



**Fabretto**

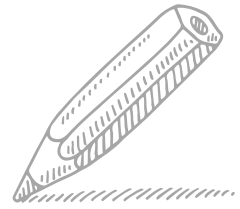
Fabretto Children's Foundation

ANNUAL  
REPORT  
**2016**

CREATING  
*Literate*  
COMMUNITIES



# LETTER FROM THE Chief Executive Officer



Amigos,

At Fabretto, we believe literacy is the foundation of all future learning and development. Looking back, 2016 was a year of educational accomplishments that will allow our children, their families and entire communities to reach a better future.

Thanks to you, over 20,000 children and youth from 0-19 years of age living in poverty, benefitted from quality education and nutritious meals. By working hand-in-hand with parents and teachers, we were able to reduce the percentage of 1st to 3rd grade at-risk readers, from 54% to 19%. Students like 11-year old Brenda from the rural community of La Jabonera had her first story included in a children's storybook published in Nicaragua and Spain. Your impact has made it possible for education to transcend the classroom, changing the lives of mothers like Katis, who – once an illiterate adult – was able to achieve personal development thanks to the power of reading.

Without a doubt, 2016 was a milestone year filled with immeasurable successes for entire communities that would not have been possible without you. This report not only celebrates those achievements, but recognizes your generous support and commitment to underserved children and youth.

Thank you for helping us to improve literacy in some of Nicaragua's most underserved communities.

GRACIAS,

**Kevin Marinacci**



# Our Mission

FABRETTO **EMPOWERS** CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN  
UNDERSERVED NICARAGUAN COMMUNITIES TO REACH  
THEIR **FULL POTENTIAL** THROUGH **EDUCATION**.

$A+B=C$









# WHO IS OUR Beneficiary?



**20,251**


**STUDENTS LIKE**  
*Maria José*


**IN 2016**

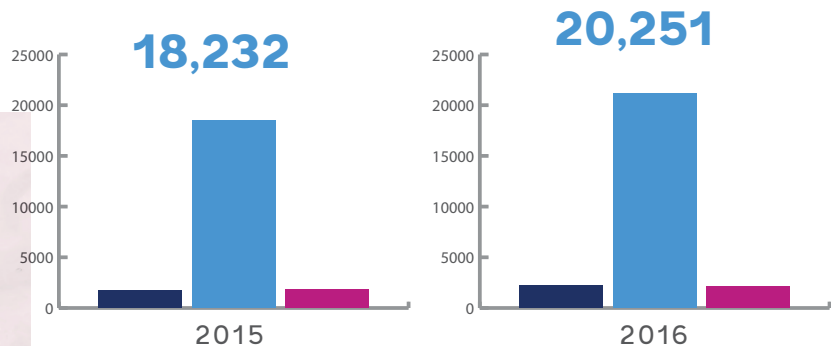
## Maria José

- Is 0-19 years of age, a key stage of physical, emotional, and intellectual development
- Lives in Nicaragua, the poorest Spanish-speaking country in the Western Hemisphere
- Doesn't have regular access to nutritious meals
- Doesn't have access to quality education
- Her family lives on less than \$2 a day
- Her parents only made it to primary school

 Early Education

 Primary Education

 Technical Vocational Education



# HOW DO WE EMPOWER



## Early Education

From the moment María José arrives in the world, she is raised with love and care. Her parents receive training in “early stimulation,” and learn how to prepare her for preschool during her infant years. Once María José is of age, she begins to go to preschool, where her teachers promote learning through LEGO blocks and other educational games. At preschool, María José receives daily meals and food supplements (like “Chapuditos” cereal) to support her development, has access to quality school supplies, and has a teacher who is well-trained in literacy methodologies. Tom and Lindsey from New York decide to sponsor María José so that she can continue to benefit from Fabretto programs.

## Primary Education

María José flourishes in primary school. She develops a close bond with her teacher, who is trained in play-based, innovative teaching methodologies, such as Open Learning. María José’s teacher also follows up with her individually to measure her reading, writing, and mathematical skills. Just like her preschool, María José’s primary school provides her with school supplies, daily meals, and food supplements. In the afternoons, María José participates in after-school enrichment activities that focus on educational and socio-emotional development, such as LitClub, the Fabretto reading club. Her parents are engaged in school activities, and continue attending Fabretto training workshops on education, nutrition, and food security. Tom and Lindsey continue their generous sponsorship.



# María José?



## Technical Vocational Education

María José enrolls in Fabretto's alternative rural secondary education program, which uses a learning-by-doing approach. She receives technical vocational training and develops entrepreneurial skills. This empowers her to support her family's business and the local economy. María José also learns English through Fabretto (English Access Microscholarship Program funded by the US Department of State). In addition, Fabretto helps María José find an internship at a local company, so that she can gain experience which will expand her future employment opportunities. Upon graduation from high school, Tom and Lindsey decide to continue supporting her future through a university scholarship. María José becomes the first person in her family to go to college and is currently giving back as an English tutor in her community.

**environmental science**

**FINANCIAL ED** after-school

**LitClub** *Learning-by-doing*

**MOBILE LIBRARIES**

computer science **sports**

**LEGOS**

**stimulation**

**MENTORSHIP**

*rural secondary education*

**AGRICULTURE** entrepreneurship

**PARENT WORKSHOPS**

*internships*

**Literacy**

**PLAY** **ENGLISH** *community service*

**school meals**

*productive initiatives*

**reading clubs**

**STEM**

**UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP** **school supplies**

**parent workshops**

**Chapuditos**

*teacher training*

**OpenLearning**

**child sponsorship**

# Literacy, THE FOUNDATION OF ALL learning

UNESCO defines literacy as “a basic cognitive skill that is fundamental for access to decent work.” Recognizing this, in 2016, Fabretto focused on improving literacy of children and adults of all ages in some of the hardest-to-reach communities in Nicaragua.

With basic literacy and numeracy as a starting point, Fabretto beneficiaries are increasingly capable of building even more specialized skill sets, such as digital literacy, financial literacy, and entrepreneurship. Thanks to our donors, in

the past year we have been able to provide Nicaraguan children with the building blocks they need to construct a better future.

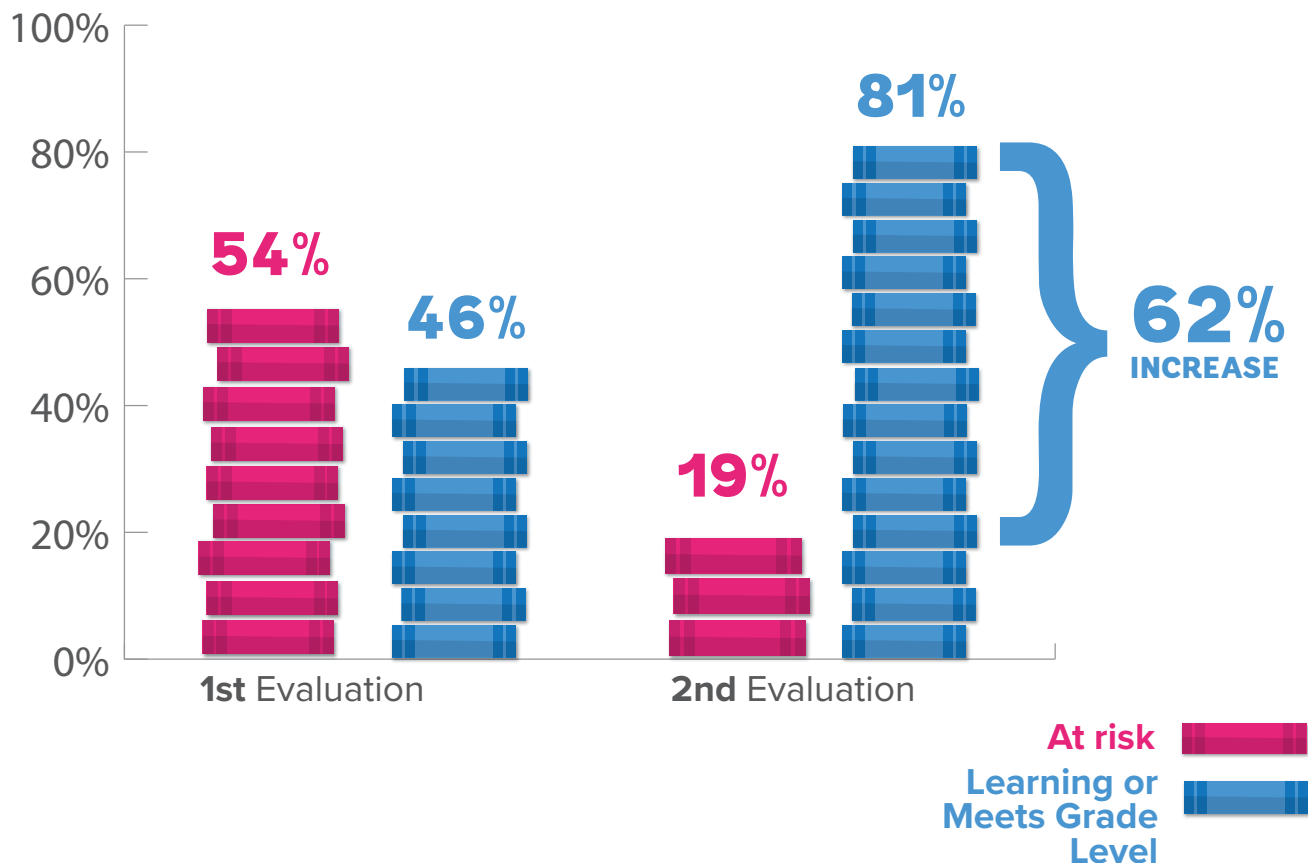
When more people are literate, more people can fulfill their true potentials and lead secure lives; there is more innovation; there are more individuals who can help others in need. When we focus on literacy, we are doing work which naturally builds on itself – we are starting a chain reaction of prosperity and success.





# EGRA

## 2016 Early Grade Reading Assessment (1st to 3rd Grade Student Beneficiaries)



In 2016, Fabretto evaluated students who benefit from the primary enrichment program, at the beginning and end of school year. Results showed a significant reduction in the percentage of at-risk readers, from 54% to 19%.

# CREATING Literate

Illiteracy entraps entire communities in poverty. According to the World Literacy Foundation, in developing countries a child born to an illiterate mother is 50% less likely to survive past age five, and a child raised in a home with at least one illiterate parent is twice as likely to be illiterate.

In 2016, Fabretto targeted regions of Nicaragua where individuals struggle to break the cycle of chronic poverty, and where literacy is yet to be used as a way to contribute to socio-economic development. As a result, entire communities were involved in inclusive, innovative activities that promote an active and broad-based learning process, such as: **Reading Clubs, Mobile Libraries, Parent Workshops, Teacher Training, School Meals**, and more.



*School Meals*



*Reading Clubs*



*Mobile Libraries*



# COMMUNITIES



Parent Workshops

Teacher Training

Padre Fabretto<sup>+</sup>

Our founder, children's benefactor, **Padre Rafael María Fabretto** (1920-1990), was the first to bring literacy to many of the rural communities where Fabretto is now present. With his characteristic creativity, Padre Fabretto was able to eliminate the barriers which prevented many from access to education. The songs and stories he wrote continue to spark the imaginations of many children, young people, and entire communities, cultivating in them a love of reading. Today, we uphold Padre Fabretto's legacy through innovation and strategic alliances to bring quality education to the most underserved areas of Nicaragua.

# Reading Clubs

Thanks to partnerships with organizations like LitWorld, Fabretto is taking literacy to remote Nicaraguan communities through **reading clubs for children, called LitClubs.**

We know that when children read books, they improve their vocabulary and spelling, learn to recognize rules of sentence structure, use their imaginations, gain the ability to concentrate, and even learn about values. Through Fabretto's LitClubs, books will be the doors which open up a better future for Nicaraguan children.

IN 2016

**13,000+**  
**BOOKS DISTRIBUTED**



# The great, little writer

By Diana Corrales

Brenda walked from school while reading “Pinocchio.” Without taking her eyes off the book, she arrived home, a small house made of adobe bricks with colorful flowers contrasting against the arid landscape of her community.

Located on the slope of the northern mountains of Nicaragua, La Jabonera is one of the most isolated communities in the country. It lacks electricity and safe drinking water, and the nearest medical center is over 20 miles away. In this distant community, education seems to have suffered a long delay in arriving. Just four years ago, secondary education was offered in town for the first time through Fabretto’s SAT Program. A single primary school serves all local children like Brenda, a 6th-grade student who is also enrolled in her school’s “LitClub”, a reading club promoted by Fabretto.

“I try to read every day! It’s the only way to improve your reading skills, learn new things, and make sure others don’t fool you,” comments the eloquent student. Brenda has made reading part of her daily routine. Every day she wakes up at 4:30 AM, grinds corn for her mother’s hand-made tortillas, and helps sweep the dirt floor of the house. After breakfast, she goes down the hill to bathe in the river, which has been running low, as drought has struck. When she arrives at school at 7:30 AM, the first thing she does is choose the book of the day – available thanks to a donation Fabretto made to her school – today, Brenda has chosen Pinocchio. Throughout the rest of the week, she’ll be looking forward to LitClub, an activity that has enriched her vocabulary and self-esteem.

At eleven years of age, Brenda already has a clear goal: to be the first in her family to go to college and become a teacher. That is the path narrated in the first story she authored, *The Brave Jose*, which was selected to be included in a children’s storybook published in Nicaragua and Spain thanks to the support of Strachan Foundation and Grupo Planeta. “Here is my name! All of the authors in this book are children like me,” shares the proud writer.





# Parent Workshops

Fabretto focuses on educating parents about the importance of sending children to school every day. We do home visits and enlist “neighborhood advocates” to help explain to parents that their children gain more by learning in school rather than by working. At Fabretto Education Centers, children receive nutritious daily meals, school supplies, and the skills which will lead them to a better life. We also hold workshops that teach parents and community members how to best support their children at home. The workshop themes range from early stimulation strategies, to reading and homework help, to nutrition and food security. By increasing **parent engagement**, we are helping more Nicaraguan children stay in school. Fabretto’s primary schools had a 96% retention rate in 2016. More families are spending time reading together, discussing their children’s futures, and – best of all – taking pride in their children’s academic achievements.



IN 2016  
**1,994**  
PARENTS TRAINED

# “Mom, you too are going to learn to read.”

By María Isabel Sacasa

27-year-old Katis had barely made it to 3rd grade and never even reached reading fluency in school, but this hasn't stopped her from becoming a supermom and an avid reader.

When we met Katis, she wore a beaming smile as she proudly told us about her two sons, Halin (11) and Adrian (7), who are both beneficiaries of Fabretto's education programs in Estelí. She first became involved with Fabretto four years ago when her eldest son started participating in the Primary Education Program. Katis is now one of the most involved parents at this center: she frequently volunteers by helping prepare school meals for the children and by keeping classrooms clean and tidy.

Katis also participates in parent workshops focusing on topics ranging from general parenting tips to learning how to promote reading with the children at home. At one of the workshops, she learned that if she took the time to read with her children and ask them questions, she could not only help them improve their reading

comprehension, she could also use the stories' lessons to teach her children values and discipline.

The mother of two was excited to start teaching her children, but the one thing she didn't see coming, was that, in the process of teaching them, she would end up perfecting her own reading. Halin would encourage her, saying: “Mom, you too are going to learn to read.” Thanks to Fabretto's Traveling Backpack initiative, Katis started to bring books home from the Fabretto Center's library. Through this program, children and their parents are encouraged to take home a backpack filled with books from the library. Whenever she would come home without a book, Katis's son would say: “Mom, here's the book you forgot,” as he pulled out a book from his own backpack.

Inspired by her children and following advice from the parent workshops, little by little, Katis helped her boys with their reading, all while improving her own reading fluency. She started with children's books, and eventually worked her way up to newspapers and magazines. Her next goal: reading an entire age-appropriate book.

Once an illiterate adult with low self esteem, the Katis we had the pleasure of meeting is now a radiant, confident woman who has achieved a great deal of personal development thanks to the power of reading.





# Mobile Libraries

In Nicaragua, books are a luxury. At school, children only have access to books with the standard curriculum; in many rural schools, two or three children must share one textbook. Families can't afford to purchase books for their children, and there are just a handful of public lending libraries in the entire country. Fabretto has devised a way of bringing reading to everyone: **Biblioburros. These are donkey-powered mobile libraries**, which can overcome the rough terrain and lack of paved roads leading to the most remote communities. With donated books and trusty donkeys to carry them, Fabretto is providing the path for educational resources to travel across Nicaragua.

IN 2016

**10** “BIBLIOBURROS”  
IMPLEMENTED

**1,541** CHILDREN  
& PARENTS REACHED





# No matter the journey, no matter the distance

By Diana Corrales

As if anticipating a loved one's arrival, the children anxiously waited for the books to arrive, sitting on the ground under a tree. The whole community gathered to welcome a very special donkey that would bring much-needed books to El Carrizo, Nicaragua. It had made a long 9-mile journey from the Fabretto Center to town.

"Here comes the Biblioburro!" the townspeople cheered, while the Fabretto teacher deftly organized the students in a semicircle. Edwin Padilla and Emma Garcia, two Fabretto educational technicians, had walked the donkey to El Carrizo, carrying a handmade sign which read *"The Biblioburro provides intellectual stimulation to the students of El Carrizo."* The "Biblioburro," a donkey-powered mobile library, is the closest thing to a public library in the 12 communities within Cusmapa's 80 square miles. Here, families live on less than \$2 a day – food is both a priority and a question mark. Storybooks? Merely luxuries most children could never afford.

The Biblioburro project arose from an evident need. *"The terrain is difficult to traverse and vehicles cannot always reach some communities,"* comments Fabretto Education Coordinator, Carlos Mejía. Both children and parents rejoice every time the donkey arrives loaded with storybooks. In fact, through the "Biblioburro," many parents have had the opportunity to read classic storybooks for the very first time. Stories such as Pinocchio, Little Red Riding Hood, and Bambi have helped to cultivate a love of reading throughout rural Cusmapa.

Mejía explains that in order to create literate communities, both children and parents need to have access to books. By working together and with just a little creativity, Fabretto has made it possible to bring books to isolated communities in rural Nicaragua. *"No matter the distance, we will continue to find a way,"* shares Mejía.



# Teacher Training

With the right training, teachers are motivated to become agents of change in their communities. Fabretto **teacher workshops** respond directly to the need for skilled teachers in Nicaraguan underserved areas. Limited access to high schools and economic constraints put rural students at a high risk for dropping out after 6th grade. We work to keep youth in school by placing a special focus on training secondary school teachers who can engage and empower youth.

Moreover, Fabretto trains primary teachers using the “Open Learning” method to promote creativity in the classroom. Teachers are encouraged to use recycled materials, helping the students to develop the necessary tools to “learn how to learn,” and take responsibility for their own learning. Our workshops also focus on spreading knowledge. When a teacher is trained by Fabretto, he or she is prepared to become the best version of themselves and share knowledge with other teachers.



IN 2016

**721**

**TEACHERS TRAINED**



# The Beloved Teacher, Sulema

By Anisha Pai

The cheerful shouts and chatter of the children in the schoolyard are audible as Sulema begins to share her story. Sulema is a teacher at a public elementary school in Cusmapa, who teaches first and second grade students.

Sulema believes that for the students, “the most important thing is to receive the information and put it into practice.” Fabretto has helped Sulema provide her students with the ability to take this crucial step. Thanks to a partnership between Fabretto and the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education (MINED), Sulema has been attending Fabretto’s teacher workshops for the past nine years. Before Fabretto started holding these workshops, none existed for teachers in Cusmapa.

Fabretto’s workshops have taught Sulema how to use hands-on techniques such as Montessori, instead of traditionally standing at the front of the class and lecturing. Sulema tells a story about a time when these strategies proved their efficacy. There was a girl in Sulema’s first grade class who had difficulty

writing vowels. First, Sulema encouraged her to trace the vowels on sandpaper.

Then, Sulema guided the student’s hand as she practiced drawing the vowels in a box of sand. Finally, the girl learned how to write the vowels in her notebook.



In the Fabretto workshops, teachers learn how to recycle materials which they can find in their hometowns to create teaching materials which are used in Montessori schools, like sandpaper and sandboxes. Sulema says “Fabretto helps us [the teachers of Cusmapa] in a very tangible way – I know they are truly on our side.” The best thing is that the techniques from the Fabretto workshops are spreading through the monthly meetings that MINED teachers have in Cusmapa.

A group of students who Sulema had taught a few years ago come running up to their former teacher, and present her with a card. “It is a card for Women’s Day,” explains Sulema. There is pure love in her voice as she praises the beauty of the butterflies and hearts the students have drawn on the card. Sulema says that to be a good teacher, you need enthusiasm. It is clear that she has boundless enthusiasm, and that she will continue to have a great impact on the boys and girls of Cusmapa.





# School Meals

Nutritious meals are the basis for good health, literacy and academic achievement. Fabretto provides daily school lunches to at-risk children in rural Nicaragua. For many of these children, this is their only full meal of the day. Their families struggle to make ends meet and put food on the table. One guaranteed healthy meal each day can make an incredible difference, greatly improving school performance.

Our meals include foods fortified with essential vitamins and minerals, thanks to our partnerships with organizations like the Mathile Institute, Feed My Starving Children, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). In Fabretto kitchens, parent volunteers combine these staples with fresh fruits and veggies from school gardens and other supplemental foods (beans, chicken, dairy products, cereals, and more) to provide a balanced plate to help at-risk children learn and grow.

IN 2016

**817,937**

**SCHOOL MEALS SERVED**



# Rosy-cheeked, Lissenia

By Diana Corrales

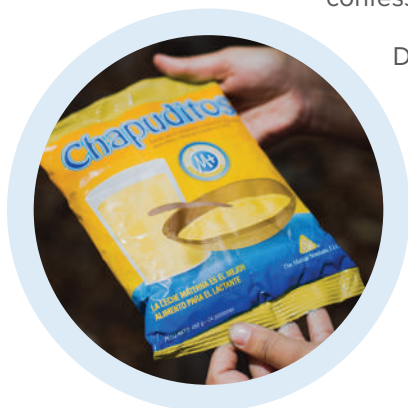
The curtain functioning as the front door of the humble clay brick house fluttered in the wind. Lissenia appeared with a striking yellow bag in her hands – “It’s called Cha-pu-di-tos!” announced the five-year-old, referencing the cereal brand.

Through an alliance between Fabretto and the Mathile Institute, Chapuditos has reached Lissenia’s preschool in Mozonte, Nicaragua, a rural community with high rates of poverty and chronic malnutrition. The cereal contains more than 20 of the vitamins and minerals that children need for their development. Every two weeks, Lissenia’s mother, Deyra, picks up two bags from the school, and prepares the cereal for her daughter and 20 classmates. Deyra is part of a group of volunteer mothers who take turns preparing the nutritious snack, typically complementing it with milk and a touch of cinnamon and cloves. In order to achieve positive results, volunteers have also received training in food hygiene and safety. “Personal hygiene and consumption of clean water is very important in order to prevent children from getting sick... to be honest, before, I didn’t know this kind of information,” confesses Deyra.

Deyra remembers when things in Mozonte were very different. “When I was young, we didn’t get this type of food. We were always tired and often fell asleep in the middle of class! That is why I was so

surprised to see my daughter and her little friends running around the school, full of energy.” Every day, preschoolers in Mozonte receive a glass of cereal, which keeps them alert in class and above all, healthy. At five years old, Lissenia understands the importance of this cereal in her life and that of her classmates. That is why, when it’s her mother’s turn to prepare it, she likes to stand next to her and be the first to try it to ensure that it tastes the way she likes it. “My mom makes Chapuditos better than anyone else!” she says proudly.

Since 2015, Chapuditos, which means healthy, rosy cheeks, has changed the lives of more than 800 children like Lissenia in Nicaragua, guaranteeing their development and a better future.











## Some of OUR PARTNERS

“

*It is with great pride that the Strachan Foundation supports the Fabretto Children's Foundation's reading and writing enrichment programs. The work which Fabretto is doing in rural and hard-to-reach communities is essential in improving the quality of Nicaraguan education.* ”

**MIGUEL TELLO**  
Executive Director,  
Strachan Foundation  
(Costa Rica)



“

*At Tegrta, we believe that knowledge transfer and enablement are key to success. This is why we take a teaching approach when we work with our clients on implementing marketing technology. As the Fabretto marketing team continues to become more proficient with the technology that they use, our success will highlight the work that the Fabretto Foundation is doing and why it is so important -- and that in turn will give more kids a chance to succeed.* ”

**MIKE GELLER**  
CEO,  
Tegrta  
(Toronto, Canada)

**tegrta** : CONSULTING  
: GROUP

“

*Elite SEM was introduced to Fabretto several years ago through Zach Ciperski, one of our employees who was heavily involved in Fabretto and had sponsored several children. Unfortunately, Zach Ciperski passed away and Ben Kirshner, Elite's CEO, decided to honor his memory by building a library. It was very fitting because Zach was an avid reader. The new library and the children of Fabretto have become an important part of Elite SEM. It has helped us to keep the memory of Zach Ciperski alive and continue to support underserved children in Nicaragua.* ”

**ABBY STONE**  
Vice President of Client Operations  
& Media,  
Elite SEM  
(Greater Atlanta Area)



**ELITE SEM**  
Performance Driven Digital Marketing



# Thank You!

A group of children are sitting on the ground outdoors, possibly in a schoolyard or park. In the foreground, a young girl with dark hair tied in a ponytail is sitting cross-legged, wearing a blue and green patterned shirt, and is intently reading a colorful book. Behind her, a large group of other children, mostly of Hispanic descent, are sitting on the ground, some looking towards the camera and others looking away. They are dressed in casual clothing, including white shirts and colorful dresses. The background shows trees and a building, suggesting an outdoor school setting.

We are deeply grateful  
for your contributions.

Please visit our website  
to view a complete list of  
our 2016 donors.

[www.fabretto.org/donors2016](http://www.fabretto.org/donors2016)

# 2016 Financials

## INCOME

**\$5,032,715**  
TOTAL GIVING



**40%** INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS



**27%** FOUNDATIONS & CORPORATIONS

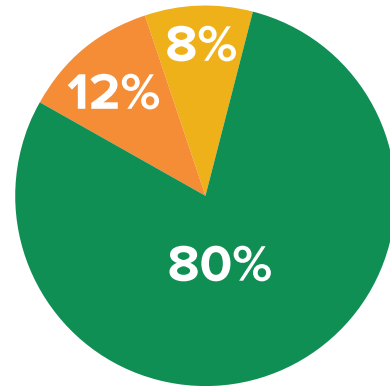


**21%** IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS



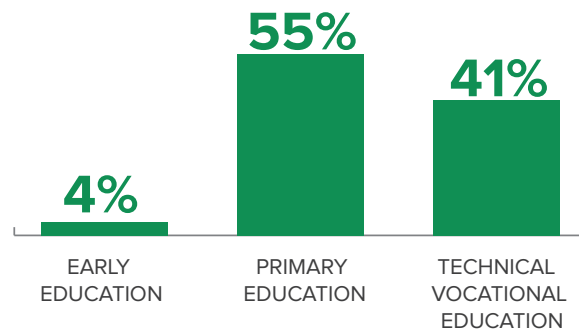
**12%** GOVERNMENT GRANTS

## INVESTMENT



■ PROGRAMS ■ ADMINISTRATIVE ■ FUNDRAISING

## PROGRAMS EXPENSES BREAKDOWN







# PADRE FABRETTO LEGACY SOCIETY

## *Your Legacy - Their Future*

On behalf of Fabretto Children's Foundation, we invite you to consider investing in Fabretto's mission through a legacy gift. Your bequest will help ensure that children in Nicaragua receive support through education, nutrition and community development programs for years to come.



*"For over 25 years, I have been involved with Fabretto Children's Foundation. I have seen up close the measurable progress and the positive impact Fabretto has on the materially poor children of Nicaragua. Although I wish otherwise, I believe that the need for Fabretto's work will continue for generations to come. I want my investment to continue beyond my lifetime, and that is why my estate planning include a bequest to Fabretto's Long Term Investment Fund."*

– Carl Marinacci

Interested in making a legacy gift to ensure that underserved children in Nicaragua receive support through education programs for years to come?

Please contact us at **[info@fabretto.org](mailto:info@fabretto.org)**.



# Fabretto

Fabretto Children's Foundation

TOGETHER, WE ARE  
Creating Literate  
Communities

[www.fabretto.org](http://www.fabretto.org)

