

# **Family Hope Center offers supportive community**

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OAXACA, Mexico—The first time Librada Cortez Martinez stepped into the Buckner Family Hope Center in Oaxaca, Mexico, she thought only about her children.

She had seen the impact the Family Hope Center had on the children in her community as they benefitted from the classes and activities, and she wanted her teenage daughters to be involved. She never imagined the Family Hope Center would become such an important resource for her entire family.

Her daughters started taking classes at the Family Hope Center, but she learned she also could participate in classes. Martinez took her first class—learning how to make baskets and vases out of paper mache—then she took another class and another. Before she knew it, she and her family were immersed in their new community.

## **Center became extended family**



Librada Cortez Martinez shows her young daughter plants growing in the garden. (Photo / Aimee Freston / Buckner International)

At the Family Hope Center, the family received shoes and school supplies, they participated in health campaigns and received parent education. The Family Hope Center became an extension of their home—a second family.

“What I enjoy the most at Buckner is the camaraderie among all the people that attend the center,” Martinez said. “We all get together for the workshops, and we have a great sense of community.”

The support of the Family Hope Center became even more valuable a year later when her husband, Florentino Hernandez Pacheco, was involved in a motorcycle accident and was in a coma.

Pregnant with her third daughter, Martinez was scared.

“I was very afraid and sad,” she said. “I was afraid of losing him, and my daughters cried constantly for their father.”

## **Finding emotional support**

She knew without her husband, their family would suffer financially and emotionally. Staff from the Family Hope Center stayed with their family.

They provided emotional support and provided them with assistance while Pacheco was hospitalized.

He awoke from his coma after 18 days and was able to recovery fully with no lasting effects from the injury.

“Thank God my husband is now OK, and we are all healthy,” Martinez said. “He is now able to work, and he works in a building materials supply store.”

Martinez embraced the Family Hope Center even more than she did before. The couple began the family coaching program that helped them identify financial, emotional and spiritual goals for their family.

## **From isolation to leadership**

Martinez took classes in cooking and crafts and began supplementing their income by selling the products she learned how to make at the classes.

“Before coming to the center, I used to spend my time at home,” she said. “I didn’t socialize much. I didn’t know a lot of people in the community, because I would just spend my days at home. Now it is different. What I learned from the classes, I put it into practice, and Buckner has helped me improve our family finances.”

Six years later, Martinez is a leader in her community. She is one of the most active volunteers at the Family Hope Center, and she teaches some of the cooking classes to other women there.

“I enjoy volunteering at the Family Hope Center, because I like to support other ladies like me and teach them what I know,” she said.

# Hope for the future

The Family Hope Center also has allowed her daughters to find hope. They play soccer, help their mother in the garden and excel in their studies. Her oldest daughter recently received a scholarship. As she draws in her notebook, she dreams about her future.

Every Sunday, the family makes sure to carve a bit of time to do something together. Often, they go to a park to eat a picnic lunch, play games and talk.

“Buckner has helped me in many ways,” Martinez said. “And my family has benefitted. At Buckner, I feel good.”