



Living into a Dream

The name *Adelante Mujer* in English means “Advance Woman.” To Sister Ann McKean, Ph.D., it represents a dream she has to join her passion for higher education with her commitment to the advancement of young women.

“While teaching at Christian Brothers University in Memphis, Tennessee, I spent a number of years during our Christmas break teaching theology in Nicaragua to CSA sisters, associates and other Nicaraguans. While teaching in Bluefields, Nicaragua, I met a young woman named Elizabeth who had graduated at the top of her high school class. Elizabeth wanted desperately to go to college but she had no financial means to do so even though the tuition at the university was only \$300 a semester. I was astonished that, for such a small amount of money, this very bright, articulate, responsible young woman could not follow her dream,” said Sister Ann.

“For the sessions I taught in Nicaragua that Christmas season I was given \$400. On my way back to resume classes at Christian Brothers University, it came to me. That \$400 would more than pay for Elizabeth’s first semester of college, and I believed somehow I would find a way to support her education,” shared Sister Ann.

Since that moment Sister Ann, with the help of other interested Sisters of St. Agnes in the United States and Nicaragua, along with one CSA associate, achieved approval by the congregation for the program. As director of *Adelante Mujer*, she is now hard at work helping the advancement of young Nicaraguan women to achieve their dream of higher education in Nicaragua. “This is a new ministry of the Sisters of Saint Agnes. Its focus is to provide university scholarships for young women who wish to attend URRACAN University in Puerto Cabezas but who cannot afford the cost of tuition or supplies. Each approved applicant receives a four-year tuition scholarship. In return she must maintain her grades and volunteer five hours a week at her former high school. Sister Ann was again taken aback when a professor who teaches students at URRACAN shared that many of the students come to class having only one meal a day. The professor asked Sister Ann if perhaps a small amount of money might also be provided so the student could purchase something to eat while at the university. Sister Ann readily agreed.

“My dream is that five years from now we will have been able to find ways to support up to 20 women in making their dreams of getting an education come true. I obviously have work to do to make this happen, but I know this is also God’s dream and hopefully the generosity of others will make this possible,” concluded Sister Ann.

<http://www.women-advance.com> Adelante Mujer’s web site