



WARP Newsletter  
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The deadline for  
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Winter issue of the WARP  
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# The Worldview of the Indigenous Maya on Display through WARP

Nicole Eubanks

As I walked through Kent State University's downtown gallery for the *Threads of Connection* WARP members show, I saw a basket made of dyed palm leaves from Africa, a woven shawl made from a 600-year-old brocade technique from



*Friendship Bridge Chief Development Officer Nicole Eubanks poses next to the Patzún huipil, part of the Threads of Connection exhibit at Kent State University. Inset: detail of neckline.*

India, and an upcycled necktie wrist cuff from Lebanon. I was there representing the organization I work for, Friendship Bridge, that creates economic opportunities for women in Guatemala, including helping textile artisans market and sell their work.

Our artisan client Florinda Quiché Sr from Patzún, Guatemala, submitted a huipil for the exhibit—a traditional Guatemalan blouse. I felt proud as I walked by Florinda's design, knowing that through the huipil, both the worldview of the indigenous Maya and the history of Patzún would be on display.

Patzún, meaning Place of Sunflowers, was derived from Maya who speak the Kaqchikel language, and is the reason for flowers in the design. As the Maya are sur-

rounded by nature everyday, embroidery of many different leaves, plants, and trees are included in the neckline. Other shapes represent volcanoes, present in Guatemala's landscape; the former Guatemalan currency, cuartilla; and the broken chains of slavery. The latter symbolizes what has been called the Ten Years of Spring (1944-1954), a brief period of representative democracy in Guatemala preceded and



*Friendship Bridge Chief Development Officer Nicole Eubanks and WARP member Betty Toguchi model Guatemalan huipiles in WARP's fashion show at the annual meeting in July.*

followed by a series of military coups. Elections resumed in 1986 and have been held every four years since 1996, the official end of the 30-year Time of Violence (called Civil War in the US). From the late 1800s until the middle of the 1900s, many indigenous communities were stripped of their communal lands. The government encouraged foreign investment and participation in agriculture for export, most notably bananas and other fruit for the US (think Banana Republic) in lowland areas, and coffee for Europe in the mountains of what are now Baja and Alta Verapaz. This was done to strengthen the economy, but it in fact harmed local farmers and drove

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# 2022-2023 Financial Report

Please refer to the Budget on pages 10-11

## 2023 Online Auction

Our 2023 Online Auction will be open for bidding October 16th - 22nd. This is a fun and highly anticipated WARP event! We have a collection of items donated by WARP members, including hand-made textiles and clothing, we include books, baskets, handmade jewelry, folk art, and fiber related tools and equipment. The auction will be hosted on WARP's website [www.weavearealpeace.org](http://www.weavearealpeace.org)

We are still seeking donations from WARP members until September 10th. If you have items you would like to contribute, please email [info@weavearealpeace.org](mailto:info@weavearealpeace.org) for the donation form.

Notably, this year's Annual Operating Budget is \$110,000, our highest budget of any year to date. As WARP's activities have grown in scope and impact over the past few years, so have our financial commitments. Our largest financial commitments of 2023 are the Executive Director salary, Annual Meeting costs, Communications tools (our website and online membership database), and our Artisan Support Grants.

Our work is made possible through the generous support of WARP members and the WARP community-at-large:

- Our fundraisers, including the annual auction and raffle, are supported by your textile donations, and your participation. (This year's raffle raised over \$6,000, and our online auction has typically raised around \$11,000 the past couple of years.)

- We rely heavily on donor support. So far this year, we have received approximately \$22,000 in donations that have supported our Artisan Support Grants, our Scholarship program, and more. We especially are in need of undesignated donations that can be used freely without restriction, to make sure our operating expenses are covered.

- We have received two generous bequests in the past couple of years, totalling \$75,000.

These gifts make a very big difference to WARP's financial stability. We deeply appreciate our supportive members considering WARP when planning your financial legacy.

*Kelsey Wiskirchen, Executive Director  
Cheryl Musch, Board Treasurer*



## Friendship Bridge

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indigenous populations into poverty. Like any country, Guatemala has a long and complicated history that has led to a complicated present day.

Far from Patzún, I, too, got to display another artisan's work during the WARP fashion show, wearing a huipil made by a client-artisan from Huehuetenango, Guatemala. The designs in my huipil represent the union of people, which was even more fitting as I connected with so many members of the WARP community over a shared love of textile arts.

The weekend was made even more special as I was accompanied by a Friendship Bridge supporter and WARP member, Betty Toguchi, who long ago recognized Guatemalan weavers as the artists they

are. As a result of exposure at the WARP exhibit, we sold three custom-made huipiles from our Handmade by Friendship Bridge online store, and are so grateful to WARP for the opportunity to be part of the exhibit.

The Patzún huipil and other Handmade by Friendship Bridge® items can be purchased directly at [www.handmadebyfriendshipbridge.org](http://www.handmadebyfriendshipbridge.org) to support the Guatemalan artisans who make them.

*Nicole Eubanks is the Chief Development Officer at Friendship Bridge, a Colorado- and Guatemala-based nonprofit social enterprise that creates opportunities that empower Guatemalan women to build a better life. She can be reached at [neubanks@friendshipbridge.org](mailto:neubanks@friendshipbridge.org).*

## More Comments from Meeting Participants

*"I'm so glad I attended the WARP meeting in Ohio and forged meaningful connections with so many people!"  
Cael Chappell*

*"What interesting, friendly people!" Betsy Blosser*

*"Thank you so much for featuring Janice Lessman-Moss; I was stunned by the beauty and complexity of her work." Shelley Mintz*

*"WARP meetings are good for the soul."  
Marcia Bellas*

*"For four days WARP created the most magnificent bubble imaginable - an instant community filled with wonderful people, programs, textiles, discussions, and events. I wish it could have lasted forever!" Beth Davis*

