



After the collaboration with Compassionate Listening Project (www.compassionatelistening.org) to bring an international delegation to San Pedro La Laguna and Centro Taa' Pi't in December 2012, some of the participants began meeting in the U.S. and formed the coordinating committee for "Friends of Taa'Pi't". With their efforts, we have been able to receive tax-deductible donations through Seattle International Foundation (www.seaif.org). Three members visited again in March, 2014 to work with Nancy Lynn, International Coordinator, to develop fundraising strategies.

Sophia - Lisa - Nani

Nani Baran, Bainbridge Island, WA

For most of my life, I have dreamed of finding a place in another country where I could be in real relationship with the community. A place where I could be open to be changed, to learn and to grow. A place where I could offer my skills and to be of service. A place to call home.

With deep gratitude, I can now say that Centro Taa' Pi't in San Pedro la Laguna is that place. I first visited the lake in 2011 as a tourist, returned in 2012 as part of the Journey to Guatemala Compassionate Listening delegation, on my own in 2013 and with friends in 2014.

With each visit, my heart and mind have opened more deeply to the wisdom and generosity of the Mayan people and specifically, to the staff and families of Taa' Pi't. I am incredibly grateful to be welcomed into the community and to have the opportunity to contribute.

I feel deeply called to return to the lake and to join the amazing jewel called Centro Taa' Pi't as it rises to meet the challenges of the 21st century by moving deeply into the wisdom and strength of traditional Mayan values and spirituality.

Professionally, I am a psychotherapist and grief counselor. I love fundraising, cooking, eating, my family, living life fully....and, Taa' Pi't.

Sophia Bowie-McCoy, Ph.D., Eugene, OR

Organizational Studies, College of Business, University of Oregon

I was called to Centro Taa' Pi't by a Compassionate Listening Delegation to San Pedro La Laguna in 2012. I was bound to Taa' Pi't by the program of many-layered cultural experiences, gifted to us by the staff. Those experiences connected me with my own life story. For example, on our day to the campo (small agriculture fields) to pick coffee and visit organic fertilizer

production, I imagined the presence and joy of my father who had died earlier in the year. He had been a food processor who began by making jam in our backyard. He would have been keenly curious about my day in the Campo. During our sharing with farmers and parents and teachers after a picnic, I mentioned my father. Several men commented that they appreciated the connections with ancestors, like my dad.

Parts of my own life story that led me to Taa' Pi't are:

- Learning some Spanish at home and at school,
- Wanting to help Latin/Central America since high school,
- Working in higher education administration,
- Researching small group strategic planning,
- Teaching small group leadership,
- Facilitating many small groups, especially in community food organizing, and
- Creating a movement-based process for implementing group and individual intentions.

This latter work, called *Moving Intentions*, carries me forward to work with groups and leaders in the 21st Century. The leadership at Taa' Pi't is a special group whom I am honored to serve.

Musings on my "unfolding" connection with Taa' Pi't

I am attracted to Centro Taa' Pi't by the radiating quality of leadership that re-weaves the fabric of community. This is literally an "unfolding," as one would unfold an old and beautiful tapestry. As I attend to qualities in the San Pedro community, I attend to qualities in my own community in the United States. For example, the time with Armando's baby daughter links with my time with my grandson, Frazier. Most mornings during a moment of quiet, I hold a vision of Lake Atitlan as crystalline pure, as I do the origins of the Willamette and McKenzie Rivers in my own community.

Lisa Weinberg, Seattle, WA

What immediately impressed me on my first encounter with Taa' Pi't was the absolute imperative of the program, the weaving together of ancient wisdom and contemporary technology to meet 21st century challenges. I was struck as well by the staff's depth of commitment, to the children and their families, to the community of 14,000 Tz'utujil Mayan of which they are a part, and to the life and future of Lake Atitlan, "Our Mother Lake." The combined impact of these forces (and Taa' Pi't truly is a force of nature!) renewed my hope and

a sense of what's possible. Margaret Mead certainly had an endeavor like Taa' Pi't in mind when she observed: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." It's a pleasure and a privilege for me to join with them in common cause.

I currently work as a psychotherapist in private practice in Seattle, WA. Earlier in my professional life, my desire to make a difference for the better in the world led me to work for a number of governmental and nonprofit organizations, and to earn a PhD in Public Administration and Policy, before serving on the faculty at the University of Washington's Evans School of Public Affairs.