

ANNUAL REPORT

2025/2026



Report on activities and finances
from August 1, 2025 to July 31, 2026

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ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

CANFRO ANNUAL REPORT | 03

"Juntos andamos, juntos llegamos"

(Together we walk, together we arrive)

I am delighted to share with you the results of what happens when the generosity of Canadians fuels the efforts of the Oaxaqueños delivering CANFRO's projects.

Several significant thresholds were crossed during CANFRO'S past fiscal year. Annual contributions from individuals and foundations exceeded the \$100,000 mark for the first time. New grants were received from The Harrison Cooper Foundation in Alberta and the Campbell Webster Foundation on Prince Edward Island, along with an increased grant from the RR Smith Memorial Fund Foundation in British Columbia. CANFRO also received its second Legacy Gift, the Andrea and Page Fairchild Memorial Fund.

This outpouring of generosity from new sources and long-term supporters has enabled the renewal of the agency agreements with CANFRO's five Oaxacan partners, ensuring that our projects will continue to improve the lives of children, youth and their families in Oaxaca. The positive impact of each project can be measured by the many success stories shared with us throughout the year. Thank you for the part you play in this endeavour.



SANDRA THOMSON

President / October 2026

CANFRO'S 2025/26 BOARD MEMBERS & COORDINATOR



Left to right: Laurie Thompson, Coordinator; Jo-Anne Vandierendonck, Secretary; Penny Hopkins, Vice President Finance; Sandra Thomson, President Michael Shea, Communications; Barbara Royce-Payne (not pictured), Treasurer

PASS IT FORWARD

A STORY OF COLLABORATION

CANFRO ANNUAL REPORT | 04

This year's Annual Report profiles a young Oaxaqueñan whose trajectory has been boosted by three different CANFRO partner agencies, demonstrating the strength that comes from braiding separate strands of support. Karen Cuenca was a scholarship recipient through Fondo Guadalupe Musalem, (FGM). After graduating from university, Karen started working at the Biblioteca Semillas de Aprendizaje (Seeds of Learning). This new library is a product of a collaboration between CANFRO partners Libros Para Pueblos (LpP) and the Centro de Aprendizaje (The Oaxaca Learning Centre). TOLC and LpP joined forces to open a dedicated library at TOLC in early July 2026, with a full range of programs and activities. As Library Coordinator, Karen recently gave a reading circle workshop to the current generation of becarias (scholarship holders) at FGM, completing a full circle of enrichment and support for Oaxaca youth.

Karen comes from San Miguel Ahuehuetitlán, located in the Mixteca Baja region. Her home town is seven hours away, over mountainous roads, from the city of Oaxaca. As a promising student, she was encouraged to apply and was accepted to the scholarship program at FGM, which supported her through high school (2017-2020) and university (2021-2024). She studied at the prestigious UNAM'S Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, achieving a degree in Pedagogy.



Running a library at TOLC is a good fit for Karen. She shares the organization's commitment to recognizing education as a right, and making it a reality for students such as herself, who come from outlying and underserved areas. She praises TOLC's use of technology and innovation to achieve success for its students, and the young TOLC team who "propose fresh ideas that resonate with new generations."

Leading the workshop at FGM "was an act of love for the foundation," Karen says. "From the moment Mirell Duarte and Dalila Carballido invited me to join the education committee, I knew my contribution to the young women involved had to be something special. The idea of sharing a reading together and creating pictorial compositions was the perfect way to express that affection." FGM echoed that emotion, writing on Facebook "It fills us with pride to see how our graduates continue to grow and open paths for other young women."

THE FOOD PROJECT

“Holistic” is the word to describe the approach CANFRO’s Food Project takes, with its partner agency, [Centro de Esperanza Infantil](#) (CEI). Beyond the 12,716 meals served during the 2025/26 school year at the two locations of CEI, Casa Emile and Casa Jodi, the Food Project supports a multi-layered approach to health and nutrition for CEI beneficiaries.

CEI, with support from CANFRO and other funding organizations, offers a range of classes and activities related to nutrition awareness, healthy eating habits and disease prevention for students and families. Workshops have included information on nutritious snacks and lunches, diabetes and obesity prevention, and, with the collaboration of nutritionists from Clinica de Pueblo A.C., nutrition support for mothers of the youth at CEI.

CEI families who live in vulnerable conditions are more susceptible to nutrition-related health issues, such as deficiencies, poor dietary habits, and excess weight. Through workshops, children and their families learn about the importance of eating healthy, balanced diets, and living healthy lifestyles. All family members are involved; they receive recommendations that are accessible, affordable, and culturally appropriate. This approach reinforces family bonds which are an essential pillar of well-being. It also means attending to children as individuals, including monitoring their height and weight periodically to track and reinforce their nutritional health.



Children at Casa Emile have had the opportunity to help create their own food-producing garden. Through a project funded by CEI’s US-based co-founder, [Oaxaca Youth Empowerment](#), children participated in growing beautiful salad greens in raised garden boxes on-site, and enjoyed the fruits of their labours in their meals. A delightful video of the project can be seen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=i9n7zo1bPW8>

THE SCHOOL SPONSORSHIP PROJECT

CANFRO ANNUAL REPORT | 06



On a Friday afternoon, more than two dozen youngsters are paired off and yelling at each other, with arms stretched straight towards their partners. They are following the lead of CEI's staff psychologist and Tae Kwon Do black belt holder, who gives self-defence workshops to CEI beneficiaries. As it does with the Food Project, CEI, CANFRO's partner in the School Sponsorship Project, takes a holistic approach to child development. A program like self-defence offers not only important physical activity, but also coordination, discipline, confidence, and self-care—all part of a ramped up mental health initiative CEI started over a year ago.

The School Sponsorship Project is dedicated to creating easier access to education for Oaxaca's most vulnerable youth, for whom the road to education can be full of obstacles. The 531 beneficiaries CEI supported during this past year received funding for education-related expenses such as registration fees and uniforms, as well as school supplies, books, backpacks and shoes. In recent years, CEI beneficiaries also are supported with internet connectivity and transportation to and from Casa Jodie and Casa Emilie, where activities and services happen. Importantly, CEI also provides indispensable psychological, emotional, and social support through classes, workshops, and other services. Beneficiaries and family members have received more than 770 hours of counselling sessions, as well as workshops designed to assist students and families as they negotiate daily challenges.



A new requirement of the program is that beneficiaries' parents, grandparents or other caregivers are required to attend a series of workshops promoting mental health awareness and the ability to recognize signs of trouble, including suicide prevention. As part of its comprehensive approach, this initiative supports the overarching program aim to promote dignity, resilience, and opportunity for every child.

THE TUTOR PROJECT

CANFRO ANNUAL REPORT | 07



CANFRO's partner in the Tutor Project, [The Oaxaca Learning Centre](#) (TOLC) imagines nothing less for its beneficiaries than “transformation.” TOLC aims to give them tools “to become the best version of themselves.”

The Tutor Project offers stipends to Oaxacan university students and recent graduates who tutor and mentor high school students from low-income families in Oaxaca City and, thanks to virtual classrooms, further afield. Many tutors were themselves TOLC beneficiaries, making them ideal role models. TOLC's comprehensive approach offers academic tutoring in chemistry, math, physics, college entrance exam preparation and English. Mentoring, counselling, and workshops empower students to develop a range of skills and knowledge for future success.

The numbers are impressive. In 2025, 355 individual students (167 male; 188 female) received more than 4,869 hours of tutoring. And the results are proven: students in TOLC's program improve their grades by 30–40%, and 83% pass entrance exams—more than double the state average. Furthermore, 301 hours of psychological support were offered, along with 163 hours of guidance counselling.

To this end in June 2026, TOLC opened a dedicated, private counselling space. In July, in partnership with Libros Para Pueblos, TOLC launched a new dedicated library. Thanks to grants from the Harrison Cooper Foundation in Alberta and the Campbell Webster Foundation in PEI along with our dedicated individual donors, CANFRO's support for the Tutor Project increased substantially for the 2025/26 school year.

Noting the benefits, a physics graduate says tutoring “has reinforced my own understanding and improved my ability to communicate complex ideas,” while a 17-year-old high school student says her goal of completing higher education “feels increasingly attainable.”

THE ADVANCED EDUCATION PROJECT

CANFRO ANNUAL REPORT | 08



CANFRO's Advanced Education Project is intertwined with the Tutor Project, in the conviction that academically capable students from low-income families deserve a shot at pursuing higher studies. Also run by the Oaxaca Learning Centre (TOLC) the project has two parts: financial support while students are in school, and additional training to strengthen their personal and professional skills.

A monthly scholarship pays expenses related to students' continuing education, including travel, food, tuition, books and school supplies, connectivity, and other required fees. Academic tutoring is offered in chemistry, math, and physics, while workshops promote life skills, including decision-making, emotional intelligence, sports, art, languages, AI, first aid, and prevention of risk behaviors. Parents and family members are included in the programming at TOLC, with workshops dedicated to fostering healthy, supportive families. Students in the Advanced Education Project have had the opportunity to lead workshops in TOLC's four-week summer program, giving them experience in planning, preparation, budgeting, and executing a workshop.



"Your support shapes our future.
Thank you for your trust and for
being a vital part of our journey."



Ingrid Ramirez
17 años
4 sem. bachillerato

Daniel Domingo
15 años
2 sem Bachillerato

Yecenia
16 años
4 sem. Bachillerato

Psychological support is an increasing need seen across the youth population served by our partner agencies. TOLC's new dedicated, private counselling space, mentioned above, addresses this.

Thanks to a grant from the RR Smith Memorial Foundation Fund in BC and individual donors, CANFRO continues to support three students who are thriving in the program. Yecenia Gómez Martínez, whose story we told in last year's Annual Report, confirms that her participation is preparing her "to attend university and pursue a degree so that I can help my family and my community."

THE BOOK PROJECT



“At [Libros para Pueblos](#) we believe a library holds more than just books; it also holds encounters, questions, and new stories.” CANFRO’s partner in The Book Project, Libros para Pueblos (LpP), supports sixty different libraries throughout the state of Oaxaca. Of those, eleven are fully or partially sponsored by CANFRO donors, three of which came onstream during the 2025/26 school year.

This year’s story begins with the 7,540 high-quality Spanish-language books distributed to the libraries. It continues with ongoing professional development of regional coordinators and volunteer librarians. LpP continually updates its “rutas literarias,” a curriculum for library managers. One hundred and fifty library managers and municipal authorities attended the annual LpP spring conference, which included a “Creative Writing for Children” workshop, as well as opportunities to share reading-promotion strategies, discuss common challenges, and explore practical solutions.

Out across the LpP network, reading enthusiasts carried out 11,400 reading promotion activities with more than 9,000 children. More than 3,000 children enjoyed puppetry presentations in ten different communities participating in the Literacy through Puppetry program, with children writing and performing ten different puppet shows at various libraries.

And a plot twist: our partner agencies are braiding their individual missions together. LpP now has a library at Centro de Aprendizaje (TOLC), one of CANFRO’s five local partner agencies. Open since July, the new TOLC library offers comprehensive and engaging programming available not only to TOLC beneficiaries but also to those at yet another CANFRO partner agency: Centro de Esperanza Infantil (CEI). Now that’s a happy ending!

THE SPEECH & SIGNING THERAPY PROJECT

CANFRO ANNUAL REPORT | 10



In the remote communities that dot Oaxaca State's rugged terrain, and in low-income urban neighbourhoods, managing disability is challenging. The disability of hearing loss is addressed by CANFRO's partner in the Speech and Signing Therapy Project, [Centro Oaxaqueño de Rehabilitación de Audición y Lenguaje](#) (CORAL). CORAL seeks "a world without barriers, a place where hearing loss is not an impediment for people to develop their full potential and to incorporate into the social, educational and emotional life to which all human beings are entitled to."

CORAL tests thousands of children across the state of Oaxaca for hearing impairment each year, beginning with newborns, and provides essential follow up using state-of-the-art equipment to provide careful diagnosis and treatment protocols to affected families. Ongoing training strengthens the CORAL team's knowledge, including recently by a Canadian audiologist in REM (Real Ear Measurement) testing, as well as in visual reinforcement audiometry.

CORAL's reach extends throughout the state, thanks to ongoing collaborations with local schools, community agencies, and city and state health clinics. In just the period between January and July 2026, CORAL provided early-detection testing and education services to nine rural communities in Oaxaca. Additionally, 1,222 specialized otoacoustic emission tests were performed at hearing screenings for children under the age of six.

CORAL has offered hearing tests to the becarias at Fondo Guadalupe Musalem, and regularly offers testing at Clínica del Pueblo which in turn provides this service to Centro Esperanza Infantil beneficiaries and their families—another example of CANFRO partners braiding their efforts for mutual strength and multiplying benefit.

THE EDUCATION PROJECT FOR GIRLS

CANFRO ANNUAL REPORT | 11



CANFRO congratulates [Fondo Guadalupe Musalem](#) (FGM), our partner in the Education Project for Girls, on its 30-year anniversary. In that time 213 young women, from all regions of Oaxaca state, have been through the program, with an 85% completion rate for high school. An impressive 60% go on to study at university. During fiscal year 2025/26, CANFRO supported a record total of nine young women, all of whom met the rigorous demands of the program. Seven of the nine students are in high school and two are studying at the university level. Our generous donors help provide guaranteed monthly stipends to girls from rural, Indigenous and Afro-Mexican communities in the state of Oaxaca so they may continue their education instead of stopping it to work or meet family obligations.

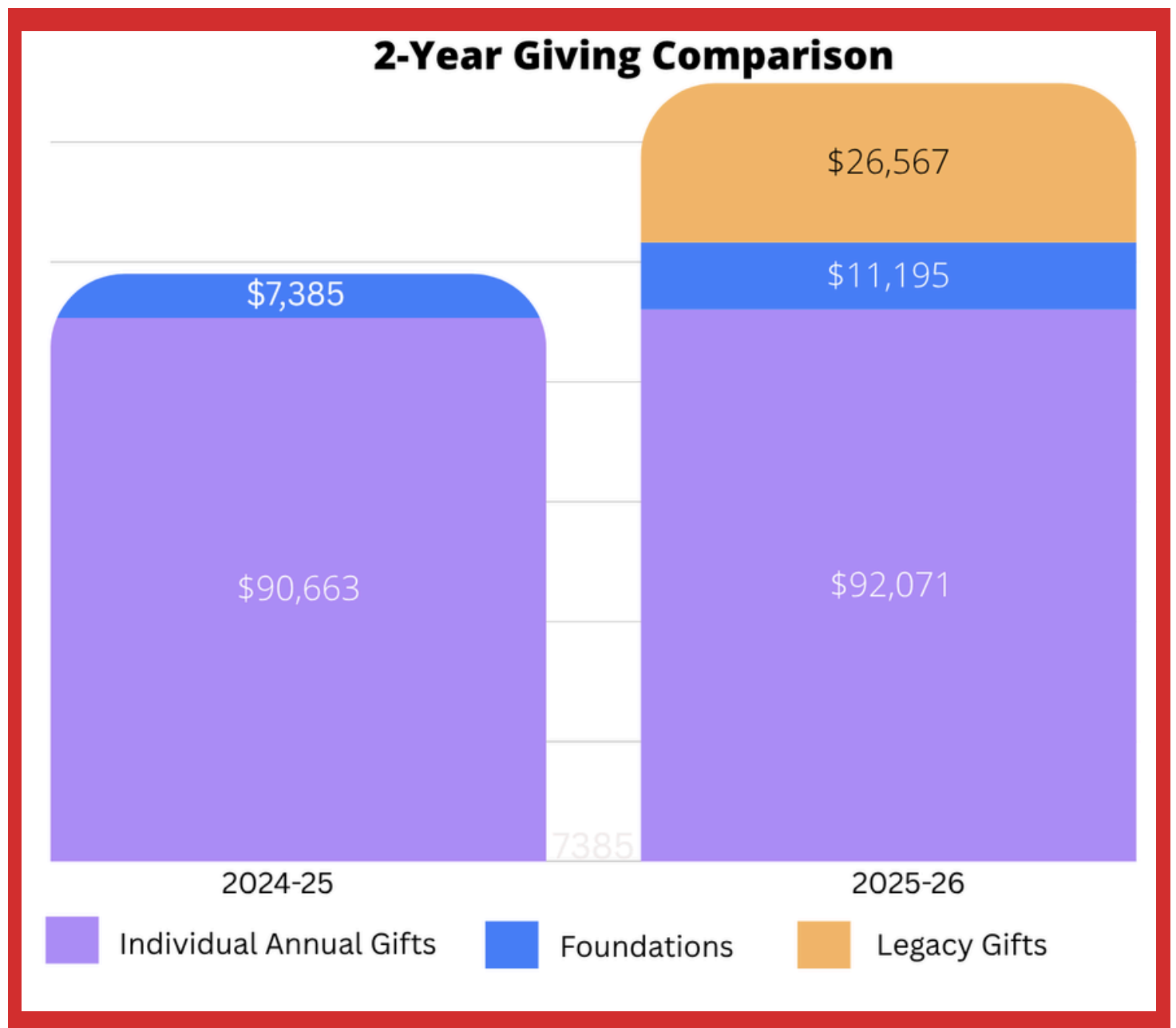
Success requires support. Once a month becarias travel to the city of Oaxaca for intensive workshops on topics like gender violence prevention, nutrition, finances, and accounting, physics, English, addiction prevention, film debate, and much more. Facilities now include a comfortable, private space for psychological support and counselling. Volunteer tutors accompany each high school student throughout their three years. A required community project ensures that their achievements are translated into workable shared knowledge and practices for their communities.

Currently, two former becarias from the EPG program, both now university graduates, are on staff at The Oaxaca Learning Centre. Edith López is long-time Operations Coordinator there, while Karen Cuenca, whose story is featured at the beginning of this report, is TOLC's Library Coordinator. Their success and their roles now, contributing to the advancement of other students, reflects a pattern seen at all of our partner agencies in Oaxaca: collaboration multiplies and spreads impacts.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

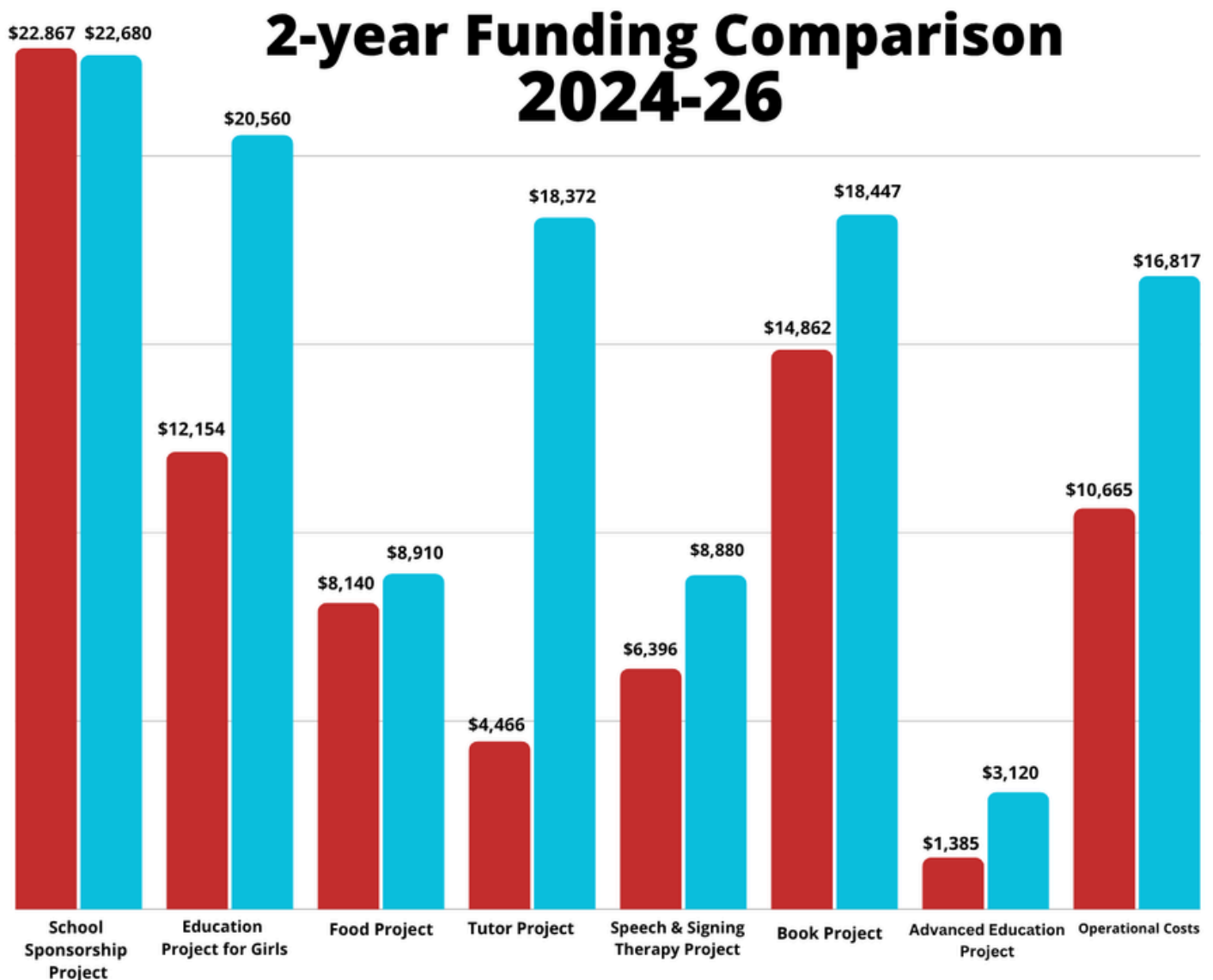
CANFRO saw substantial growth in donations this past year. Individual donations increased as well as both Legacy and Foundation giving, translating into stronger support for our partner agencies in Oaxaca.

Total donations 2025/26 \$129,833



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Total expenditures 2025/26 \$117,786



Project Funding: \$100,969

Operational Costs: \$ 16,817

Total Expenditures: \$117,786

Operating costs include a part-time Coordinator supported by the Judi Schwartz Legacy Fund.

YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Special Thanks...for the ongoing funding from the Judi Schwartz Legacy Gift and the Andrea and Page Fairchild Memorial Fund, given in 2026. Both funds support the ongoing transformative work at Centro de Esperanza Infantil.



Kim & Paul Alexander
Viv Alper
Shelagh Amour-Godbolt
Karla Orozco Andrade
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Paula Moore-Ansell & Don Ansell
Carolyn Anthony
David Bakhurst & Christine Sypnowich
Natalia Baraniecka & Nicholas Fodor
Nanny Barb (in celebration of Finn McDonald)
Vicki Bartlett
Virginia Bartley
Kathleen Battle
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Jennifer Lobo & Geoff Clarke
Larry Loeb

YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

The following people have informed us that they have named CANFRO as a beneficiary in their wills:

Viv Alper
Robin Cardozo & Jeff Richardson
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Erin Pinto
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Ritzwan Rana
Tiina Randoja & her book club
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Annette Reinhart



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2025/26

MUCHAS GRACIAS! TO

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Photos courtesy of our partner agencies and
other funding organizations: Oaxaca Youth
Empowerment and Friends of the Oaxaca
Learning Centre; and Laurie Thompson.

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PO Box 23043
Belleville, ON
Canada
K8P 5J3

info@canfro.ca
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Donations may be made via Interac e-Transfer, PayPal,
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gift.

Interested in volunteering with CANFRO?

We can use help with fundraising, social media and grant
proposal writing. As little as two hours per month can make a
difference - and be a fun way to connect with other Canadians
who love Oaxaca.

Special Thanks to CANFRO volunteers:

Wendy Robbins

Kim Thompson

Jessica Hanna

Alvaro Torres

and webmaster, Michele Gare

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