MAYA HEALTH ALLIANCE
WUQU' KAWOQ




**We welcomed scholars and practitioners from around the world, along with leaders from Guatemala, for the International Developmental Pediatrics Association (IDPA) Congress in Guatemala City.**

Dear Friend,

Before sharing our wonderful news below, I wanted to offer an update on the current situation in Guatemala. Earlier this month, President Arévalo declared a 30-day state of emergency following prison riots that led to the deaths of 10 police officers. While there is tension across the country, the primary areas of concern are around Guatemala City and major prisons. We are proceeding with caution, prioritizing the safety of our team and patients and pausing services where necessary. Fortunately, we're able to continue the majority of our health care services as usual, but we are prepared to make more adjustments as needed. The prison riots, instigated by the Barrio 18 gang, are part of a larger movement to destabilize Guatemala and challenge the administration of President Arévalo, a reform-minded leader. For more details and a preview of our plans for 2026, please check out my video message here! Meanwhile, even with a break to enjoy the holidays, it has been a busy few months! Some highlights follow.



**Click the photo for a brief video update from Anne.**

Wishing you all the best for 2026!

Anne Kraemer, CEO

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## CATALYZING CONVERSATIONS ON CHILD DEVELOPMENT




**Maya Health Chief Science Officer Dr. Peter Rohloff and Chief Medical Officer Dr. Waleska López Canú with Guatemala Vice President Dr. Karin Herrera (center).**

We ended 2025 strong, hosting an inspiring International Developmental Pediatrics Association (IDPA) Congress that drew more than 400 people from over 40 countries. We were honored to have the participation of Guatemala's Minister of Health, Dr. Joaquín Barnoya, who gave the welcome address, along with Secretary of Science Gabriela Montenegro, and Vice President Dr. Karin Herrera, who closed the

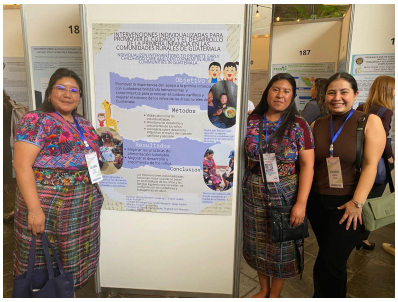
Congress. Meeting for the first time in the Americas, the Congress highlighted the importance of science and equity for all children, with a focus on Indigenous and minority communities.

It was exciting to see our team leading plenaries, panels, and poster sessions – as well as keeping everything running smoothly behind the scenes! Chief Medical Officer Dr. Waleska López Canú received a standing ovation after her keynote speech: "Unequal Childhoods." Dr. Waleska told the truth, our truth, about the struggle to provide humane, quality care to each of our patients, especially children.

Participants reported they left the Congress more engaged and motivated about the future of developmental pediatrics.




**Health Minister Dr. Joaquín Barnoya**



**Team members Lily Aju, Charis Gudiel, and Lesly Olcot**

## EGGS: GOOD BUT NOT ENOUGH

Adding an egg a day to children's diets does not alone significantly improve their growth and development. That's the conclusion of our research team's two-year clinical study of 1,200 indigenous Maya infants funded by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation. The Saqmolo' (Egg) Project compared infants aged 6-9 months who received standard nutrition care (including growth monitoring, complementary and responsive feeding education, deworming medication, multiple micronutrient powders, and referrals for medical care) with those who received the same standard care plus one whole egg per day for six months.

This is the latest in a series of trials exploring the potential benefits of adding eggs, which are among the most affordable and environmentally sustainable animal-sourced proteins, to children's diets to support growth and brain development in low-resource settings during the important first 1,000 days of life. Most studies have reached similar conclusions: eggs and other whole foods are an important part of strategies to support children's growth but they are not sufficient. These results suggest that successful approaches for improving child growth and development require multiple components, from prenatal care for mothers to information and resources to help families support their children's cognitive development.




Click here to read the study published in *The Lancet Regional Health - Americas*.

## THANK YOU, ROTARY!

In a lovely, life-saving surprise, we just received some very generous donations of equipment and supplies that will significantly enhance our work fighting cervical cancer! Rotarians from the Niles Rotary Club of Fremont and Rotary Club of Santa Cruz in Northern California visited our microbiology lab in Santiago Sacatepéquez and left behind game-changing equipment for cervical cancer testing and treatment. These gifts will help us transition to AmpFire, a more affordable and efficient testing process for HPV, the virus that causes cervical cancer. This technology will help us reduce our per-test cost by a remarkable 80%, allowing us to bring screening to thousands more women! The Rotarians also donated portable equipment that our nurses will immediately put to use providing home-based thermal ablation treatments for patients with precancerous cells.

It was a delight to join with new partners and learn from them about strategies being used to fight cervical and breast cancer in low-resource settings worldwide!



**Pictured from left are Manuel Franco of Niles Rotary, Keith McKenzie and Janet Gluch of the Rotary Club of Santa Cruz, Maya Health biochemists Elisa Reyna and Cindy Villalobos, Dr. Richard Godfrey of Niles Rotary, and Maya Health CEO Anne Kraemer.**

## AND THANK *YOU* !

We're thrilled to share that **our 2025 annual campaign was a resounding success**! Thanks to each of you, we met our Board of Directors' unprecedented, wonderfully generous matching goal of $140,000. With the match, we raised a total of $316,568 to propel us into a productive 2026! Our sincere thanks to everyone who participated in the campaign!

Junawäch. Community. Comunidad.



## KEEPING BABIES HEALTHY AND WARM

This SciDev.Net article features our work improving care for newborns to reduce infant deaths. In the rural communities where we work, nearly half of the births take place at home, and families do not always have the information or resources they need to ensure their babies remain healthy in their critical first days. Building on our partnership with Kaqchikel midwives to reduce maternal deaths, our neonatal care program combines home visits, family support, culturally appropriate care and digital technology to identify problems early so that newborns receive timely care.

In support of these efforts, our new partner, Global Newborn Solutions, has donated some Dream Warmers, non-electric infant warmers that support skin-to-skin care for newborns. We can't wait to make these available to families to help keep their babies snug and warm!



## EXPLORING ART AS A TOOL FOR COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Earlier this month, we welcomed researchers from the University of Manitoba to mark the conclusion of the "Democratizing Pandemic Recovery" project. Infectious disease historian Dr. Esyllt Jones led the project, created to document the voices and experiences of marginalized people, especially those in rural Indigenous communities, during and after the Covid-19 pandemic.

A year ago, more than 60 members of our team participated in three days of workshops where they expressed their experiences through words, colors, and brushstrokes. The process allowed them to explore emotions ranging from fear and worry to faith and hope, and to reflect on their personal and community recovery. Their art remains on exhibit at our headquarters in Tecpán.

During the final visit, members of our Center for Indigenous Health Research shared their insights on the impact of our work and our health staff reflected on what they value most about their work. The project has provided an opportunity for the team to explore how art can serve as a tool to communicate messages, share experiences, and strengthen community connections.



## HELP US GET OUT THE WORD!

We love to share our work so that potential supporters will join our community. Help us do that by providing a review on GreatNonProfits. To get started, click here!

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*Thank you so much for your ongoing support!*


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