



# FRIENDS OF ALALAY (SANTA CRUZ)

Registered charity no. 1123425

## AUTUMN/WINTER 2015 NEWSLETTER

In my last newsletter I talked a little about the vocational training activities and progress of a number of the adolescent boys at Alalay, and in this edition I've decided to give some detail about our girls. Vocational training is a critical part of the work that we support and we are currently funding the training of fourteen children. There clearly would be little point in educating and caring for them if, when they were getting closer to leaving Alalay, they weren't also equipped for useful and satisfying work. Alalay also works hard to get them fully prepared for independence when they are ready – ensuring they finish their schooling and vocational training, helping them open a bank account, find a flat and buy life essentials such as a bed and cutlery! Here are some of our current students:



Daniela

Daniela came from a very unhappy childhood, much of the time left on her own until neighbours encouraged her father to send her to Alalay. She is on a dressmaking course, which she greatly enjoys.

Maria was born onto the streets and spent much of her young life there, before coming to Alalay. She started a nursing course but found it was not what she expected. She has transferred to an executive secretary course – with which she is much happier



Maria



Marizel

Marizel's parents separated when she was very young and she was brought up initially by her grandparents, until they couldn't cope. She is on a very popular beauty and hairdressing course.

Matilde had never really known any family life until she came to Alalay. She is now enrolled on a catering course and is progressing rapidly.



Matilde

As many of you are aware, I arrange for a number of British and other volunteers to visit and work with the street children. We usually ask that in addition to more general skills, volunteers have a particular passion to which they would like to introduce the children – these have ranged from dance, rugby, art, craft work, music, teaching English, first aid and so on.

Recently, after being contacted by a local government politician from London, I arranged for him to visit and talk with the children about politics, democracy, the role and relevance of politicians and the importance of taking individual responsibility for shaping the local and wider world. The visit was a great success and here's a brief extract from a note that I've just received from him:

*"I left Alalay with a far greater understanding of some of the challenges facing young children in Bolivia, as well as an appreciation of the different solutions possible [...] these include nurturing a sense of belonging, feeling part of a wider community and developing the skills to support themselves later in life [...] some of the universal values of childhood.*



*I will take these lessons and experiences back to my political work in the UK and do what I can to both raise the profile of Alalay and to continue my work to support children facing difficult circumstances around the world. I hope that this is the start of an enduring and constructive relationship between the area I represent in the UK and the children in Santa Cruz".*

As always, comments such as these remind me of the great importance of the work of Alalay!

Annie Syrett, Eastern Ukraine – November 2015

[www.alalay.co.uk](http://www.alalay.co.uk)