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Dear Friend,

Growing up the daughter of a Presbyterian pastor planting a church in one of the most idolatrous areas of Mexico City greatly impacted my life. From an early age I became increasingly sensitive to the vast spiritual needs of the Mexican people, and a great longing began to grow in my heart for the extension of God's kingdom in my country.

After spending several years in the United States obtaining my high school and college degrees, returning to Mexico was an eye-opening experience. While enrolled in a graduate program at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), I grew deeply aware of the immense spiritual hunger and brokenness around me: wounded people searching for answers in philosophy, psychology, transpersonal experiences and even drugs. And though some of my professors and classmates would openly attack and ridicule my beliefs in class, others would approach me later in private to tell me their stories and ask deeper questions, as if desperate to finally find something real. My heart would break to hear their stories, and at times I felt totally unprepared to help. All I could do was listen and pray, but just being able to show God's genuine love and interest in them often brought them back. And so, in the midst of seeking to give honest answers to seekers and trying to help those who were facing emotionally challenging situations, I began to sense in my heart a call to ministry and an urgent need for training. God kept gently whispering in my ear: *"...Always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you ..."* (1 Peter 3:15-16)

After responding to God's call to training by earning an M.A. in Christian Philosophy from Juan Calvino Seminary in Mexico City and an M.A. in Counseling from Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, I returned to Mexico last fall. And after spending several months prayerfully considering how my heart, gifts, and training could best be put to use for the extension of God's kingdom, I believe that the Lord is leading me to join His work at the very university from which He first called me, the National Autonomous University of Mexico.

The UNAM, as most people call it, was founded shortly after the Spanish conquest, and is perhaps the oldest university in Latin America. With almost 270,000 students, it is also one of the largest universities in the world. The faculty and student body of the UNAM hold a wide range of worldviews ranging from devout Roman Catholicism to devout materialism, with many other "isms" in between (relativism, humanism, positivism, mysticism, socialism, existentialism, skepticism, to name a few). Together, these philosophies provide the pool from which hurting and longing hearts are drawing answers to life's big questions, and ultimately placing their faith in a false gospel. The UNAM is a very challenging environment for young Christian students, especially for those lacking a solid biblical foundation to discern and give answer to the diversity of ideas to which they are exposed. Sadly, under these circumstances, many of them become confused and end up leaving the church.

In the midst of this difficult, yet very needy and fertile soil for the gospel, God has been at work. Not only is there a small Christian contingent on campus, but many non-Christian students are

open to talking about their lives and spiritual struggles. God has also brought Peter Dishman, an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church in America, to begin the first international work of Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) at the UNAM in partnership with Mission to the World (MTW) and the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico (NPCM). This partnership represents an understanding of the strategic necessity of campus ministry in supporting covenant children through college, reaching a new generation of college students with the gospel, and planting both populations in the church.

As I work alongside of Peter to establish this ministry, I hope to use my experiences in Mexico and the Mexican church to help Peter bring the gospel to bear in a Mexican context. I also hope to use my counseling skills to reach out, shepherd, and support young women on campus, especially those who are confused and vulnerable, helping them to find the answers that only Christ can give as they develop a biblical worldview and become solidly rooted in Christ and His church.

However, in order to get to Mexico City to be a part of the UNAM project, I need your help. First, I covet your prayers as I look to begin work in this challenging field in September of 2005. Second, I need financial support in order to meet the approximately \$1,900 in monthly needs (living and ministry expenses) and \$2,200 in one-time needs (primarily set-up and training) for my first year. Will you prayerfully consider joining me as a ministry partner in pursuing this call? Please take a moment to fill out the attached response card and drop it in the mail.

May the Lord bless you richly as you participate in His world mission wherever you are!

In His Grace,

Ruth Z. Martínez G.

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SUPPORT CARD FOR RUTH ZURIELLY MARTINEZ

Ministering to students with MTW/RUF in Mexico City



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daily weekly monthly

Yes, I/we will give the following financial support

\$ _____ as a one-time gift

\$ _____ as monthly/quarterly support for a **one year term**

Yes, I/we would like to receive news of updates to your website or email newsletters describing what is going on in your ministry.

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Make checks payable to: Mission to the World marked "UNAM Project — 093888" in the legend.

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