



# 14th Annual Gala Annual Report 2023 - 2024



Riseandwalkus



Rise and Walk Foundation

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



**Rise and Walk**  
Foundation

"Giving children the childhood they  
deserve today."

# OUR MISSION



**To help underserved children develop their potential while giving them the childhood they deserve today.**

## ABOUT US

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Rise and Walk Foundation Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charitable non-profit organization headquartered in Bridgeport, Connecticut with a branch in Bogotá, Colombia. We seek to inspire children and their families to rise above their vulnerable conditions by providing alternative spaces for children where they can make productive use of their free time, learn valuable skills and develop a guiding sense of purpose.

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# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

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After four years of pandemic challenges, we're thrilled to gather once again in 2024 to celebrate our generous benefactors and the continued success of Rise and Walk Foundation.



In May 2023, my husband and I had the pleasure of visiting the Foundation's headquarters in Colombia. Seeing the children's smiles and hearing parents' heartfelt gratitude for the role we play in their lives was deeply moving and reaffirmed the value of our work. The impact we've had—not only on children and their families but also on businesses, sponsors, and volunteers—has been remarkable.

Your contributions have gone beyond providing school supplies, gifts, and basic necessity. You've empowered women, helped children discover their talents, and promoted values of friendship, learning through play, and mutual support. Even during the pandemic, your generosity allowed us to continue our mission virtually, fostering a true sense of community.

This project is not a family legacy left to us by Hernán Bohórquez, but the collective effort of a community that, with immense generosity, has worked alongside us to create a better world. Thank you for walking this journey with us.

I am deeply grateful for your continued support.

Martha Bohórquez  
President & Co-Founder

# OUR NAME

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Our name was inspired by the teaching of the Gospel of Mark (2:1-12). As the story goes, four people brought a paralyzed man to Jesus, but could not get through because of the crowd. Determined to bring him forward, the four people made an opening on the roof above Jesus and lowered the mat the man was lying on. Jesus healed him by saying “Rise, take your mat and Walk”. It is our mission to help others rise above their difficulties and limitations and walk on their own.



# OUR HISTORY

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In 1998, while Hernan Bohorquez was leading a youth group called Talitha Kum in Barrio Minuto de Dios in Bogota, a very needy family came to their group meeting. Realizing that this family lived in makeshift house made of metal and cardboard, a group leader named Luz Dary Lopez took the initiative to help them. Inspired by the teachings of the Gospel, the youth group came together and helped build a foundation of a prefabricated house, constructed frames and finishes and bought furniture to complete the project. This was the first great achievement of what would become Rise and Walk Foundation.

In 2000, Hernan Bohorquez moved to the United States where he continued to support the work of the youth group, Talitha Kum. In 2006, through joint efforts the project became a charitable nonprofit organization in the United States with a branch in Bogotá, under the name Rise and Walk Foundation Inc. / Fundación Levante y Anda. Since 1998, hundreds of people have benefited from the generosity and the work of our benefactors and volunteers who started as a small group of people that wanted to enact change.

# OUR BENEFICIARIES



60 children (ages 5-15) who join our programs daily Monday-Sunday

45 families who receive need-based support & assistance

15 youths (age 14-18) who attend photography workshops every Friday

Over the last 13 years of service we have touched the lives of more than 350 families and 500 children.

# OUR VALUES

- Rise and Walk Foundation is rooted in the Gospel values - especially love, compassion, service and solidarity.
- We promote an organizational culture that respects and embraces people of all races, gender, religion, culture, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical abilities, age, parental status, and socio-economics levels.

LOVE   
COMPASSION  
SERVICE  
SOLIDARITY

# YOU MAKE IT ALL POSSIBLE!

Thanks to the support of our benefactors in the USA, we distributed school supplies and Christmas gifts to every children of the Foundation in 2023.

During the 2023 Holiday Season, thanks to the heartfelt efforts of Araseliz Fernandez and everyone who donated clothes and toys for each child, we made Christmas dreams come true!



In 2023 and 2024, with the help of sponsors in Colombia, each child received school supplies to support them in the new school year.



# OUR PROGRAMS

The Foundation is open daily from 3:00 p.m.- 6:00 p.m, Monday to Friday. The children are divided into groups, based on age, and have a schedule that allows them to participate in our various art and academic programs.

## THE ARTS

Theatre

Music

Dance

Art

Photography





# Academic Program

-Homework Support

-Dedicated Tutoring



## RECREATIONAL PROGRAM

Our recreational programs are geared on promoting learning, relaxation, and discovering new interests, all while nurturing cultural appreciation and creativity in the children.

This year, the children benefited from:

- PARK VISITS
- TRIPS TO THE MOVIE THEATRE
- MUSEUM VISITS
- BIRTHDAY PARTIES
- CHILDREN'S DAY CELEBRATION
- SUMMER CAMP
- HOLIDAY PARTIES



# The Homework Assistance Program

## #TOGETHERFOREducation

We firmly believe that education is the path to transforming the lives of all children. That's why, for several years, the Homework Support Program has been one of the foundation's most essential initiatives.

On a daily basis, each child receives a dedicated hour to complete their homework with the guidance of volunteers and teachers, ensuring they receive the support they need to succeed.



# OUR VOLUNTEERS IN COLOMBIA

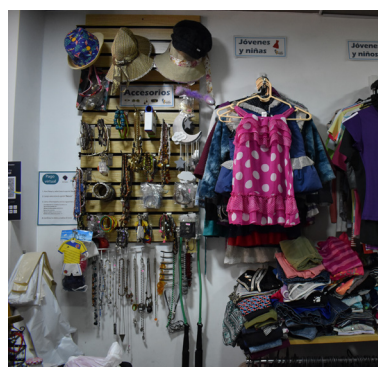
Since 2023, more than 20 volunteers have generously contributed their time to our activities and meaningfully impacted the lives of the families of the Foundation.

Our work would not be possible without their unwavering support, and we are deeply grateful for their kindness, hard work, and dedication.



# MAKING AN IMPACT THRIFT SHOP

Thanks to the generosity of our donors in the United States, our Thrift Shop has become a staple in our community, providing high-quality clothing at affordable prices, while also creating meaningful job opportunities for two mothers from the Foundation.



# OUR URBAN GARDEN

This year, the Bogotá Botanical Garden supported our gardening program. The children has access to eight workshops where they learned about planting, caring for, and propagating plants.



# BETTER TOGETHER

In May 2023, we received a very special visit. Martha Bohórquez and Edgar Bernal, members of the Foundation's board of directors, visited our headquarters and spent a day with the families, children, and teachers.



# PHOTOGRAPHY FOR YOUNG ADULTS

In July 2023, we hosted a three-month photography workshop for adolescents, teaching them both the theory and the techniques of photography. The goal of this program was to make photography a creative tool and to help participants see the world differently and connect with others.

Each of the 8 participants in the program greatly improved their skills over the course of the program.



# BINGO 2023

Thanks to 30+ volunteers in Colombia, we hosted a very successful Bingo event in 2023. The event included prizes, raffles, music, and delicious traditional Colombian food. The children also had the opportunity to perform a dance for the guests.





# SOCCKER AROUND THE WORLD

Stephen Schirra, founder and director of Around The World, visited our Foundation in September 2023 to host a soccer workshop for the children. For many years, Stephen has used soccer as a powerful tool for building discipline, teamwork, and promoting good health in communities across the globe.



# THE POWER OF MUSIC

Several children from the Foundation participated in a musical production organized by Mushaisa, a consulting company that has also generously donated musical instruments to the foundation.

Through the generous efforts of Mushaisa, many children of the Foundation will also be invited to attend a Christmas show in December put together by Colombia's oldest and most prestigious musical company Misi.



# CELEBRATE TOGETHER!

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With the support of Connect Assistance Colombia, we hosted a costume party for the children of the foundation. The day was filled with fun crafts, delicious snacks and the making of many new memories!



# STRATEGIC GAME OF CHESS

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The local government of Barrios Unidos provided chess workshops to the children of the foundation throughout October and November. These classes are part of a partnership between Rise and Walk, the IDRD (Institute for Recreation and Sport) and the local government. These workshops encourage children to develop new skills and explore different opportunities in new learning environments.



# MERAKI, CUENTOS JUGADOS



We would like to sincerely thank Meraki, Cuentos Jugados, for bringing a puppet show to the children of the foundation. Their enthusiasm and dedication turned an ordinary afternoon into a joyful experience filled with play and creativity.



# UNIVERSIDAD DE LOS ANDES

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## #TOGETHERFOREDCATION

Uniandes Invited the Children from the Foundation to Explore Their Campus!

In April, the children were invited to visit the Universidad de los Andes, recognized as the best university in Colombia. The children were warmly welcomed and invited to immerse themselves in a world of knowledge at the General Library Ramón de Zubiría. The adventure continued in the fascinating Movement Laboratory, where they explored the secrets of animation under the guidance of experts in the field.





# CELEBRATING THE JOYS OF CHILDHOOD

Our Friends from Life 96 generously spent time with the children of the foundation in celebration of Children's Day. The kids enjoyed an entire afternoon filled with games, dancing, music, and fun.



# NUTRITION AND WELLNESS WORKSHOP

In March, the children of Rise and Walk had a unique and fun opportunity to learn about nutrition and healthy habits, thanks to a workshop organized by the Subred Norte group. Through the magic of theater, the children were entertained while learning about the importance of healthy eating habits.





# LET'S TALK ABOUT OUR DREAMS

Our friends from Kushki and GOSH - Brand experiences inspired the children of the foundation with a workshop that focused on the importance of believing in themselves and pushing through adversity to reach a goal.



# BINGO 2024!

We are excited to share that our 2024 Bingo, hosted by the team in Colombia, was a resounding success.

The turnout to this event far exceeded our expectations. We continue to ramp up our fundraising efforts in Colombia.



# FINANCIAL REPORT

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STAY TUNED...COMING SOON!

STAY TUNED...COMING SOON!

# WHO WE ARE



## Hernán Bohórquez / Founder:

Hernán was the founder and president of the Board of Directors of Rise and Walk Foundation. He held two Bachelor's Degrees in Theology and Systems Engineering, and a Master of Arts from Fordham University. Hernan dedicated his life to providing love and support to those who needed it most both through his work with Rise and Walk and Alpha Community Center-YMCA.

## Board of Directors



## Martha Bernal President / Co-Founder

Martha is a Certified Public Accountant from the Externado de Colombia University. She also holds a certification in taxes in the United States. In 2004, in partnership with her husband Edgar, she started Contaccount LLC, a company offering services in accounting, finances and taxes.



## Francisco Middleton Co-Founder

Francisco has over 30 years of international experience in general management, marketing, engineering and VLSI production, Francisco is currently a Managing Partner at Renoir Asset Management. He received a B.S. from the National Polytechnic Institute in Mexico City. Francisco volunteers with his wife, Rosa, at St. Rose of Lima Parish in Newtown CT.



## Tatiana Anduckia Vice President

Tatiana received a dual Bachelor's Degree in Sociology and Latin American and Caribbean Studies from SUNY University of Binghamton. She also has a BSN from SCSU and currently works as a Registered Nurse in Hospital of Central Connecticut and at the Endoscopy Center of CT. She has been a volunteer and active member of Rise and Walk since its incorporation in the United States.



### Edgar Bernal Treasurer

Edgar is a professional in international relations of the University Jorge Tadeo Lozano and broadcaster and producer of radio and television of the Superior College of Communications. Alongside his wife, Martha, he is an owner of Contaccount LLC, a company that offers accounting, finance and tax service. He has been a volunteer and active member of the foundation since its incorporation.



### Juliana Anduckia Officer

Juliana Anduckia studied at Fairfield University and has professional experience in accounting technology. Over the last 8 years, she has worked for multiple financial technology startups as a consultant for spend and procurement management. Currently, she works as an Airbase Technical Program Manager at Paylocity.

Juliana has been an active volunteer with Rise and Walk Foundation since 2009.



### Manuela Contreras Officer

Manuela Contreras is a business and leadership alignment consultant, holistic coach, and facilitator with a passion for integrating racial equity and trauma-informed practices into modern leadership models. Through her work with Con Fuerza Experiences, she empowers social impact leaders to reimagine leadership, balancing personal well-being with community impact. With experience in both corporate and non-profit sectors, Manuela is dedicated to fostering transformative change through holistic, sustainable solutions.

# Advisory Board



**Delma Bernal**

Delma completed a Bilingual Secretariat Program at the Colombo-American Center and earned her degree in International Relations and Diplomacy from Jorge Tadeo Lozano University. She worked at the United States Embassy for 30 years and retired from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Currently, Delma is pursuing a Master's in Theology at Universidad de la Sabana in Chía, Colombia.



**Carlos Hernández**

Carlos is a specialist in change management and building criteria for disruptive thinking: change, transformation, and innovation. He has over 15 years of experience in leading commercial teams and managing productive initiatives. Currently, he is postgraduate lecturer in commercial leadership, productivity in remote teams, coaching for commercial teams, and burnout management.



**Katia Greco**

Katia has a degree in Biology and is specialist in Education Management. She lived in Bogota for three years - from 2017 to 2020 - and during this time, she joined our foundation as a volunteer, working in the fundraising for the implementation of the Nutrition project and the Community vegetable-garden project. Nowadays she lives in Brazil, her home country, where she teaches Spanish, works as a preschool teacher and is still connected with us virtually.



**Amparo Bohórquez Rincón**

Amparo Bohorquez Rincon has worked for various well-known organizations in Colombia. Her area of expertise is project management and organization of community projects. She is committed to promoting the rights of children through non-profit work.



**Carolina Jiménez**

Carolina Jiménez studied business administration at Universidad de los Andes in Colombia. She was the director of Rise and Walk in Colombia for 5 years, successfully leading various programs.

# The Administrative Team



**Luz Dary Lopez**  
Administrative Assistant



**Lina Osorio Arteaga**  
Accountant



**Yasser Puentes Mendoza**  
Communication  
Coordinator



**Johanna Mojica Sánchez**  
Program and Project  
Coordinator



**Andrea Piracoca**  
Educationalist



# Our Teachers

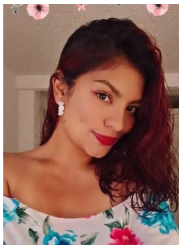
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**Soraya Aguirre**  
Art Teacher



**Daniel Ubaque Garzon**  
Music Teacher



**Nathalia Cadena**  
Dance Teacher



**Dario Muñoz**  
Theatre Teacher

# HOW CAN YOU HELP?

## SPONSOR A DREAM

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Collaborate with us to help our children and their families have opportunities to dream, grow, and develop by committing to donate US \$25 monthly as part of our annual sponsorship programs. Our kids love knowing that they have people around the world committed to their success and will thank you with annual gifts and occasional letters. Recuring donations are best managed online from our webpage donate button ([https://donorbox.org/rwf\\_sponsor](https://donorbox.org/rwf_sponsor)). Checks can also be made payable to Rise and Walk Foundation and sent to 971 Fairfield Ave Bridgeport, CT 06605.

## VOLUNTEER

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It is generosity at its best! It is giving without expecting anything in return and working together to enact positive change. We invite you to be part of the work of the foundation by visiting the center on our annual mission trip, assisting with fundraising efforts, or offering your expert advice on how we can better meet the needs of our beneficiaries.

## DONATE

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Your contribution allows us to continue providing a space where children and adolescents can have the childhood they deserve and guarantee bright teachers committed to keeping our children stimulated and engaged. Money or in-kind donations go a long way in supporting our programs and projects.

# OUR 2024 GALA SPONSORS

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:



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Foundation**

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