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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**TRAVELING GUATEMALAN TEXTILE EXHIBIT NOW ON
DISPLAY AT CONVIVIO CAFÉ**

*Denver's first fully bilingual café partners with the Lakewood
nonprofit Friendship Bridge to celebrate Guatemalan culture and Latino community*

DENVER, COLORADO: Convivio Café, the first Guatemalan-inspired, women-owned, fully bilingual café in Denver, has teamed up with the Lakewood nonprofit, Friendship Bridge, to display a signature Guatemalan textile exhibit at the café. The exhibit is made up of 15 handmade *huipiles*—traditional Guatemalan blouses known for their intricate embroidery—created by different women artisans who live in Guatemala.

“I’m very proud of the artisans who created these collections,” says Maya Colop-Morales, manager of Handmade by Friendship Bridge®, a division of the nonprofit that helps impoverished Guatemalan women artisans grow their businesses. “I wish I could personally take them to the café to see the exhibit.”

Each *huipil* design is specific to different geographical areas of Guatemala. Francisca, for example, crafts a two-piece huipil to represent Sololá. “This *huipil* will always be



red...it is the color of the original design. It is distinguished from many others because it has long sleeves and a neck piece that is sewn separately. The *sute* (the second piece of the garment) is something that identifies Guatemalan women. We feel that something is missing when we do not have our *sute*,” Francisca, who learned to weave from her mother at age seven, explained. After experiencing poverty and an abusive relationship as a young adult, Francisca sought out the help of Friendship Bridge in order to develop her textile business.

Convivio Café co-owners Vivi Lemus and Kristin Lacy envision that the cafe will continue to house rotating exhibits that can connect their customers to Latin American culture, as they enjoy coffee both grown and roasted by Guatemalan farmers. “Sadly, people don’t really know that much about Guatemala,” Lemus said. “It’s a small county and it has so much to offer. We want to be the place for people in the community to make that connection.”

The *huipil* exhibition at Convivio Café marks the first time it will be displayed to the general public. “We are very grateful to Convivio Café,” said Colop-Morales. “It’s beautiful that two business owners like Vivi and Kristin are supporting our female artisans.”

View the exhibit during Convivio Café’s business hours, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., at 4935 West 38th Ave., Denver, until mid-November. Learn about the artisans and find opportunities to support their work when you visit.

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About Friendship Bridge: Friendship Bridge is a nonprofit social enterprise based in Lakewood, Colorado, creating opportunities that empower women in Guatemala to build a better life. It combines the tools of microfinance, education, and preventive health services to achieve this goal. Learn more at www.friendshipbridge.org.

About Convivio Cafe: Convivio Café, located in Northwest Denver, is a women-owned, Guatemalan-inspired, bilingual café. They serve coffee, tea and other goods from companies that allow more of the products’ profits to remain with the producers and farmers. Learn more at www.conviviocafe.com.

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