



The Astra Foundation

BY PEDRO BENITEZ-CRESPO

“Fundación Astra” is an up-and-coming, innovative medical charity whose mission is to provide free healthcare and preventive health services to communities in need all over the southern state of Baja California. With the support of local and international doctors, nurses and paramedics, the foundation offers essential care to those people who require it the most.

“Fundación Astra” was conceived when the president of The Terma Foundation (www.terma.org), Dr. Nancy Harris, met a group of highly motivated and idealistic local professionals who shared the common goal of supporting poor families excluded from the Baja California Sur health system.

The Terma Foundation is

a California-based non-profit organization that promotes and develops culturally appropriate community health programs in underserved populations. Since 1999, The Terma Foundation has been reaching indigenous communities in Tibet, Brazil and Myanmar (Burma) with services related to infectious and chronic diseases and nutrition.

Fundación Astra started in 2018 as a coalition of Mexican and international professionals who are committed to achieving a holistic and sustainable effort to address the emerging health challenges of the vulnerable communities of Baja California Sur.

With a population north of 800,000 people, the state of Baja California Sur is a place where

nearly one-fifth of its residents live below the poverty line – and a smaller percentage of that live below the extreme poverty line. These families are usually left out of meaningful healthcare systems, exposing them to a healthcare crisis nearly invisible to the casual observer.

Mexico also faces a growing epidemic of chronic diseases. Today, its three main causes of death are cardiovascular diseases (heart-related), diabetes (mainly due to being overweight) and malignant tumors. On a different note, for the past three years, COVID-19-related deaths have been among the top four causes of death in this country!

To make matters worse, violence, dysfunctional families, an increase in drug use, the high rate of teenage pregnancy and low self-esteem place additional pressure on families and the health system in this country.

Seventeen percent of residents in Baja California Sur do not have access to medical services and forty-one percent of patients who get attention from Fundación Astra have no access at all to any kind of health insurance!

Through innovative and culturally adapted programs, Fundación Astra addresses three main areas: primary healthcare, mental health and nutritional therapy.

As a holistic health center, Fundación Astra views the community’s well-being as more than what happens within

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a clinic, so the field team visits marginalized communities in the municipalities of Los Cabos, Comondú, and La Paz to offer preventive general medicine, primary care, psychological support, nutrition counseling, dental services, acupuncture, meditation, yoga, and women’s peer support groups. Patients can also attend educational workshops about nutrition, breast cancer, domestic violence, self-defence, herbal and traditional treatment, as well

as healthy traditional cooking. Throughout the year, the community clinic, located at the corner of Alfredo V Bonfil and calle 7, in the neighborhood of “Ampliación El Centenario”, outside the city of La Paz, also has events for children where they can learn about positive nutritional choices within their budget constraints and within their circumstances.

In 2022 alone, Fundación Astra offered more than 1,000 medical consultations to over 330 patients onsite (at the clinic) and distributed long-term vitamin supplements to more than 1,370 children in rural areas.

In terms of food instability, Fundación Astra distributed pantry bags (despensas) to more than 1,000 families, assisting more than 5,500 people living with food insecurity. They have also taught basic health principles of infection control and nutrition to over 600 community health influencers during the pandemic.

Last year alone, 3,800 people

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sion. The buyers keep looking at other properties while watching the seller's property continuously sit on the market. This encourages buyers to wait for a price reduction because

they have no call to action.

We know that no two properties and no two clients are the same. The idea is to work closely with the customer to understand their situation, their wants and needs when advertising a property as well as how much or how little they want to be communicated with

and by which method.

The idea is to implement a true fiduciary service, together with marketing strategies to best fit any given property at any given time in order to ensure all opportunities are being explored, displaying full transparency of the process and aligning incentives. ✨

THE ASTRA FOUNDATION...

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directly benefited from the services and programs provided by Fundación Astra and since its inception in 2018, has reached over 9,000 direct beneficiaries.

Astra Foundation's pro-

grams operate with strong passion and professionalism, yet with modest financial support. Sadly, as we all know, resources are limited and currently not enough to tackle this big issue that afflicts our community.

If you would like to support this great initiative, we strongly encourage everyone to log on to their web page <https://fundacionastrapa.org/> as well as like and share Fundación Astra's content on Facebook (www.facebook.com/astrafundacion), volunteer your time at the clinic or at an event, and send a cash donation through Pay Pal (www.paypal.me/fundacionastrapa) to enable them in the purchase of supplies for people in need.

United States, Canadian and Mexican taxpayers can receive a tax deduction letter as Fundación Astra is an accredited charity in the three countries. All money and resources donated go directly to support the vulnerable population of Baja California Sur.

Moreover, I invite everyone to shoot Fundación Astra an e-mail at fundacionastrapa@gmail.com or give them a call to +52 612 232 3444 so you can set an appointment and see how you can be of help.

Here are some examples of the impact your donation will have:

- US\$10 provides dental hygiene products for 3 children
- US\$20 provides the consumables needed to provide dental screenings to 3 children
- US\$25 supports a family of 4 for 15-days' worth of groceries
- US\$50 ensures a patient with diabetes gets the equipment and treatment that he/she needs
- US\$100 provides a monthly supply of multivitamins for 25 children
- US\$500 ensures that 25 women and 25 children get nutrition education

And remember that you have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you, because no one is useless in this world who lightens the burden of it to someone else. ✨

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