

# Looking Back At 2019



# At The Turn Of 2019

We started the year with the urgency to amplify our impact, forecasting the effects in the population caused by the fluid Venezuelan political situation. Some new challenges were coming our way and we needed to face them head on. The Venezuelan crisis had overflowed its borders and reached us here in Houston.

We began to work in building stronger partnerships in Houston with local groups and initiatives. We wanted to build a solid network of like-minded organizations from the Venezuelan community to better address the Venezuelan complex humanitarian emergency. The first steps were taken and now the network, known as La Liga, meets every month during 2019.

At the same time we kept our focus on strengthening the missions of our partners in Venezuela, working closely with them and their communities.

We kept securing and shipping the medicine and supplies our partners needed to take care of their patients. And we received great support from generous institutions such as MAP International and Citgo's Simon Bolivar Foundation.

A year later, our partnerships are even stronger. Along the way, we have been inspired and welcomed ideas and support from others to amplify our impact. With their help, we've been able to continue supporting the work our partners are doing out on the field every day.

We have learned from our many experiences (including writing and winning our first two grants) and we're ready to start 2020.

# Our Partners and our Programs

## SOS Somos Portuguesa



The SOS Somos Portuguesa Foundation (SSP) was started in 2016 as a response to the health crisis. It is run exclusively by volunteers, including medical doctors, odontologists, and psychologists. Its objective is to bring free primary medical care for low-income children.

SSP organizes weekly medical missions throughout cities and villages within the state of Portuguesa. There they bring medicine and medical attention to children who would otherwise not have access to medical care. They provide their care free of charge for those communities.

Our alliance focuses on our commitment to strengthen their mission — supplying medicine and medical supplies, as well as channeling donations

such as formula, sunscreen, toys, etc. We have funded their purchasing of cars and basic medical portable equipment.

They visit from 50–150 children on a weekend, and we send them between \$15-20K of medicine and medical supplies in a year. These consist of antibiotics, hydration therapies, analgesics, gloves, gauze, etc.

Most of the medicine and medical supplies we get for them come from MAP International, a global Christian health and relief organization with whom we have partnered. With the generosity of MAP's donors we have been able to support SSP, who have been doing an amazing job with very little resources. At the beginning of 2019, MAP's Relief Team cleared us and funded our two 2019 shipments (with three pallets each). This was great news for us! We are very grateful for this support from MAP International.

We sent SSP a total of eight shipments during 2019, including those two funded by MAP International. The other six shipments consisted of formula, sample medicine, and donations collected throughout the year.

In 2019, we also funded the purchase of volunteer cell phones and repair work for their mission pickup truck.

Our latest collaboration project with SSP is a monetary grant to benefit and nurture motivation to their pool of doctors. For this we applied and won a grant from the first Small Grants Program offered by Citgo's Simon Bolivar Foundation. Using some of the funds freed thanks to the generosity of MAP International, we decided to create an incentive for the doctors who volunteer with SSP, and contribute to reduce the drain of health professionals currently undergoing in Venezuela.



## MAP International



During 2019, [MAP International's Relief Team](#) covered the costs of our two shipments for our partner in Venezuela.

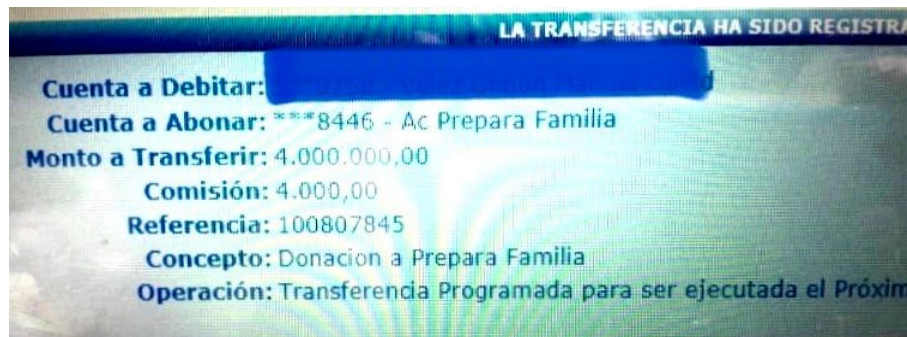
This support meant a big validation of our work and a big push for us to increase the time we dedicated to our local programs in Houston. Our shipments were now secured by MAP, allowing us to continue strengthening the network of local organizations.

## Hospital Ortopédico Infantil

For 2019, we did not receive any donations that matched the specific needs for the Hospital Ortopédico Infantil, so we were not able to provide them with that support.

[Hospital Ortopedico Infantil](#), however, was been able to incorporate its foundation in the USA, and thus receive donor support through their organization.

# Prepara Familia



This Venezuelan nonprofit focuses on addressing the needs of the children and their families at the Hospital J.M. de los Rios. In the past we focused on sending them nutrition-related supplies in addition to general medicine and hygiene supplies.

In 2019, we were able to make monetary contributions to support their mission. These contributions came from donations received in Venezuelan currency.

Visit [Prepara Familia](#) to learn more about their work.

# CESAP/Caritas



[CESAP](#) (“sesap”) is a larger umbrella-like institution that works on coordinating and structuring social programs. We have been collaborating

with them in a nutritional therapy program to combat the rampant child malnutrition in Venezuela. This program is being carried out by [Caritas](#).

In 2019, we sent them two shipments with medical and hygiene products needed to treat these children for lice infestation. They need to be treated for lice in order for the nutritional therapy to be effective.

## Women of the Venezuelan Chaos




In December 2019, we attended the screening and the panel discussion at the OAS in Washington D.C. The discussion and conversation prompted by the documentary focused on its ability to document and provide an awareness raising tool for governmental agencies addressing Humanitarian Aid, Global Women Issues, etc.

We were able to participate in conversations about the magnitude of the Venezuelan Complex Humanitarian Emergency and the extent of its effects in Venezuelan women. We plan to continue supporting and organizing screenings of this documentary in the USA during 2020.



# Events

## Encuentro con EDO Ilustrado




HOUSTON SALUDOS CONNECTION

Presentación y conversatorio



**HISTORIETA DE VENEZUELA**

Un libro de Laureano Márquez & Eduardo Sanabria




**JUEVES 25 DE ABRIL.**  
**6:00 - 9:00 PM**

Southside Place Clubhouse  
3743 Garnet St. Houston TX. 77005

Adquiere tu entrada en  
[click-event.com](http://click-event.com)

**Y PARTICIPA EN EL SORTEO DE 3 OBRAS DE EDO.**



As part of our series *Encuentros*, which started in 2017, these events seek to raise awareness and funds as well as to offer an opportunity to experience Venezuelan culture as well as creative collaborations.



In April of 2019 we organized an *Encuentro* with cartoonist artist Eduardo Sanabria (EDO Ilustrado) who presented his book *Historieta de Venezuela: De Macuro a Maduro* written in collaboration with comedian and writer Laureano Marquez. This event drew a crowd of approximately 90 people and raised over three thousand dollars.

## The Big Roundup for Venezuela

### Houston-Venezuelan Community Building



Our latest program is working on strengthening and formalizing networks within the Venezuelan community in Houston, the second largest in the US.

Our goal is to facilitate and amplify the efforts of all the organizations addressing the Venezuelan crisis with strengthened local connections.

At the beginning of 2019 we identified and invited a small group of community leaders to present the idea of creating a structured network to provide a space to present each other's missions, build a stronger local representation and explore collaborations. We started regular monthly meetings and have recorded over 20+ collaborations produced after these initiatives/organizations started to get to know each other better and found ways to collaborate. We named this network *La Liga*.

In June of 2019 we held *The Big Roundup for Venezuela*, our first collaborative event with most of the La Liga first participating initiatives together in one space. This event gathered 20+ initiatives and organizations from the Houston-Venezuelan community.

The objective of *The Big Roundup for Venezuela* is to bring together, connect and make known among the community, the local organizations and initiatives working to address the needs of the growing Venezuelan community in Houston.





# Saludos Bazaar



Our principal event of the year, the Holiday Saludos Bazaar invites around 35 local vendors (typically Venezuelan) and around 300 guests for an evening in November to share in food and goods while raising money and awareness for our mission.



In 2019 our Holiday Saludos Bazaar gathered close to 500 guests. We had 10 Sponsors, 50 donors for our raffle and first ever Silent Auction. We also had a live concert donated by musician Linda Lowe and the neighboring music academy Writers in the Round. We had 40+ volunteers working to create a nurturing experience for all participants. We raised \$18,187.00. There is a substantial growth in many aspects of our Bazaar 2019 in comparison to 2018.



We were able to increase by 110% the funds raised compared to last year.

The number of participating guests increased by 50%. The number of sponsors increased by 100% from 5 to 10.

We grew by 25% the number of volunteers who contributed to the success of the 2019 edition of our Holiday Saludos Bazaar.





Holiday Saludos Bazaar was our fifth bazaar event and provided lessons to keep improving the experience which we will incorporate into our next edition for November 2020.









# Events and collaborations organized by partners and allies during 2019:

## February

### Venezuela: Past, Present, Future VSU Venezuelan Student Union University of Houston



In February we were invited to collaborate with the Venezuelan Student Union at the University of Houston.

VSU organized a conversation around the past, present and future of Venezuela from different perspectives. We participated with the perspective of humanitarian action.

We are very grateful to have been invited to participate and provide a grassroots view of organized response to the Venezuelan humanitarian crisis.



# #23N: The Venezuelan Crisis

## HACER Rice Universtiy



# #23N: THE VENEZUELAN CRISIS

**SATURDAY, FEB 23RD,  
3-5 PM HERRING 100**

A discussion about the political and humanitarian crisis in Venezuela  
Free and open to the public, snacks and refreshments provided  
Donations (Cash/Venmo) will be collected for Saludos Connection

### Speakers:



**Luis Duno-Gottberg**  
Associate Professor of  
Caribbean and Film  
Studies



**Fabiola López-Durán**  
Associate Professor of Modern  
and Contemporary Latin  
American Art and Architecture



**Francisco J. Monaldi**  
Baker Institute Fellow in  
Latin American Energy  
Policy



**Eric Rodriguez**  
Will Rice College, 2021

**Amanda Perozo**  
Wiess College, 2020



We are very grateful to HACER, for having selected Saludos Connection to be beneficiaries of this event where there was a very interesting discussion about the political and humanitarian crisis in Venezuela.



# March

## The Nomad Market



In March, The Nomad Market invited us to be the recipients of donations of formula and baby hygiene items to be sent to Venezuela.

This was a colorful event with participation of several Venezuelan-led businesses.

We are grateful for their support and were able to send needed supplies after this drive.

## April

### Venezuelan Flavors

The Institute of Hispanic Culture



In April of 2019 we were honored to be the recipients of proceeds from the event Venezuelan Flavors dedicated to Venezuelan culture by [The Institute of Hispanic Culture of Houston](#).

We are very grateful to the Institute of Hispanic Culture of Houston for their generous support.

## May

### Doctor Fernando Boccalandro

We received more sophisticated medical supplies from the efforts of Dr. Fernando Boccalandro, a generous Cardiologist working in Midland Odessa in Texas, who with his team selects these supplies and sends them to us with volunteers by car all the way to Houston.

These supplies for different kinds of invasive procedures are distributed through a network of cardiologists working in different hospitals in Venezuela.

## July

### Conversations that Transform Lives Citgo's Simon Bolivar Foundation



In July we were invited to present Saludos Connection and participate at the event of Citgo's [Simon Bolivar Foundation](#), *Conversations that Transform Lives*.



# September

## CESAP/Red SINERGIA



In Caracas, we participated at the monthly meeting of the network [SINERGIA](#), which gathers local active NGOs addressing several issues and adjusting to the current complex humanitarian emergency. This meeting participation gave us a broader image of the efforts conducted by local organizations in the ground.

This allowed us to build new connections and to nurture those we had been cultivating from long distance.

## Big Little JC 5K

Back in Houston, as part of our commitment to help strengthen the mission of our local partners and fellow members of La Liga network, we supported our allied local organization [Big Little JC Association](#) by sponsoring this event.

This 5K run is Big Little JC's annual fundraising event and we are proud to have been part of their success in 2019.

# 5th Latino Health Summit: Creating a Blueprint for LatinX Health Person

## Hispanic Health Coalition Houston



In September of 2019 we participated in the [5th Latino Health Summit: Creating a Blueprint for LatinX Health Person](#).

We learned from local doctors and public officials interesting insights and perspectives of the many efforts being done to address the Houston Latino population's health needs.

Participating in this event helped us connect with local organizations carrying amazing operations to provide for underprivileged populations, making accessible and bringing to them quality health services.

## Foro Penal Houston Chapter and World Affairs Council of Greater Houston



In September of 2019 we partnered with [Foro Penal](#) Houston Chapter and [World Affairs Council of Greater Houston](#) to host a reception after the screening of Foro Penal's *Struggle for Justice* documentary film at Rice Cinema.

This collaboration with our partner and fellow members of the La Liga network is one of many that started in February and has strengthened our community of Venezuelan-led organizations working from Houston.



We are very grateful of this opportunity and proud to be part of this collaboration with both the Foro Penal Houston Chapter and the World Affairs Council of Greater Houston.

## Trunk Show Bazaar in The Woodlands

In September of 2019 we traveled to The Woodlands in support of the Venezuelan crafting and commerce community which organized this Trunk Show Bazaar.

This community has been a constant source of support becoming the backbone of our own annual fundraising event with our Holiday Saludos Bazaar.

We are thankful for their talents and support and are very grateful to have been offered this opportunity to show our appreciation.



# October

## Continuing Conversations to Address the Venezuelan Health Crisis Simon Bolivar Foundation

In October of 2019 we were invited to the event *Continuing Conversations to Address the Venezuelan Health Crisis* organized by Citgo's [Simon Bolivar Foundation](#).

We received good news about the plans of the foundation to support the mission of our local organizations through the launch of their initiative of Small Grants.

We are very grateful for this opportunity and the resources it brings for the strengthening of our mission.



# December

## Gift of Guidance

### Social Media Breakfast Houston



We were one of the 10 non profit organizations selected by [Social Media Breakfast Houston](#) as recipients of their coaching and assistance at their annual event Gift of Guidance.



This was an awesome event at the [Houston Chronicle](#).

[Social Media Breakfast Houston](#) provided us with an amazing team of experts and gave us great counseling to work on better communicating our work through social media.

Thank you!

**At Saludos Connection we are grateful of all of the opportunities we were offered and appreciated every hand given to us in 2019.**

**As we move into 2020, we are committed to keep working on strengthening our relationships with such great allies.**

**Their trust and support inspire us to seek and create many more opportunities to fulfill our mission.**