

THE ALBERDI SCHOOL AND ITS TEACHERS

The people of Manicomio started getting hold of new teaching equipment using their collected money to set up proper classes for their children. This meant a direct commitment from the neighbourhood members, with many of them working full time on a voluntary basis to get things up and running. Once re-opened, the community itself became the teachers, organisers and maintainers of the Alberdi school, working on average 6 days a week, starting at 7am every morning up until late at night – always exclusively on a voluntary basis. The main objective, according to committee representative Gabriela Leon was “to make the children’s rights valued. This place is now open to everybody, and for the first time the parents actively contribute to their children’s education.”

The idea was that everybody who participated in the school would help to maintain it. Parents who were also being taught at the school would help with the day to day running and upkeep of the Alberdi, doing jobs such as cooking in the free canteen to helping keep the school clean.



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Yolimar Marcano Rodriguez (left) is a 22 year old teacher at the Alberdi School. Originally a student at the Alberdi herself, with her mother she has been a full time volunteer for the past three years. Her younger sister still attends the school

(below) The Juan Bautista Alberdi collective - members of the original committee who helped bring to life the dream of the Alberdi school. (from left) Oscar Negrin, Danny Camaripano, Gabriela León, Omaira Rodriguez and Alfredo Padyón



EDUCATION

The age groups attending the school range from pre-school all the way up to adults. The school has adopted a very complete syllabus based on the government directed 'Missions'.

The Alberdi Committee first developed Mission Robinson, which forms part of the governments plan to eradicate illiteracy in Venezuela and teaches all ages the basics of reading and writing.

The committee went through original enrolment papers and found out that many of the parents were actually illiterate themselves;



some hadn't finished primary school and a big majority had not finished secondary school.

For this reason, they developed Mission Robinson first - for children and parents alike to finish their

basic education.

From this initial success they then went on to develop Mission Ribas which is concerned with getting children and adults to complete their secondary education. The age groups range from between 15 years old up to people in their 70's and 80's. Seven separate subjects are taught under Mission Ribas, and it also includes analysis of the constitution and the Bolivarian system.

Mission Sucre - an access course into university is also taught at the Alberdi school. They also teach Mission Vuelvan Caras; a basic practical vocational training that focuses on learning skills such as



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At the Alberdi school they also teach **Mission Sucre** and **Mission Vuelvan Caras** - *Mission Sucre* is an access course into university and *Mission Vuelvan Caras* is a basic practical vocational training that focuses on learning skills such as plumbing and electric's.

