



### **The “Star” of A STARFISH Story Making a Difference One Child at a Time...**

#### **Supporting the Health and Education Needs of Children in Nicaragua**

In the summer of 2007, Maria Jose Chinchilla Medrano, was introduced to the CHES project through Manuel Marengo, the CHES Community Facilitator, during his work at Osneida School in Villa El Carmen. Maria Jose needed medical attention for her physical condition. Her mother reached out to Manuel and the CHES project to see if we could help get her daughter a medical examination and evaluation. With the help of the Tiscapa Rotary Club to support a doctor’s evaluation it was determined that corrective shoes could be of help to her. The shoes were purchased by the Rotary Club and worn for several months by Maria Jose.

In partnership with innerCHANGE CHES Nicaragua, Robert Morris University School of Nursing from Pittsburgh made a medical mission trip to Nicaragua in November of 2007 and met Maria Jose at her school to evaluate her condition as well. Dr. Carl Ross and the nursing students provided funding for further medical support for the next months until her diagnosis could be determined by the hospital in Managua. Maria Jose has been tentatively diagnosed by the Children’s Hospital in Managua with rickets and treated with medications to build up her bone structure.

In November of 2008, Robert Morris University School of Nursing made their second medical mission to work in our CHES schools. Dr. Ross and the CHES staff met with the Director of Children’s Hospital in Managua to discuss Maria Jose’s diagnosis and next steps. In February of 2009, Maria Jose will be evaluated at the Children’s Hospital to explore the possibility of genetic disorders that may change the course of her treatment.

Just as Elkin, from Calle Nueve School, was identified in 2006 and received medical care in 2007 (please check [www.chesnicaragua.com](http://www.chesnicaragua.com) to read the Elkin story), Maria Jose will be supported by our CHES project. The innerCHANGE CHES community development model is designed to work through partnerships with academic and healthcare institutions to find and coordinate the care necessary to open a door to a future that Maria Jose may not otherwise have in front of her.

If you would like to participate in any way with this child in Villa El Carmen, please send us a message and we’ll be very happy to connect you with our work and this little girl from Osneida School in Nicaragua.