

FREEDOM AND DIGNITY AT EVERY AGE: A CAMPAIGN FOR SENIOR CITIZENS' RIGHTS

Throughout this past year, groups of older women accompanied by EPES met to underscore that senior citizens have rights.

It began when a group of EPES educators from Concepción and Santiago proposed a round of conversations about a topic they believed had to be addressed: How is the aging process affecting and transforming their lives? After delving into the issue and dialoguing together in groups, they concluded that rights must be respected at all stages of our lives.

This led them to develop various actions to raise awareness and spur reflection within their communities about the rights of older people. The questions they posed were: How do we relate to older people? What situations do senior citizens face that might not be visible to other people? How can elders become empowered to exercise their rights?

From these musings, a new campaign took shape: “¡Libertad y Dignidad en toda edad!” (Freedom and Dignity at Every Age).



MURALS IN EL BOSQUE AND SAN RAMÓN

Women from the health promoter groups Círculo de Mujeres por la Salud, Llaleta, David Werner, and Mujeres Organizadas por Vidas Sin Violencias met with EPES staff to design murals to reflect their thoughts about the rights of older women. After several hours discussing the symbols to best communicate their message, they painted murals at three locations in El Bosque and San Ramón.

Students from the IES Abroad program joined the women and took up brushes and painted the reflection of their own identities. Colorful images appeared on neighborhood walls portraying women of all ages marching and carrying signs that read, “We are women senior citizens and we have the right to make our own decisions,” “We’re grandmothers, not maids” and, “We demand respect.”



OLDER PEOPLE IN HUALPÉN

To talk about aging processes experienced by senior citizens of Hualpén, EPES Concepción held several activities to share experiences and knowledge to strengthen the groups and their members at this stage of their lives. Activities organized so far in Hualpén include workshops on self-care, digital technology, active aging, and visual health; and educational programs that teach exercises to strengthen physical fitness.

WEAVING NETWORKS FOR FOOD SOVEREIGNTY AND HEALTHY LIVING

On a recent Saturday morning, 90 vegetable gardeners and health promoters met for the Second Community Garden Forum, to exchange seeds and wisdom about working the soil in urban spaces.

Amidst seeds of squash, tomato, beans and medicinal herbs, the gardeners—women and men of all ages—shared something that instinctively bonded them even before knowing each other's names: a love for plants and food sovereignty.

The day-long session was organized by EPES, jointly with the Intersectoral Nutrition Coordinating Coalition of El Bosque. The project seeks to generate connection between people who independently are working toward the goal of the right to healthy nutrition.

Representatives of each garden showed and shared the results of their work at a Garden Fair created on site. People conversed about how the presence of a community garden makes a significant contribution to the wellbeing of an entire neighborhood. A garden becomes one of the best classrooms, where people can foster teamwork and learn to plant and harvest their own chemical-free food.



The Garden Fair was an occasion for Tráfkintu, the Mapuche indigenous nation exchange or barter system. Gardeners shared tips for seed conservation and exchanged not only seeds but also the stories associated with them.

Sonia Bustos is with the Little Green Garden (Huertito Verde) of Hualpén, a community vegetable plot that has been cultivated by EPES Concepción thanks to health promoters. She emphasized what she considers most important, namely, sharing seeds. “We are caretakers of our seeds because they are a legacy we will leave for others in the future,” said Sonia. “We are not eternal but new generations will have the right to our seeds as an inheritance which we will leave for them.”

TWO ESSENTIAL WOMEN: TERE AND CHARITO

Rosario Castillo (“Charito”) and María Teresa Fuentealba (“Tere”), two historical leaders of EPES, retired in October after forty years with the organization.

Charito was part of the founding team of EPES. Since the Foundation’s inception, she has been an educator and advisor for the health promotion groups that we formed in the early 1980s and continue to work with today. As Executive Director for 18 years, she led EPES during difficult times.

Tere has been EPES’ administrative secretary for over thirty years. We have relied on Tere for key organizational and logistical support of every workshop, course and training session held by the Foundation.

More than 100 friends, family members and health promoters gathered on October 5 to celebrate and honor these two remarkable women whose unwavering commitment to the right to health and dignity has been vital to our work. Befitting the occasion, there was music, with a disc jockey



María Eugenia Calvin, María Teresa Fuentealba (“Tere”), Karen Anderson and Rosario Castillo (“Charito”).

cranking out salsa and cumbia for a lively dance floor; and a delicious dinner was enjoyed by all. There were few dry eyes as personal recollections were shared of working alongside these incredible women.

Tere and Charito leave a legacy of wisdom, dedication to social justice, and the unflinching conviction that a different, better world is possible.

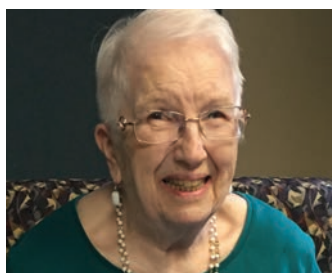
Thank you so very much Tere and Charito for your tremendous contribution. Your vision will continue to guide us as EPES enters the next phase of its work and mission.



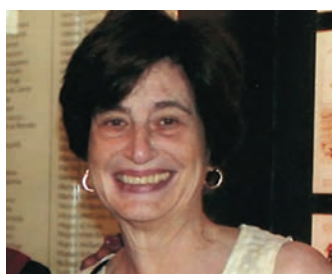
▲ Twenty-seven Haitian women graduated from this year's Spanish language course strengthening their autonomy in Chile. The course, "Sharing our Wisdom," was offered as a space of trust where the participants could practice Spanish and share their feelings as immigrant women, while also generating bonds of friendship.

THREE NEW SCHOLARSHIPS TO HONOR THE LIVES OF EPES STAFF MEMBER AND AHA BOARD MEMBERS

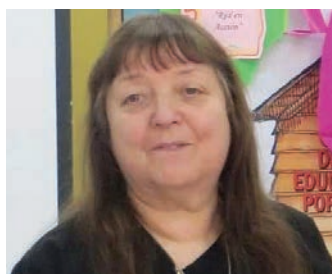
EPES and AHA lost three remarkable women this year: Carol Larkin and Sheila Dauer, AHA board members, died earlier this year, and just recently, Vicky Norambuena, long-term staff member of EPES Concepcion, passed away on October 19. To honor their memories and dedication, EPES has established three scholarships in their names for our 2025 International Training Program.



◀ Carol was a dedicated, long-term AHA board member and was its treasurer for 15 years—she meticulously took care of every penny! She also worked enthusiastically on many fundraising initiatives, supporting and promoting EPES for more than 40 years. In 2006, she joined the US delegation at the opening of EPES' retreat center in Concepción. Carol was an active member of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Clifton Park, NY. She will be remembered by EPES staff and the AHA board for her kindness, generosity, dedication and loving support.



◀ Sheila founded Amnesty International's women's division in New York (which she headed for 20 years), and taught human rights and gender at the New School and Columbia University. She was a dedicated friend of EPES, especially of our work related to women's empowerment and gender-based violence prevention. Sheila joined the AHA Board in 2006 and passionately served throughout her 18 years. In 2014, she participated with the women of Hope Foundation for African Women in the International Escuela, the first time it was held in English. Sheila was caring, intelligent, committed and humble. We will miss her presence in our lives and her great commitment to EPES.



◀ Vicky was part of the EPES Concepción team for decades, as a popular educator and member of the executive committee. She was remarkable for her intelligence, humility, simplicity and sense of humor, and she wrote beautiful stories. Vicky was a member of the student organization sanctioned under the dictatorship, and once democracy was restored, managed to finish her sociology degree at the University of Concepción. An expert in research methodology and a gifted teacher, she also shared her broad knowledge of the environment and love of plants. Thank you, dear colleague and friend, for so much that you gave to everyone who crossed your path in life.

Carol, Sheila and Vicky, Present, Now and Forever!!



EPES was created in 1982 to promote health with dignity for the poor through empowerment, mobilization and collective action. It began as a program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile (IELCH) and maintains close ties nationally and internationally with the Lutheran church and is an ELCA Global Mission supported ministry. EPES became an independent, non-profit Chilean foundation in 2002.

SUPPORT EPES

To contribute to EPES, make a tax-deductible donation online at www.actionforhealth.org, or mail your contribution to:

Action for Health in the Americas
c/o Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
4 Northcrest Drive
Clifton Park, NY 12065-2744 USA

Make checks payable to: "Action for Health in the Americas" (AHA) a non-profit North American partner of EPES.

USE THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS!

To designate your Thrivent Choice Dollars to AHA go to www.thrivent.com/thriventchoice or call 1-800-847-4836.

LEARN MORE

www.epes.cl • www.actionforhealth.org

On Facebook: EPES Fundación

Action for Health in the Americas



Thank you for donating—your contribution changes lives! Mail your check in the enclosed remittance envelope, or donate online at: www.actionforhealth.org



AGROECOLOGY AND POPULAR EDUCATION SCHOOL

Twenty-five people got their hands dirty learning how to work the land in urban settings, as well as explore food sovereignty and the right to food. The 2nd Annual Agroecology and Popular Education School was sponsored by EPES and the El Bosque Intersectoral Round Table on Nutrition.



Action for Health in the Americas

c/o Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
4 Northcrest Drive
Clifton Park, NY 12065-2744

PRESORTED
FIRST CLASS MAIL
US POSTAGE PAID
OWATONNA MN
PERMIT NO 41

EPES METHODS CROSS MANY BORDERS

During the height of the Southern Hemisphere summer, in mid-January, the thirteenth cohort graduated from EPES' International Course on Popular Education and Participatory and Community Strategies for Health.

Twenty people traveled from Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Panama, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Mexico and the United States to join Chileans for ten intense days, immersed in the practice of popular education.

During the days they shared in Santiago, the participants learned how to design and implement community actions from EPES health promoters and staff. On field trips to El Bosque and San Ramón neighborhoods, they put into practice the theory and principles of popular education methodology learned in classroom sessions. At an outdoor market, they set up a booth



to provide information about medicinal herbs and seeds, gave passersby origami dogs to raise awareness concerning responsible pet care, and held a street parade to encourage neighbors to keep the neighborhood clean and free of litter.

The course's underlying objective is to enable participants to plan community strategies that they can carry out upon returning to their communities. Participatory education methods not only empower the individuals who come to the Escuela: they strengthen communities throughout the continent. Since the inaugural session of 2010, 245 students from 29 countries have participated in the course.