

# FOUNTAIN OF HOPE



OFFERING A BETTER FUTURE TO DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN THROUGH HOMEWORK SUPPORT, HOT MEALS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO PREVENT SCHOOL DROPOUT

## Little ecologists from Club TIP cleanup the riverside

Club TIP (the Smart Teenagers in Panatau) was created in the summer of 2011, with the aim of offering young people from 8-16 the opportunity to become active citizens in their local community. This year the club continued its activities, involving both children from the Fountain of Hope' and from Familia AMURTEL. The project received a modest financing from the Buzau county council for the summer program. The objectives were to foster leadership and teamwork, develop empathy and the spirit of service

towards the other members of society and towards the environment we live in.

One of the successful activities of the club was cleaning up the garbage along the banks of the river that passes through the center of the village. This action was designed to encourage the children to take active steps to protect the environment. Our little ecologists were very proud of the results of their efforts and said that they will scold those that they see throwing garbage where they aren't supposed to.

In order to increase empathy and service spirit, the children prepared a meal for the elderly people in the community. They bought the food with the money they raised during a disco night they organized with music and dancing for other kids their age (just like the big ones!). After they cooked lunch and put it in containers, they went to the elderly people's homes and gave them the food. The joy on the faces of the elderly while receiving the food, their tears and good wishes were very rewarding for the youngsters.



CLUB TIP CHILDREN MAKE A MOSAIC WITH BROKEN TILES



CHILDREN FROM CLUB TIP BRING FOOD TO THE ELDERLY



THEY ALSO HELPED PREPARE GARDEN VEGETABLES FOR WINTER

# INTRODUCTION TO THE FOUNTAIN OF HOPE

In September 2007, in partnership with the Local Community Council of Panatau and Cooperating Netherlands Foundation (CNF), Asociatia de Ajutor AMURTEL opened the "Fountain of Hope", an after-school center for the village elementary school children.

The center offers a hot meal, homework support and a creative variety of recreational extra-curricular activities for students of the Panatau Elementary school that come from socio-economically disadvantaged families.

The goal of this project is to reduce the number of primary school drop outs in the community. The rural communities in Romania have high rates of children who do not even complete primary school, due to financial strains and parents who are unable to effectively support their children if they themselves often did not complete their formal education.

The project plays an important role in offering a better future to these children by motivating them to continue their studies, awakening a love of learning and discovering hidden talents, thus breaking the cycle of poverty.

## ACTIVITIES FROM THE 2011-2012 Schoolyear:

### INCREASED ENROLLMENTS

The children that benefit from the social services offered at Fountain of Hope are carefully selected from a large number of requests by the social assistant of Panatau. In the 2011 schoolyear, the number of children enrolled increased from 25 to 50! This is due to the increasing popularity of the center among the children, and a sign that we have successfully managed to create an inclusive and fun environment!

### FUN ACTIVITIES

One of the children's favorite activities is working on the computer. Last year we installed 3 computers received from the 'ASSOCLIC' competition, to the joy of the children. Although we did not have a computer instructor, they enjoyed playing games, writing and drawing on the computer.

During the Club TIP project together with the children, we created a mosaic on a wall near the center from broken pieces of tiles donated by Bricostore. The children were very proud to see the improvements they made. Also during the summer, the children assisted in preparing vegetables from the garden to freeze and preserve for winter..

### SANTA BROUGHT GIFTS!

Like every year for Christmas, the children received presents. This year Santa Claus came with his sack full of presents from Bucharest. The parents of the children from the Rasarit kindergartens were very generous and donated different gifts for the center's beneficiaries. This year it will be harder as the number of children has increased to 65. But we trust Santa to find a way to bring smiles to all of the kids faces.

### THE VISTARA PROGRAM:

Vistara is a socio-professional integration program for the young adults leaving care from the Familia AMURTEL home, where they grew up. This year Mircea worked in the center until January - when he left to take a vocational course in Bucharest and look for a job. We also had Elvira in our team, who worked well with Lucy our volunteer, and in the springtime left to work at bakery run by Caritas. She returned to the Center in August of 2012, and is continuing to gain work experience in a protected environment, and plans to attend another vocational training course in 2013.

## ACTIVITIES



HOMEWORK HELP



FREE HOT MEALS



ARTS AND CRAFTS



SPORTS AND GAMES

## EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCE: Romania and Holland

In an effort to offer the best possible services at the center, we make ongoing professional development a priority. Last year, Dorina, the cook from 'The Fountain of Hope' went to one of the kindergardens in Bucharest where she had the possibility to learn new vegetarian recipes. Our aim is to offer the children a varied, nutritious diet emphasizing the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables - so that is part of why 'The Fountain of Hope' has a vegetarian menu.

In February 2012, Larisa, the center's director had the opportunity to go to Holland, together with the president of AMURTEL Romania, for a 10 day training for Neohumanist educators. This was made possible by the kindness of Yadurani Yolanda Koning. It was quite an exciting new experience for Larisa, as it was her first time travelling by plane, it was the first time she had left her family for so long, and the first time she

visited Holland. In a presentation she gave, she declared: "it was a unique experience for me and a very educational one, keeping in mind the fact that the training helped me find many solutions to the situations I experience in my day to day work.

Yolande Konige has been running a similar center in Den Bosch, Holland, on a larger scale. The training took place within that center. In the training, different topics were touched upon, while making the connection between body and mind: ways of dealing with certain situations which come up at work, which concern the children and other topics on personal development. In addition, after the training, Larisa was able to spend time observing the program of the Zonnelicht Center. She was able to borrow many ideas from the exchange experience and them into practice at the Fountain of Hope.



### THE PANATAU AFTER SCHOOL CENTER FIGHTS AGAINST SCHOOL ABANDONMENT

This was the title of an article which appeared on the 25th of November 2011 in the local newspaper in the municipality of Buzau. We were pleased that the results of the center were promoted on a wider level in the local area. We also created a Facebook page, where we post photos and news with and about the activities which take place in the center. The annual "Open Doors" event is also an opportunity to increase local community involvement.

For the 'Open Doors' day, a small group of children composed and recorded a song together with Didi. They wanted to sing the song in order to thank everyone who helped for what was offered at the 'Fountain of Hope'. Here you have some lyrics:

'At the center, at the center, every day, we come. Come with us, come, come with us. When we come here, we find our second home...'. Come and listen to the song on our facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/izvorul](http://www.facebook.com/izvorul)

### VOLUNTEERS- ALWAYS A BIG HELP!

The involvement of volunteers in our project is a way of offering our children the opportunity to get to know a diversity of people, who come from different backgrounds and cultures, and who offer them the opportunity to learn new things. In February-March 2012 we had the joy of having work with us Lucy Lambert, a volunteer from England. She stayed 6 weeks with us, and the children got very attached to her. In September we had with us Katherine, a teacher from The US. The English lessons were very useful for the children, as were the games taught and played with her.

### INCOME GENERATION AND NEW INVESTMENTS

Every year, our local team looks for opportunities to raise funds locally. We invest any extra income in the modernization of the building. As it is an old building, it needs many improvements. In 2011 we rented the center for an event, and a group of students from Switzerland stayed with us for 4 days. With the money from this,

we installed new flooring in the main study hall. In 2012, we had a similar event and invested in a new fence, as the old one was broken and cows and other animals were stealing from our garden!! The local town hall also helped us to replace the old entrance doors with some new thermopanones which better hold in the heat in winter.



# FINANCE REPORT

## Sept 2011 - Aug 2012

Income	EUROS
AMURTEL	5716,67
Panatau Townhall	5261,90
Income generating	523,81
Grant - Buzau county	714,29
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12216,67</b>
EXPENSES	EUROS
Food	2324,4
Consumables	709,51
Repairs	807,26
Salaries and wage taxes	6742,86
Transport	110,05
Club TIP activities	553,60
Authorizations	751,90
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11,999.57</b>



## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

### PROJECT TEAM

#### PANATAU:

LARISA BRATUCU -PROJECT DIRECTOR

DORINA PASCU - COOK

ELVIRA LEPEDAT AND MIRCEA COSCODAR - ASSISTANTS

#### BUCHAREST::

DIDI A. DEVAPRIYA - FUND RAISING, PR, COORDINATION

DIIPANI HALANGESCU- TRAINING, ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

We wish to extend our gratitude to all of our sponsors whose continued dedication and support makes this project possible.

Thank you also to our partners, the Panatau local community for donations of wood and for covering the utilities expenses, as well as increasing financial support so that more children could attend.

A warm thanks to our international sponsors.

For donations of 1000 or more:

Uma Ingrid Sollai, Jyotisvar Bruce Boyd (USA)

For other donations:

Lisa Dwyer (USA), Chandra Gupta (Taiwan), Divyamurti Quale (USA), Jacqueline Smith (UK), Christine

Visconti and AMURTEL Fonte Nouva (Italy), Barbara Chartier (USA), Gopi Fischer (Romania), AMURTEL USA, AMURT UK, Bernadette Stokwielder, Mamata and Ananda Marga Salorno (Italy), Anandamayii, Rohini, Ainjali, Abik and Ananda Marga Trento (Italy).

Thank you also for donations received at the Winter Retreat in Austin and the PROUT Conferences in Copenhagen and Portugal.

Especially as the number of children keeps expanding, we need more help to keep up with the increased demand for our services. It is simple and fast to donate online at [www.amurtel.ro/donate-now](http://www.amurtel.ro/donate-now). It costs about 20 euros per month / 200 euros per year to sustain the costs for one child. Please also help to spread the word by sharing this report with others.