lost a lot of sleep and felt genuine panic about what we would do.

I found myself on my knees, asking God for peace and for the ability to loosen my grip on trying to control the outcome. Almost immediately, as I worried less and trusted Him more, students began enrolling.

We now have two classes: one for three- and four-year-olds and another for four- and five-year-olds. Our youngest class is completely full, and the older class I am co-teaching has only two spots remaining.

In December, one of our teachers decided to pursue a different path, so for now I am stepping into both teaching and administrative roles until we can find another qualified native English-speaking teacher. The sweet upside is that Keke is at our school, and I get to spend more time with him and be part of his learning journey. Although he is not in my class, we share subjects like reading, art, Bible, P.E., music, and snack/recess time together.

I don't believe I am ultimately called to be a pre-K or kindergarten teacher, but for this season, I am truly enjoying watching these little minds soak up new skills—and a new language.



# SEEDS vs AFL



Being in another country has caused some understandable confusion—specifically about who we are, what we do, and the difference between SEEDS and AFL. This has increased now that Kevin and I are operating two completely separate schools at the same location.

So let's clear that up...

## Seeds

**Founded:** January 2026



**What:** SEEDS currently offers pre-k and kindergarten classes, teaching 12 different subjects. Half of the instruction is in English and half in Spanish. Our vision is to grow by one grade level each year until we become a full elementary school.

**Why:** Parramos is a rural, developing area where most children attend public schools. These schools often operate with little to no regulation, and it is common for classrooms to have 40–50 students. Many students attend school only three or four days a week and for half days. While there are private schools in the area, they are often difficult to access, already full, and financially out of reach for most families. SEEDS was created to provide an excellent education at an affordable price point, while also giving students the opportunity to learn English.

**When:** SEEDS operates from 7:15 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. The two-hour window between SEEDS closing and AFL opening allows our maintenance team time to clean the building and convert the children's desks into tables suitable for adult students.

## AFL

**Founded:** Sept 2020



ACADEMY  
OF FUTURE LEADERS

**What:** AFL stands for *Academy of Future Leaders*. It is an English academy that helps students of all ages learn English. AFL is a six-year program, with students receiving a diploma from the Ministry of Education every two years after completing 400+ hours of language learning per level. Each diploma reflects the student's achieved English proficiency.

**Why:** English is a highly sought-after skill, so many children, teens, and adults are looking for opportunities to add it to their skill set. Business owners and managers in Parramos and Antigua regularly contact us for employee recommendations, as they recognize the strong level of English our students bring to the workplace.

At AFL, English is taught in a way that integrates real-life and practical skills alongside language learning. These include interview preparation, asking thoughtful questions, holding meaningful conversations, self-evaluation, goal setting, and even rehearsing pre-marital counseling scenarios.

**When:** AFL is open from 2pm to 7pm, classes are just one hour from Monday to Friday.

With love, *Lauren & Kevin*

## Support

Thank you for your gifts and prayers. Reach us by email at [lauren.s@cimissions.org](mailto:lauren.s@cimissions.org)

To stand with us financially, you can give online at [www.cornerstoneinternational.org/sanchez](http://www.cornerstoneinternational.org/sanchez) or give by mail by making checks out to Cornerstone International, and memo "Sanchez," mailing to: Cornerstone International PO Box 192 40390-0192.



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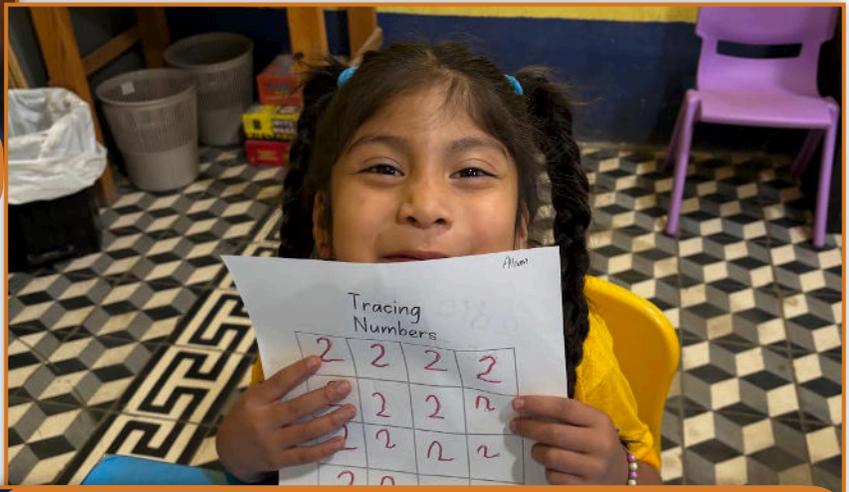
The active neighboring volcano on our hike.



Our three new classrooms can be seen in the background while the construction crew is finishing the roof.



Fabian showing off his Noah's Ark craft.



Allison proudly writing numbers by herself for the first time.



Julian and Keke in fine motor skills class, learning to wipe after going to the bathroom. Admittedly, we laughed a lot during this class!



Me trying to get the kids to repeat numbers in English.