

The Chiapas Photography Project

San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, México

UPDATE October 2004

Dear friends, once again we thank you for your support and interest in our work here in Chiapas. As you know, the very modest beginnings in 1992 have resulted in two institutions:

- The Indigenous Photography Archive/*Archivo Fotográfico Indígena* (AFI), begun in 1996, houses the work of over 200 photographers from ten different ethnic groups, supported by a full-time staff of indigenous men and women photographers, and represented in publications, exhibitions and public activities in both Mexico and abroad. The Ford Foundation has been key in CPP's development since 1995 and naturally, yet regrettably their support will end in 2006.
- Lok'tamayach/Mayan Photographers from Chiapas, is an independent organization begun in 2002 that provides members with an autonomous space to learn and further develop their photographic work. Lok'tamayach is developing well. It works in collaboration with AFI to carry out the training program and over the last year provided several workshops. Presently, it is sponsoring a photo contest for its members.

Scholarship Program: The scholarship program, funded by your donations, is now managed by Lok'tamayach and this year provides 16 young men and women with the opportunity to attend middle and high school and has three students studying at the university level.

Loan Fund: Donations have made it possible for Lok'tamayach to establish a loan fund/credit union for its members. The 3% interest rate is helping the fund to grow and the members have agreed that some of the interest income be used for program needs.

A MAJOR NEW DEVELOPMENT: an ENDOWMENT

We are pleased to announce that in order to establish an endowment-like fund for the future of Lok'tamayach and AFI we have formed a partnership with the

Maya Educational Foundation (MEF, www.mayaedufound.org). The Mission of MEF is to: support educational and professional advancement of individual Maya young people, assist in the development and enrichment of the Maya and other indigenous cultures of Mexico and Central America, advance the understanding of these cultures and the broader societies and nation-states in which they exist and provide support for publications and public dissemination of information.

Your donation to CPP this year will go toward this fund, some of which will be immediately available for the needs of Lok'tamayach. As the fund grows, it will function as a sort of small foundation to which Lok'tamayach and AFI will apply and be accountable, thus providing the photographers with experience in soliciting and managing grants for its activities. Any amount that you donate helps the photographers, as well as their families and their communities.

- Lok'tamayach continues to need more automatic and manual 35 mm cameras in good working condition. To make an equipment donation, contact Alison Abbott: abbott_alison@hotmail.com.
- Check out our updated website at www.chiapasphoto.org - our books can now be ordered!
- A special thank you to my religious order the Society of the Sacred Heart for receiving donations since 1992, facilitating our transition towards an endowment, and its continued interest in our work.

Your support has fostered all of these achievements. We thank you for your generosity and interest in our work and your part in our future.

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**Use the enclosed form to make your tax deductible donation by
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