



IslaUrbana  
U · S · A



# Annual Report 2024

**#Rainmakers #RainForAll**

[www.islaurbana.org/en/](http://www.islaurbana.org/en/)

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# Dear Rainmakers,

As this year comes to a close, **we reflect on a period of growth, learning, and renewed purpose.** Thanks to your unwavering support, we have revisited our roots, strengthened our foundation, and built meaningful connections with the people who make our work possible — like you.

**In 2024, we focused on laying the groundwork for future growth by fostering deeper, more personal relationships with our individual and corporate sponsors.** It's been a joy to connect with many of you personally, and we're deeply inspired by the passion and commitment you've shown toward our shared mission.

This year's #AguaVida campaign was particularly special. With the incredible support of students from Texas, to our team members from the Sierra of Oaxaca and Oregon, we felt the power of cross-border collaboration. Through them, the spirit of solidarity shone brightly, helping to fuel our work.

One of our proudest achievements this year has been **deepening relationships with supporting partners, enabling us to further our work alongside Lluvia Para Todos** ("Rain for All"), the nonprofit arm of our sister organization, Isla Urbana México. As our on-the-ground implementation team in Mexico, their work is vital to our mission, making it a top priority to strengthen their capacity. With the support of incredible allies like you, our US-based partner Via International, and the entire Isla Urbana Mexico team, we're building bridges across borders to ensure every family and community we serve has access to safe, reliable water.

***This year*** has been one of **return** and **renewal**. ***Ten years after*** Isla Urbana's formal founding in 2009, **Isla Urbana USA was born**. Although small in comparison to ***our Mexico counterpart*** we have used **our agility to test, refine, and strengthen our approach**. **Our impact** this year has been **anything but small**



**Thanks to your generosity and belief in our vision, Isla Urbana USA doubled the number of beneficiaries we served in 2023**, and nearly quadrupled those served in 2022. Behind these numbers are lives transformed— they represent children, families, and communities with access to safe, life-sustaining water. This progress is a direct result of your trust and support, and we are profoundly grateful for it.

Our Rainmaker Summer Program also reached new heights, welcoming 25 students and five chaperones from five different states. These students are future leaders and changemakers; their energy, ideas, and passion inspire us daily. We are thrilled to learn that many of our supporters are eager to join us next summer.

In 2024, we also launched the initial phase of our new website and began our first social media initiative on Instagram. **Our goal is simple: to be closer to you, our supporters.** We aim to build a community where active participants in the journey toward water justice. We value your feedback and engagement, and we're committed to ensuring our work is visible, accessible, and responsive to your voice.

The water crisis in Mexico remains urgent, with nearly 10 million people lacking access to safe, clean water. Climate change and growing urbanization only intensify this strain, making rainwater harvesting an essential, life-saving solution. **Every system installed is a step toward a future where water is a universal right, not a privilege.**

As we look ahead, we're filled with hope, determination, and commitment to growing our impact and community. Your generosity moves us, humbles us, and propels us forward. Together, we'll continue to bring clean water to the families and communities who need it most.

**Thank you for believing in our mission.  
Thank you for standing with us.  
Thank you for being a Rainmaker.**

**With deepest gratitude and love,  
Renata Fenton**  
Isla Urbana USA Director





## Mission:

Forge partnerships across North America to drive **equitable clean water access through sustainable rainwater harvesting and management technologies**, inspiring a global water justice movement that transcends geographical boundaries.



## Vision:

A future where equitable and sustainable water access is a universal reality, empowering communities in Mexico to achieve **autonomy through increased water access**.

**“Water is a vital liquid because it is fundamental to our growth and development... Great distances and precarious roads are traveled to obtain it.”**

Liz Gallardo, Naxo Tojndi Administrator,  
San José Tenango, Oaxaca



# Our Approach





## Rural Focus

With rural communities being so vital to Mexico’s economy, we focus our programs here and center our approach around **cultural sensitivity, collaboration with local leaders, and respect for traditional knowledge.** This ensures that our solutions are not only effective but also inclusive and respectful of each community’s unique water heritage and practices. By addressing the profound impacts of rural water scarcity on health, livelihoods, and access to essential education and healthcare, we strengthen communities and build a sustainable future for all of Mexico.



**55%**  
of the rural population  
live in poverty



**5.2**  
million people live  
in extreme poverty





## Resilience

**We build resilient, self-sufficient communities by empowering community members to repair and manage their own systems.** Beyond system installation, we are committed to providing ongoing system follow-ups, monitoring, and educational user training workshops that give locals hands-on experience with the systems. In doing so, we ensure proper system maintenance, effectiveness, durability, and sustainability amid evolving environmental challenges.



**12,000 beneficiaries**

**have been trained by Isla Urbana on how to maintain their rainwater harvesting systems through workshops and training sessions**





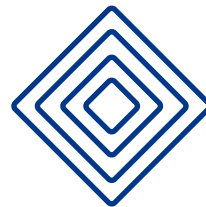
## Adaptability

Isla Urbana tailors technology and implementation strategies to meet the unique needs of each community, focusing on flexible, comprehensive water solutions tailored to diverse cultural, social, geographical, and water-specific contexts. We continuously refine our methods to adapt to evolving needs, by designing robust, reliable systems that maximize long-term impact and strengthen communities against water scarcity.

### Isla Urbana supports:



**42**  
different rural  
communities



**74%**  
of them are  
indigenous



## Collaboration

We collaborate with our funders, student groups, Via International, and Isla Urbana Mexico to foster cross-boundary relationships that make meaningful impact

At Isla Urbana USA, we enhance the effectiveness of our rainwater programs through **strategic partnerships**, while also working closely with Isla Urbana Mexico. We engage with **international supporters, students, businesses, academic institutions, non-profit organizations, and government agencies to pool resources and knowledge to drive impactful change**. Our initiatives also encompass collaboration with local agents to identify beneficiaries and assess needs, enhancing system adoption through community meetings.





# 2024 Overview





## 102 Total Systems Installed



**10**  
School  
Systems



**64**  
Purification  
Filters



**28**  
Residential  
Systems



**53**  
Emergency  
Systems





**3,269**

**Beneficiaries**

(2.35x more than in 2023)



**921,779**

**Gallons Annual**

**Rainwater Harvesting**

(2.5x more than 2023)



Over

**3,164**

**hours of water**

**hauling eliminated**



Freeing up time  
for **education, work,**  
and **play**



# On The Ground Highlights





# Nanda Jtsi

The Nanda Jtsi program, **named after the Mazatec word for “rainwater,”** provides rainwater harvesting systems in the Mazatec community of Oaxaca, Mexico, where a staggering 89.6% of households lack access to public water services. Situated **in the remote Sierra Mazateca in the Cañada region**, this close-knit indigenous community faces critical water scarcity, with many traveling up to 4 hours a day to collect water from dwindling natural resources. **Focused on developing sustainable technology tailored to community needs**, Isla Urbana technicians collaborate with local cooperative, Naxo Tojndi, to train local residents in the installation, maintenance, and repair of rainwater systems.



**3 School Systems Installed**

- 212 People Impacted
- 419,066 Gallons Harvested Annually



**11 Residential Systems Installed**

- 150 People Impacted
- 67,480 Gallons Harvested Annually

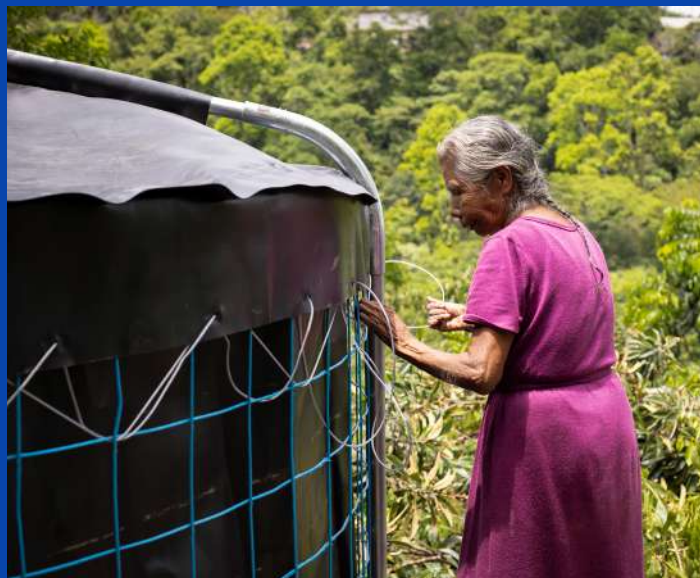




“

*I have a system at home and it helps a lot. Before, we carried water from a well 2-3 hours away, which provided only 20 liters per household. We are so grateful for this system at school. We will take care of it and push our projects forward.”*

Maria Esther García, Centro de Bachillerato Tecnológico Agrícola (CBTA) Student, Teocuatlan, San Jose Tenango



“

*For the families who are going to benefit, it is practically a gift from heaven...I talked to one family who did not have water and they told me they didn't bathe because they simply couldn't, so the systems are really going to bring a huge benefit to their lives.”*

Carlos Martinez, Community Representative, Llano de Arnica, San Jose Tenango





“  
**Thanks to this project, we will be  
able to give life to this institution.**”

Blanca Chávez, Centro de Bachillerato  
Tecnológico Agrícola (CBTA) School  
Coordinator, Teocuatlan, San Jose Tenango





# Tlamacazapa

This program addresses severe water scarcity and infrastructure challenges in the **Nahuatl community of Tlamacazapa, Guerrero**. With local wells contaminated by high levels of coliforms, arsenic, and nitrates, this initiative offers a crucial alternative to unsafe water sources. In Tlamacazapa, only 30% of residents have access to tap water, forcing many women and girls to spend hours daily collecting water from the contaminated wells. Despite these challenges, Tlamacazapa’s **long rainy season makes it ideal for rainwater harvesting**. By centering this program around community engagement, **these systems improve public health and strengthen economic stability, providing hope for a more sustainable and empowered future for Tlamacazapa.**



## 10 Residential Systems Installed

- 56 People Impacted
- 46,230 Gallons Harvested Annually







“

*It rains so much that the cistern fills up in just half an hour, which has been a tremendous help for the family.”*

Pablo Flores, Rainwater Harvester,  
Tlamacazapa, Guerrero





# Yaxe

Nestled in the valleys of Oaxaca state, the lively San Nicolas Yaxe **community faces the effects of severely over-exploited water sources by the mining and agriculture industries.** Over the past few years, neighboring towns developed greenhouses that further deplete what are already dangerously low aquifer levels. This program implements rainwater harvesting systems in the Yaxe community so more people can enjoy access to a sustainable, clean, and long lasting water supply. Now, families act as skilled water managers, youth attend Rain Schools, and residential systems reduce reliance on dwindling wells. This project not only addresses immediate water needs but also empowers the community by positioning women and youth as central figures in driving sustainable change.



## 2 School Systems Installed

- 315 People Impacted
- 83,498 Gallons Harvested Annually

El Porvenir Primary School & Maria Montessori Kindergarten



## 3 Residential Systems Installed

- 13 People Impacted
- 12,010 Gallons Harvested Annually







“

*We are very grateful for all this. From all our hearts we want to thank you. It is important to have these kinds of opportunities to harvest rainwater because it's very necessary, it is very essential for schools... we are going to put effort into taking care of this system.*”

Juan Francisco, Parent and Member of Rain Committee, El Porvenir Primary School

# Rainwater Brigades

What began as a direct response to the 2017 earthquake in Mexico City, quickly grew into a powerful model of community resilience in other disaster-stricken areas. As climate change intensifies natural disasters, our Rainwater Brigade Program has evolved, **offering compact, user-friendly rainwater harvesting and purification technologies to vulnerable communities affected by recent disasters.** The program was revived after Hurricane Otis hit the coast of Guerrero in 2023, devastating crops, homes, and infrastructure. In addition to rainwater harvesting systems, training sessions are offered to teach families how to install, use, and maintain each component in the system. This program becomes a lifeline for families, providing them with a sustainable, reliable water source during a time of crisis.



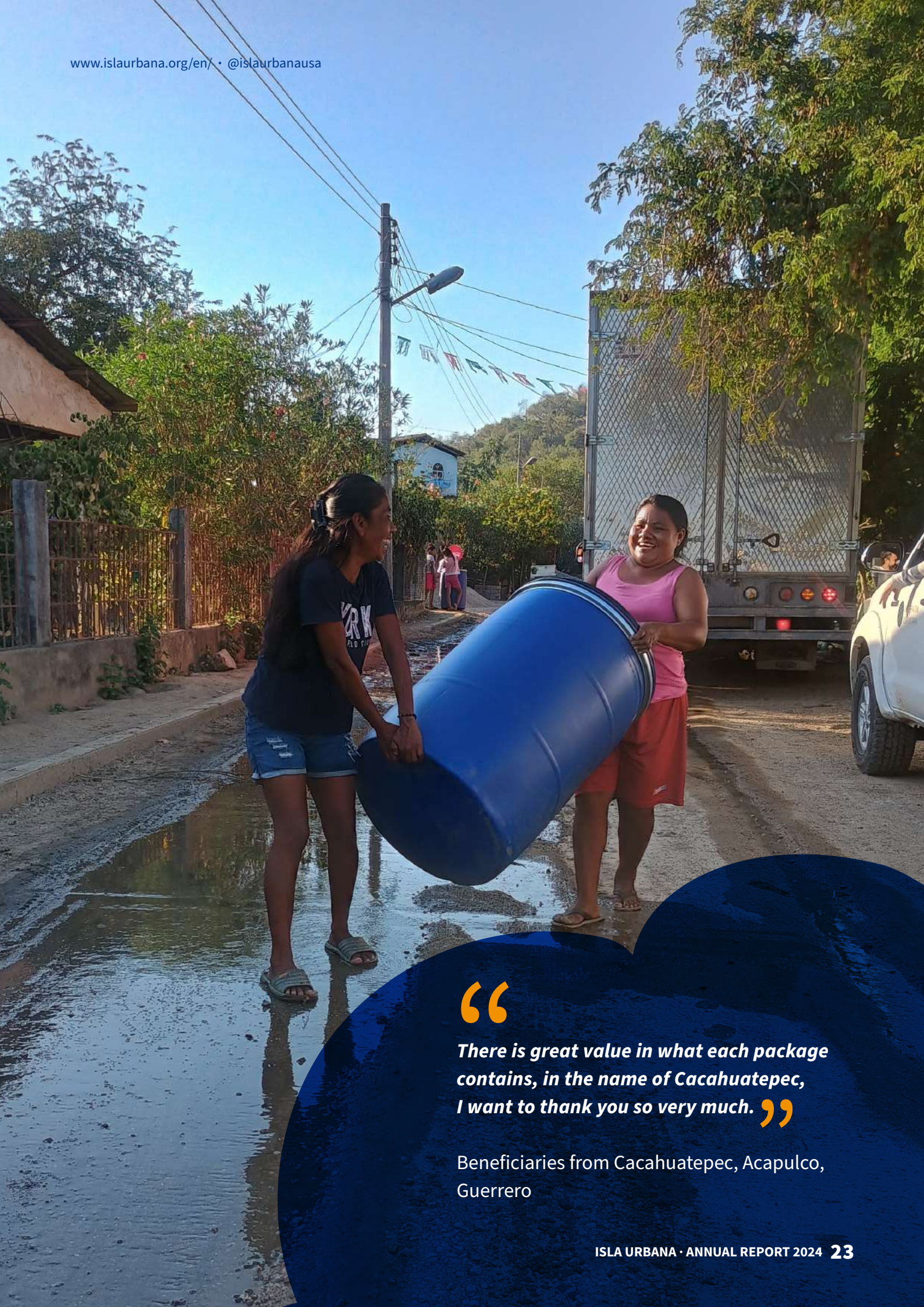
**53**

## Emergency Systems with Purification Filters Installed

- 280 People Impacted
- 178,316 Gallons Annual Rainwater Harvesting Potential







“

*There is great value in what each package contains, in the name of Cacahuatpec, I want to thank you so very much. ”*

Beneficiaries from Cacahuatpec, Acapulco, Guerrero



# Rain Schools Program





## In Mexico



**6 out of every 10**  
schools lack access  
to clean water



**55%**  
of primary schools lack basic water  
and sanitation services

Source (INEE, 2016)

Through the Isla Urbana Rain Schools Program, we partner with corporate sponsors to **provide rainwater harvesting systems and environmental education to educational institutions across Mexico.**

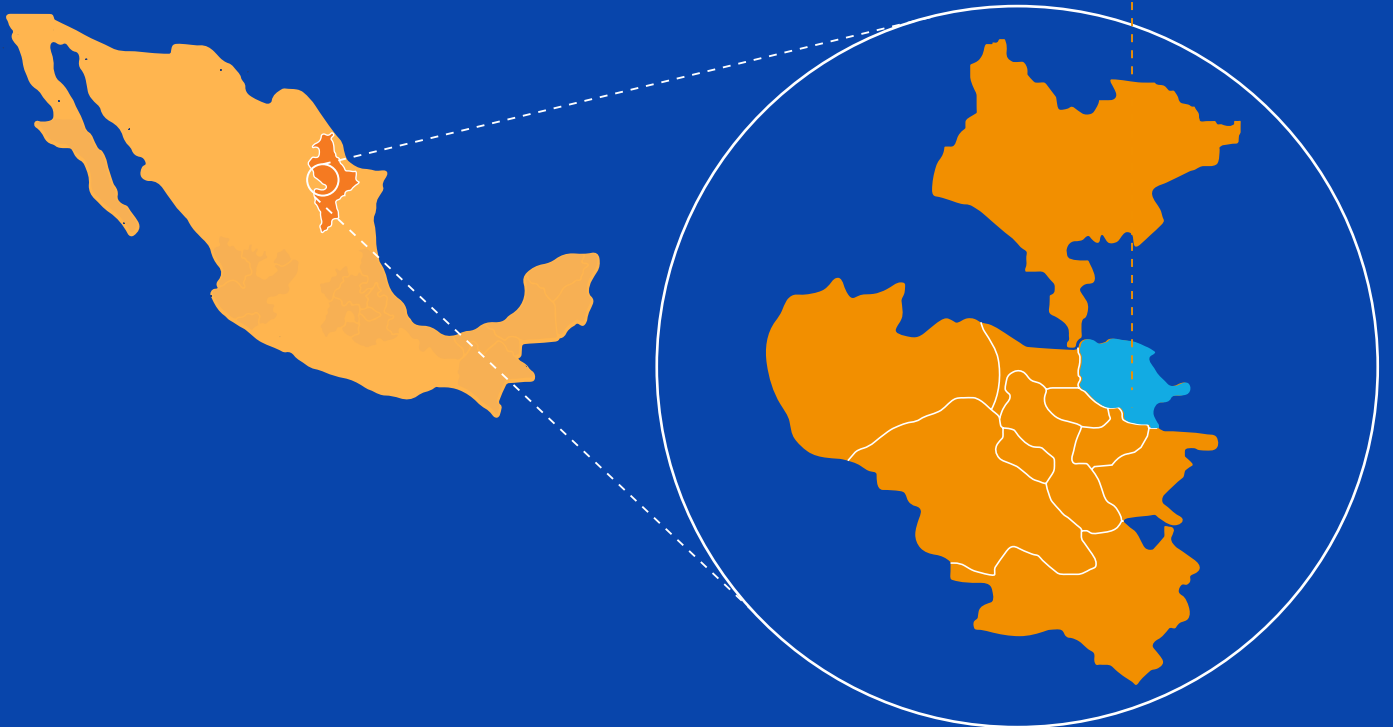
Each school participating in the program must establish a dedicated Rain Committee composed of students, teachers, and parents who oversee the system's maintenance, ensure its efficient operation, and support its long-term sustainability. This program not only empowers water-scarce communities **to adopt autonomous and sustainable water management practices, but it also instills a sense of responsibility and awareness in students**, preparing them to become advocates and guardians of their local resources.



# Corporate Allies: A Rain School Case Study

## Apodaca (Monterrey) •

A heavily industrialized city in the Monterrey Metropolitan Area, **hosts 70% of Nuevo León's industrial plants**, while Juárez, another municipality in the region, **has experienced the highest demographic growth in the state.**



**Rapid population growth and industrial activities have overwhelmed Monterrey's outdated water infrastructure, leaving it unable to meet the growing demand.**



**Frequent water cuts became the norm**, and the available water quality deteriorated, appearing muddy and emitting strong odors. By the end of the year, nearby wells were closed, forcing schools—many operating up to three shifts—to shut down multiple times. By 2023 the situation worsened, and many concerned parents began withdrawing their children from school.

**In 2024, rainwater harvesting became an essential solution**, providing an additional water source to the school and helping to meet part of the demand. **With the support of our remarkable partner, Kohler, we installed one rainwater harvesting system in three schools in Monterrey!**



• ***“Our corporate Partner took the time to understand Mexico’s water challenges and are genuinely committed to creating impactful solutions together. Launching the project in Monterrey in September alongside our partners was particularly special, giving school leaders and students the chance to meet the US Supporters in person.”***

• **-Renata Fenton**



## 3 School Systems Installed



**2,175**  
People Impacted



**201,927**  
Gallons Annual  
Rainwater Harvesting



### Arturo De La Garza Gonzalez Primary

- 785 Students
- 30 Teachers
- 58,973 Gallons Annual Rainwater Harvesting Potential



### German Gedovius Huerta Secondary

- 752 Students
- 25 Teachers
- 66,836 Gallons Annual Rainwater Harvesting Potential



### Basave Fernández Del Valle Secondary

- 543 Students
- 40 Teachers
- 76,118 Gallons Annual Rainwater Harvesting Potential





“

*This is a very good project for the entire educational community. Firstly, we are teaching students, who will be the next generation of citizens, about the significant commitment to sustainable water use, which will shape them as more aware and responsible individuals. Secondly, it allows parents to participate and feel engaged with these projects. This process will enable the school to improve in various aspects related to sustainable practices over time.*”

Representative from the Arturo de la Garza Gonzalez Primary School







“

*I believe that any project representing innovation for the school, aiming to bring us closer to sustainable development, will translate into a meaningful learning experience for the school community and signifies great support for us. The ability to collect rainwater seems like a fantastic idea: being able to harness the physical phenomenon of water, evaporation, condensation, and precipitation, to capture this resource and learn the technique for water harvesting.”*

Arturo de la Garza Gonzalez Primary School  
Principal, Glen Gutierrez



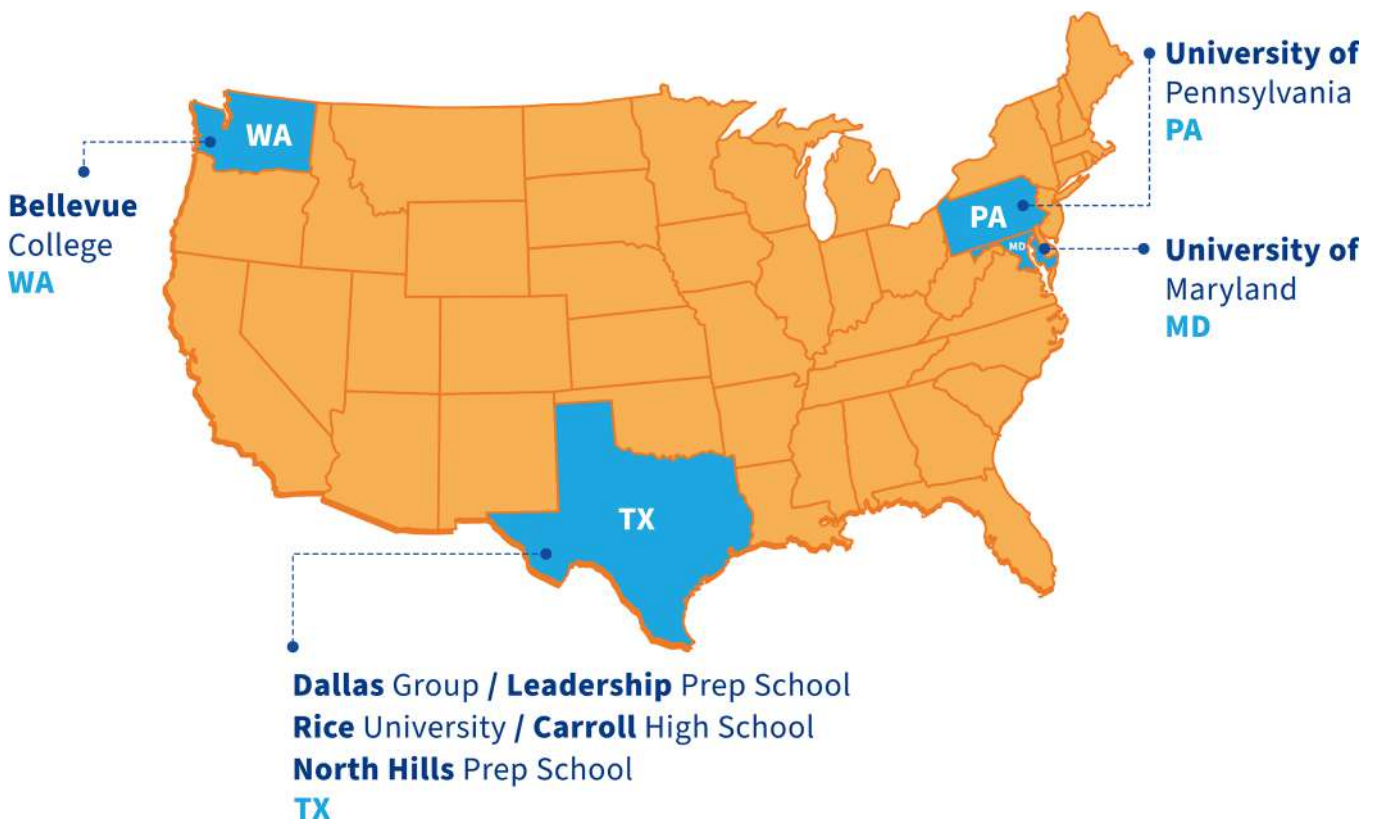


# Student Engagement



# Empowering Future Leaders

Since 2018, passionate students and young leaders across America have united in their commitment to promoting and expanding sustainable water access in Mexico through Isla Urbana’s rainwater harvesting programs. Our first affiliated student group was established at the University of Pennsylvania, and has since steadily grown, with more high school and university students joining the movement each year!



**Student engagement is vital to Isla Urbana USA’s mission, fostering youth leadership and empowering students to drive meaningful change in their communities.** By bringing fresh perspectives and creative ideas, students help tackle water access challenges in dynamic and impactful ways. Their diverse backgrounds and collaborative efforts expand Isla Urbana’s reach, building a stronger, more inclusive movement. By engaging with the next generation of global changemakers, we equip young leaders with the skills and experiences needed to champion sustainable water solutions. **Through advocacy, fundraising, and awareness campaigns, our student groups span across 5 states to amplify our message and inspire action.**





**Our Bellevue College student group**, for instance, advocates for rainwater harvesting systems in Mexico while also **envisioning transformative projects in their own community, like an urban garden supported by rainwater systems**. They are currently planning on writing a grant proposal to bring this vision to life and are in the process of formalizing their group, with plans to develop a broader educational program focused on rainwater harvesting.

**In our North Hills Prep School student group, our brilliant Engineering and Design Volunteer, Anusri Chinni, has worked with Isla Urbana’s Research and Development Team to engineer a pump-free floating intake device for our rainwater harvesting systems**. After proposing the idea for a project in Mazateca, Anusri’s innovative design is now being implemented.

With each new student group, **Isla Urbana’s network grows** and so does the movement for clean, reliable water access in Mexico. We are so glad to see the continued expansion of our student groups across the U.S. as more young people join the fight for water justice!



# This Year's Rainmakers: Student Summer Program

Building on the momentum generated by our student groups, **our Student Summer Program provides an opportunity for group members to take their involvement to the next level.** Over the years, the program has grown in scale and impact, with a core mission to educate, empower, and activate the next generation of environmental leaders.





This year's summer program marked an exciting milestone as our largest cohort yet **25 students and 5 chaperones from Oregon, Washington, Texas, Illinois, and Washington DC.**

This group of Rainmakers embarked on a week-long educational journey, traversing Mexico City's rich history of water systems and the pressing challenges the city faces today. Beyond learning, these students rolled up their sleeves to make a tangible impact.

**This year's Student Summer Program successfully installed four residential rainwater harvesting systems, benefiting four families and improving the lives of 24 people. These systems have the potential to collect a whopping 14,000 gallons of rainwater annually!**







Students also participated in rainwater harvesting workshops, **planted 100 Ahuejote trees**, **painted a vibrant mural**, **observed Chalchiuhtlicue Primary School's Rain School Program in Mexico City**, and sponsored the installation of a **new Rural Rain School at Primaria Rural Tata Vasco in Tlalpujahuá, Michoacán**.

Thanks to their efforts, **by the end of 2024 this initiative will positively impact 125 students and 6 teachers, making a lasting difference in their community!**





For young people, opportunities like this **are about more than just the work—they're about creating meaningful connections and memories that transcend borders.** Traveling, experiencing new cultures, and meeting people with perspectives different from your own enriches their worldviews, shaping the youth into more compassionate, thoughtful, and understanding leaders.

**“The Summer Program put life into perspective and made me want to start a chapter. I would love to continue to work with Isla in any way I can. It inspired me to give back to my community.”**

Evelyn Blanco, 2024 program



**“Talking to the other students, who all come from different backgrounds, was especially very impactful. Learning about their endeavors was inspiring and encouraged me. I also feel that actually speaking to the members of the community and the school and hearing their story was quite valuable and an experience that you can't get elsewhere.”**

Anusri Chinni, 2024 program

# Student Community Immersion Initiative

**This year, we embarked upon a new adventure: our Student Community Immersion Initiative!**

This initiative allows students to travel to a community that graciously feeds and welcomes them. By immersing themselves in a blend of cultural exchange, these students learn about rainwater harvesting systems in the context of the beneficiaries, in addition to learning about the evolution of Isla Urbana.

**The small fee the students pay to attend the initiative covers not only their meals prepared lovingly by the communities, but it also goes towards purchasing purification filters that are donated to the very community they visited.**

These filtration systems are distributed to families who already have rainwater harvesting systems, but no way to purify the water. This model of funding goes 100% to the communities that open their doors to the students, guide them through their surroundings, and share their experiences with the systems they have.



**Our first immersion initiative student group consisted of a cohort of students from the Indiana University Kelley School of Business. They traveled to Huacahuasco, which resides in the Xochimilco borough of Mexico City.**



**During their visit, students were warmly and graciously hosted by community leaders Felipe and Felicitas, who have been rainwater harvesters since 2012.** The group also enjoyed the hospitality of Domingo and his family, who provided a delicious meal that highlighted the rich cultural traditions of the community. ***They shared their knowledge and experiences, offering a firsthand understanding of how the systems have impacted their lives.***

**In addition to visiting Huacahuasco, students also visited another system in San Miguel Topilejo,** and had the chance to see the two systems installed by U.S. students during the 2022 Student Summer Program in Paraje Zacatenco! **These visits gave the business students a thorough understanding of rainwater harvesting systems in action and provided valuable insights through feedback from their users.**



Our second immersion initiative group was composed of students from Eastside Preparatory School in Seattle, Washington. **This group visited Paraje Quiltepec, a community located in the Tlalpan borough of southern Mexico City that has long faced water scarcity challenges.** Here, students were welcomed with open arms by Elena, Maura, Rosa, and Fernando, who ensured they were treated to a delicious feast of authentic Mexican cuisine. We witnessed bright-eyed students engage with the community's rich history, asking insightful questions to delve deeper into the complexities of the water crisis in Mexico City. This not only provided the students with hands-on experiences, but also allowed them to reflect on the importance of sustainable solutions for global challenges.

**The Quiltepec community's dedication to sustainability is reflected in every aspect of their daily life. From flourishing fruit trees and free-ranging chickens to the use of ecotechnologies, the community lives and breathes sustainable practices.**

**Because of these students and their genuine desire to comprehend and contribute to a better world, we were able to install eight purification filters in Paraje Quiltepec and four in Huacahuasco!** Overall, these young changemakers gained life-long skills, amazing experiences, and built strong connections, all while positively impacting the lives of 44 people in both communities!



## Impact



### **Huacahuasco Xochimilco, Mexico City**

- 4 Purification Filters Installed
- 16 People Impacted



### **Paraje Quiltepec Tlalpan, Mexico City**

- 4 Purification Filters Installed
- 16 People Impacted



# Community Fundraising



# Agua Vida 2024

Each year we host our annual Agua Vida fundraising campaign. Agua Vida, meaning “Water Life,” is more than a fundraiser—it’s a testament to the **creativity, passion, and dedication of our student groups, volunteers, and supporters as they advocate for water justice and make a lasting impact.**

**The 2024 Agua Vida Campaign raised an incredible \$31,174 surpassing our initial target by \$6,174!**



**These funds will provide essential support to rural families in communities across Oaxaca, Guerrero, Jalisco, and a rural area in Xochimilco on the outskirts of Mexico City.** Thanks to our rainmakers, **at least 18 families will have rainwater harvesting systems installed**, granting them easily accessible, clean, and sustainable water sources in their own homes. These systems will capture approximately 215,000 gallons of clean water year after year!





**Our Rice University student group was especially motivated to fundraise for this year's Agua Vida after attending two consecutive Isla Urbana Student Summer Programs through the University's OEDK iSEED program.** During these immersive trips, students traveled to Mexico to explore both the technical and social aspects of water issues.

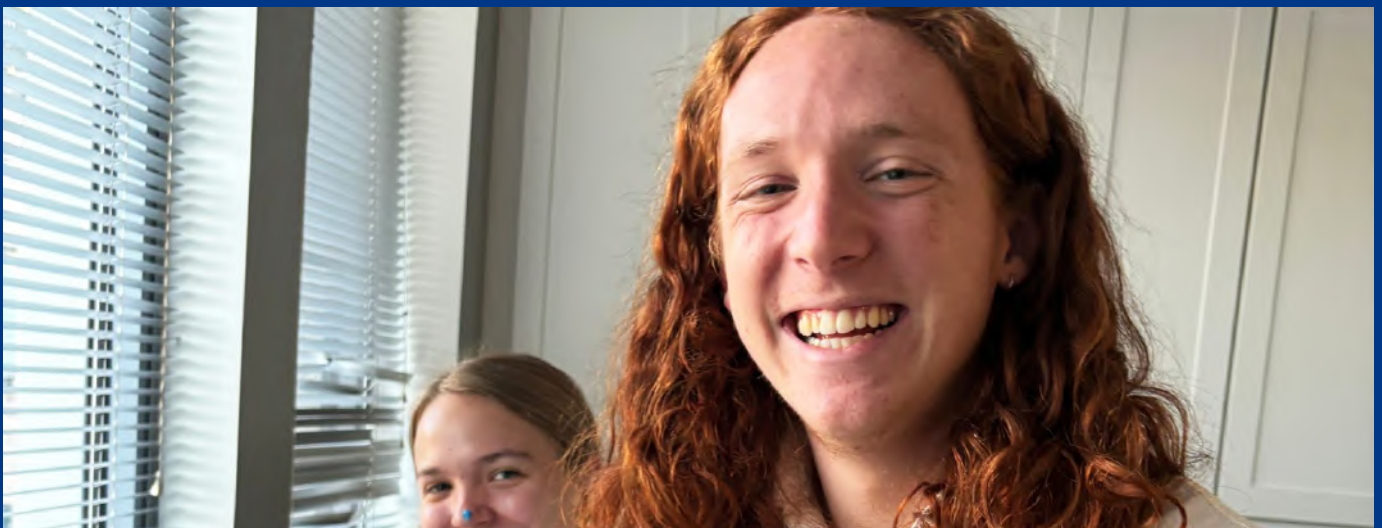
**They visited impactful projects such as the Olintalli Cultural Center in Xochimilco, on the rural outskirts of Mexico City, which became a focal point for their fundraising efforts.**



## Events

Driven by their experience, our Rice University group organized three amazing fundraising events that doubled as educational sessions, sharing Isla Urbana's mission and raising awareness about the water crisis in Mexico. Rice University students kicked off the campaign by hosting a coffee booth, followed by a water-themed cupcake sale, and finishing with a hot chocolate sale.

**They were able to fundraise enough money for the installation of two rainwater harvesting systems.**



**Nearby in the Dallas area, our Leadership Prep School student group shared a similar passion for fundraising after their experience with our Summer Program. These students organized a fantastic donut sale at their school and raised \$108, showcasing the impact of grassroots fundraising. Outstanding work, Leadership Prep Team!**

**On October 27th, our Oregon team kicked off our Agua Vida Campaign by holding a drop-in Cafe Con Leche and Espresso Bar event on October 27th! This event was a great success and raised \$815! Well done, Oregon team!**

Last but certainly not least, our Minnesota team hosted two remarkable events this year, celebrating community, culture, and the transformative power of rainwater harvesting. **On November 7th, 80 attendees enjoyed an evening featuring authentic Mole from Oaxaca, an arts and crafts sale with handmade pieces from Oaxaca and Jalisco, vibrant music by the Son Jarocho Collective, captivating dancing, and heartfelt stories shared by Maribel Gallardo, Regional Coordinator.**





**On November 14th, their second event took place at Eleven, a stunning venue overlooking the Mississippi River, where Latin music by Rose and Francisco created a warm atmosphere.** This event brought together business professionals, water advocates, artists, students, and Isla Urbana funders, with Maribel once again sharing her powerful stories from Oaxaca.





# Agua Vida 2023 Achievements

Reflecting on the many successes of last year's Agua Vida campaign we are very proud to share the latest meaningful benefit it provided. The funds generated from Agua Vida 2023 supporters made it possible to install a rainwater harvesting system at a school in La Unión Zaragoza, a community within the town of Nochixtlán, Oaxaca.

**The impact of this system has not only improved access to clean water but has also strengthened the resilience and well-being of the communities we support.**



## 1 School Systems Installed

- 13 People Impacted
- 21,926 Gallons Harvested Annually







“

*I am deeply grateful to everyone who supported this system. In my town, many families, especially the most vulnerable ones, live in remote areas where they must haul water using donkeys or carry it in small buckets. When I was young, I used to carry water too—it’s essential for everything. Rain is the source of life and absolutely indispensable. Water comes first. A Rainmaker is someone who plants a seed and nurtures it with care.* ”

Nazario Ruiz, installation technician  
at Isla Urbana Mexico

Nazario was born in this community and despite living much of his life in Mexico City, he visits the town frequently. He was not only the reason why we installed a system in this school, but he helped install the system himself. He is both proud and thankful to be able to bring his rainwater harvesting work to the place he once called home.

# Additional Fundraising Events This Year

## Agua Unida

**Agua Unida is an annual water festival thrown by our student group at North Hills Prep in conjunction with the Junior World Affairs Council in Dallas, Texas. The festival includes live music played by students, carnival games to play, and various snacks to eat! Our amazing young rainmakers at North Hills Prep raised an impressive \$2,500 to support student participation in our 2024 Student Summer Program.**

## World Water Day 2024

**On March 22nd, we celebrated World Water Day with a special fundraiser, raising \$2,700 to support the initial development of The Rainmaker App. This interactive tool will serve as a platform for our student groups and will continue to be developed in conjunction with our students in 2025.**

**In addition to improving the tracking of our programs and their impacts, the app will strengthen connections between our Rainmakers and the communities we serve.**

**By providing real-time insights and fostering open communication, we aim to create a growing network of Student Rainmakers dedicated to sustainable water access in Mexico.**





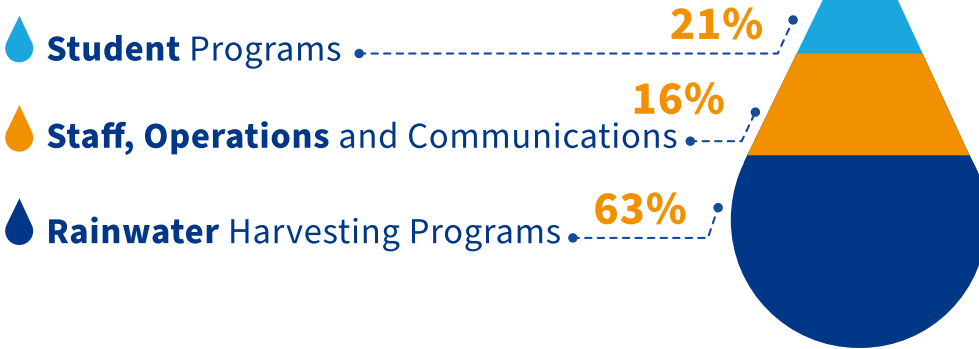
# Financials



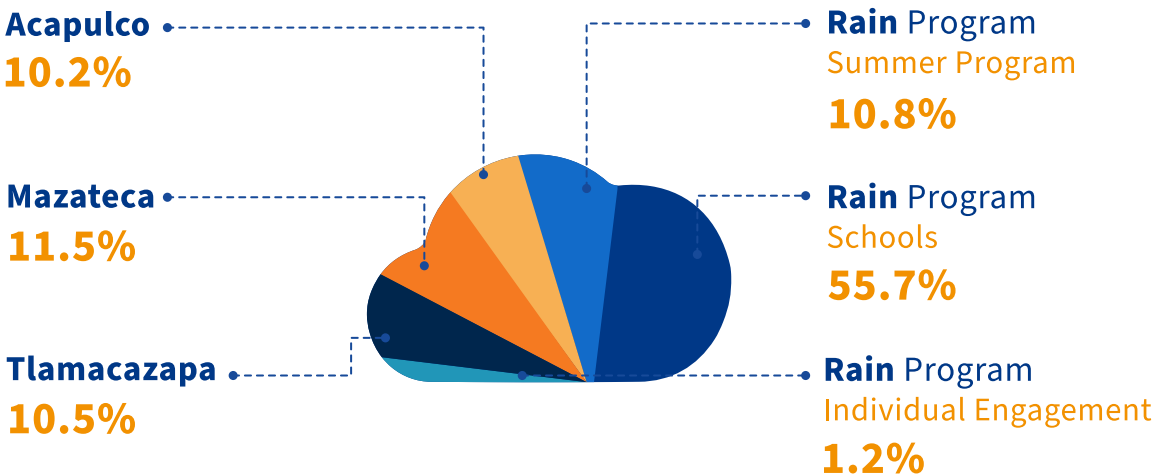
# 2024 Financials

We Fundraised  
**\$190,752.12**  
(1.52x more than 2023)

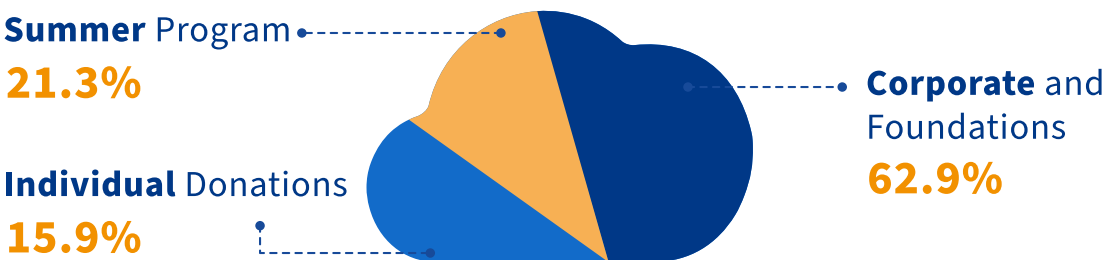
## Expense Breakdown (through Dec 12th)



## Contribution by Project Area



## Revenue by Source





# Growth



# Growth and Milestones

## Looking back over the years



**500**

**Systems Installed to date**  
**102 in 2024**

(20.4% installed this year)



**12,276**

**Beneficiaries to date**  
**3,257 in 2024**

(26.5% benefitted this year)



**3,375,970**

**Gallons Harvested to date**  
**3,489,313 in 2024**

(27.3% of total harvested this year)

## 2024 Key Milestones



### Summer Program

**30 Attendees this year**

(Up 50% from last year)



### Student Engagement

**4 new school collaborations in 2024**



### Digital Outreach

**New Instagram Account Launched in March**

- 321 followers
- 156 posts
- Reach: 11.9K



### Corporate Partnerships

**2 New Partners**



### Agua Vida Supporters Givebutter Direct Donors

(107 in 2024, 86 in 2023)

### Event Supporters

(236 in 2024, 190 in 2023)

### In-person US events

6 in 2024, 3 events in 2023

(up 50%)

### Upgraded Website Launched in October

- Better descriptions
- Clearer numerical transparency
- More engaging visual layouts

### Newsletters

- 12 Sent
- 363 People On The Mailing List



# In the Press



# Isla Urbana Media Mentions & Awards

This year, Isla Urbana is proud to have gained significant recognition for our work driving sustainable water solutions, and the impact we have made. We are proud to share our mission with a broad audience and continue driving positive change on a global scale.

## Recognized By:

From **NBC News** (Broadcasting Company)



“In Mexico City, women water harvesters help make up for drought and dicey public water system”. [Article here](#)

From **The Project Management Institute** (Professional Development Group)



“Isla Urbana’s Escuelas de Lluvia: One of the Top 20 Most Influential Projects of 2024”. [Article here](#)

From **What Design Can Do** (Social Impact Initiative)



Speaking Event Promo [Article here](#)

## Awarded By:

From **Global Warming Mitigation Project**



[Project Keeling Curve Prize Winner](#): Awarded to ten innovative climate solutions that have demonstrated exceptional innovation and commitment to tackling climate change in their respective fields.

From **Pentair Foundation**



[Water Grants Program Winner](#): Awarded to nine water-focused programs in support of their mission to advance inclusive and sustainable communities.



# IUUSA Team



# Meet the Isla Urbana USA Team

## Renata Fenton – Director .....



**What is a rain/water related insight you think everyone should know?**

*All the water we consume ultimately originates from rainwater.*

**How has rain shaped your view of the world this year?**

*Rain is a universal phenomenon, but our responses to it are deeply personal. Whether it's seen as a blessing or an inconvenience, our perception reflects the unique lens shaped by individual life experiences..*

**If you were a drop of rain, where would you want to land?**

*Somewhere purposeful.*

**How were you a Rainmaker this year?**

*I have experienced deeply meaningful moments of connection with supporters, team members, and individuals in the communities we serve, all rooted in our shared appreciation for rainwater.*

## Christopher Isele – Operations and Accounting Associate .....



**What is a rain/water related insight you think everyone should know?**

*Poor rainwater management can affect both areas that get enough rain and areas that don't.*

**How has rain shaped your view of the world this year?**

*Everything should be in balance. Too much or not enough can cause issues.*

**If you were a drop of rain, where would you want to land?**

*Probably the ocean.*

**How were you a Rainmaker this year?**

*Helping to support IUUSA efforts to provide clean water to communities.*

## Melody Moore – Fundraising, Communications, and Administration Associate .....



**What is a rain/water related insight you think everyone should know?**

*The Xochimilco canals, an innovation pioneered by the Xochimilca and crucial to the Aztec Empire's agriculture, exemplifying a history of sustainability in pre-Hispanic Mexico.*

**How has rain shaped your view of the world this year?**

*Coming from the rainy UK, where rain is often taken for granted, experiencing its celebration in Mexico made me rethink its significance and the need to harness it.*

**If you were a drop of rain, where would you want to land?**

*At the top of the Andes to become part of a rushing stream and and journey through valley and plains.*

**How were you a Rainmaker this year?**

*Visiting Logoche and helping Isla Urbana Mexico build a 52,000-liter tank, which taught me about the diversity of Mexico's water needs due to the varying rainfall and conditions of each region.*



**Barritt Reynolds – Student Summer Program Coordinator** .....



**What is a rain/water related insight you think everyone should know?**

*The smell of the rain, ‘Petricor’, is currently being studied for its stress-reduction properties. Not only does the rain give us life, but it also makes us chemically feel happier and more relaxed!*

**How has rain shaped your view of the world this year?**

*This year, rain feels more vital than ever, as LA’s wildfires highlight the urgency of collective action to protect, conserve, harvest, and reuse water.*

**If you were a drop of rain, where would you want to land?**

*In Los Angeles*

**How were you a Rainmaker this year?**

*This year, I hosted a fundraiser for Isla Urbana USA in my hometown and collaborated with student activists in Mexico City during the Student Summer Program.*

**Stuart Murray – Community Manager** .....



**What is a rain/water related insight you think everyone should know?**

*Humanity’s resilience to water scarcity throughout history is remarkable, showcasing both past and present innovation—though I wish it were history, it reflects the strength of the human spirit.*

**How has rain shaped your view of the world this year?**

*In under a year working with Isla Urbana USA, I’ve learned so much about rain’s immense power—specifically how its abundance and absence shapes many lives.*

**If you were a drop of rain, where would you want to land?**

*Somewhere dry, rather than into a lake where I’d be just one of many!*

**How were you a Rainmaker this year?**

*I used our Instagram account to find more Rainmakers out there who love both the rain, and what Isla Urbana does.*

**Celsa Calderoni – Visual Documentation @ CamaroniProducciones** .....



**What is a rain/water related insight you think everyone should know?**

*Right now, someone somewhere in the world needs clean water. Simply being aware of this can help get clean water to that person.*

**How has rain shaped your view of the world this year?**

*I traveled to Mazateca to document IUUSA’s work. This region has heavy rainfall, but the people lack the technology and capacity to store the water. We must help maximize the rain’s potential.*

**If you were a drop of rain, where would you want to land?**

*Somewhere I’m appreciated and valued.*

**How were you a Rainmaker this year?**

*I’ve promoted stories emerging from rain and rain awareness, aiming to create a culture of appreciation and water utilization in areas that need it most.*

**Angie Irais Soto Tinoco – Graphic Designer** .....



**What is a rain/water related insight you think everyone should know?**

*That rain / water brings life to all organisms on planet earth and has a very strong symbolism in many cultures representing that water must be cared for.*

**How has rain shaped your view of the world this year?**

*Harvesting rain is so important for communities without clean water access. Rural areas seem more conscious of water usage than city dwellers, which is understandable. Every drop counts for better living.*

**If you were a drop of rain, where would you want to land?**

*The ocean!! To be able to swim with the whales.*

**How were you a Rainmaker this year?**

*I created engaging graphic designs for their amazing projects, took better care of water, and spread the importance of rain harvesting with my community and loved ones.*

**Ava Cohen – Content Writing and Storytelling Fellow, Illinois** .....



**What is a rain/water related insight you think everyone should know?**

*The average American family wastes up to 9,400 gallons of water annually.*

**How has rain shaped your view of the world this year?**

*Rain reflects nature’s resilience through cycles of change and growth, reminding us that it nourishes us and we must respect and appreciate all our planet provides us.*

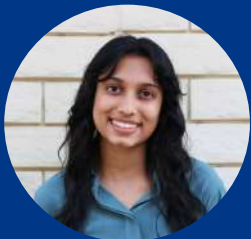
**If you were a drop of rain, where would you want to land?**

*In the ocean to reunite with other water droplets and journey across the world.*

**How were you a Rainmaker this year?**

*I crafted written and visual communications material showcasing how Isla Urbana’s programs transform lives through rainwater harvesting.*

**Anusri Chinni – Engineering and Design Volunteer, Texas** .....



**What is a rain/water related insight you think everyone should know?**

*Rain is one of nature’s most generous resources, yet it often goes unnoticed. Embracing rain as a sustainable water source reminds us to be more mindful of the world around us.*

**How has rain shaped your view of the world this year?**

*Rain deepened my appreciation of nature’s capacity to provide solutions to challenges. As a symbol of renewal and abundance, it inspires me to see everyday resources with sustainability and creativity.*

**If you were a drop of rain, where would you want to land?**

*In a Tlaloquito, joining other raindrops in a life-giving system that sustains communities.*

**How were you a Rainmaker this year?**

*I developed a pumpless floating filter intake device for electricity-free water access in Mazatec, led my school chapter, helped plan the 2024 Student Summer Program, and fundraised \$3,000 for Agua Unida.*



# Isla Urbana USA Board Members

## Renata Fenton – Chair

### Elisa Sabatini – Secretary of the Board .....



**What is a rain/water related insight you think everyone should know?**

*Water is life and we need to respect rain as a gifted resource.*

**How has rain shaped your view of the world this year?**

*The rain that swept through the south US during the hurricanes shows us the need to honor the power of rain.*

**If you were a drop of rain, where would you want to land?**

*Right now, on the fires in Los Angeles.*

**How were you a Rainmaker this year?**

*My efforts have been in the stewardship of resources to bring water systems to Mexican communities. May we encourage more support in 2025.*

### Jaime Croteau – Treasurer of the Board .....



**What is a rain/water related insight you think everyone should know?**

*That the solution for the water crisis for millions of people in Mexico and around the world literally falls on them - the solution is rain! It's just a matter of getting the infrastructure to harvest it. .*

**How has rain shaped your view of the world this year?**

*That what is healing in some contexts is destructive in others.*

**If you were a drop of rain, where would you want to land?**

*I would fall into the headwaters of the Colorado River so that I could enjoy some of my favorite parts of the U.S. as I flow through its rapids and then hopefully help the river reach Mexico again.*

**How were you a Rainmaker this year?**

*By having the honor to serve on the board for Isla Urbana USA, an organization that is making life better for so many people through rainwater harvesting.*



**Thank You!**





## To Our Supporters, Partners, Collaborators, Rainmakers, and Friends, Thank You.

On behalf of the entire Isla Urbana community, we are so grateful you have chosen to become a critical part of our ability to bring clean, reliable water to those who need it most. We could not do it without you, and we are so appreciative of you all. Your unwavering support, consistent dedication, and generous contributions mean the world to us—and to our rainwater harvesting system beneficiaries.

**Your commitment to inspiring meaningful change, even across geographical boundaries, is immensely admirable. For that, we are eternally thankful.**

Every drop of progress we achieve is fueled by your collective belief in our mission. Together, we are transforming lives, one raindrop at a time. Here's to another year of creating a world where water connects us all.

**With Gratitude,  
The Isla Urbana USA Team**

**We would like to give a special shout out to:**



**IslaUrbana**

Isla Urbana USA is a proud member of the Isla Urbana organization network, a pioneering institution harnessing rainwater harvesting for water sustainability.



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**#Rainmakers #RainForAll**

[www.islaurbana.org/en/](http://www.islaurbana.org/en/) · [@islaurbanausa](https://twitter.com/islaurbanausa)

Annual Report 2024