

Fun, conviviality, and learning

THE CALIVERANOS

Rubí Gómez. CALIVERANOS Coordinator of Mexicali



A CALI-VERANO is an educational program based on corporal expression, especially play. It aims for children, adolescents, and young people to have fun, play, live together, and learn. Corporal expression accompanied by reflection is a great educational tool through which people can modify their behavior and internalize values. CALI-VERANO (SUMMER) is different from school precisely because it opts for corporal expression (play, dance, mime, theater, singing, drawing, crafts, etc.) as an essential element for education.

CALI-VERANO is aimed at all children, adolescents, and young people during vacation time, regardless of religious or political beliefs. Although it is of Catholic inspiration, it is not proselytizing.

The CALI-VERANOS offer the child the possibility of leaving the routine, leaving home, the bad family environment when it happens, the loneliness, the boredom, and offer a time and a space to have fun, to coexist, to LEARN. For the child to freely abandon television and games to break the emotional dependencies with parents and siblings, the proposal of the SUMMER SCHOOL must be very tempting and attractive. Likewise, the CALI-VERANOS offer the youth and adults, as educators, immense opportunities for their personal development and growth. It is also an enormous benefit for the community or institution where it takes place.

The educators who carry out the CALI-VERANOS are called "*tíos*". The uncle (*tío*) is the educator who accompanies the child in his educational process from the whole experience that is lived in the CALI-VERANOS, being aware that as he educates, the uncle is also educated. The uncle is the child's educator, especially in his free time, that is to say, in vacation time.

CALI-VERANO indicates SUMMER IN THE CALIFORNIAS because this project is carried out in Mexican and American California.

The legal, pedagogical, and economic responsibility of the Cali-Summers falls on the Civil Association "EDUCACIÓN SOLIDARIA EN LAS CALIFORNIAS," legally established with the RFC ESC070504D89. This Association is formed by the religious of the Order of the Pious Schools. Margalef is the Association's direct liaison with the Project.

The Association has appointed Claudia Martinez as General Director and also as General Coordinator of the CALI-VERANOS, who animates the persons in charge of each zone: Rubi Gomez in Mexicali, junior Miguel Montejo in Tijuana, Fr. Roberto Morales in Los Angeles. Roberto Morales in Los Angeles. They organize the different CALI-VERANOS in each place.

WHAT IS A SENSI-SUMMER?

The CALI-VERANOS generally serves children between six and twelve, corresponding to primary school grades. Experience has taught us that a certain age is required to become an uncle, set at sixteen. What to do with the children who have gone through the CALI-VERANOS and cannot yet become uncles? In the summer of 2007, SENSI-VERANOS was born, a type of CALI-VERANOS for pre-adolescents between thirteen and fifteen years of age. These CALI-VERANOS are designed so that even at this age, they can enjoy, live together and learn, and in a special way so that they can become "aware," hence the word SENSI-VERANO, so that one day they can be uncles.

Very often the pre-adolescents who come to SENSI-VERANO come from different colonies. Also, due to the age of the children and the planning requirements, it is necessary to have uncles with unique abilities to be able to offer this service. Solidarity with Fundació Educació Solidària and Colònies Jordi Turull, works of the Order of the Pious Schools of Catalonia, has been a key factor in the birth and sound development of CALI-VERANOS and SENSI-VERANOS.

HISTORY OF THE CALI-VERANOS

In the Californias, both Mexican and American, children have almost two months of vacation in the summer. As it is well known by both parents and teachers, this long time is not without its problems... How to entertain children positively? How to prevent TV, video games, and the internet from devouring their time and minds. And their hearts? How to control the risks of time spent in the street? How to turn this recreation time into a real "recreation" time, that is to say, a time in which the person recreates, becomes creative again, and enjoys, for his own good and the good of others? How can you enjoy the vacation if poverty and the environment often prevent you from leaving home?

In 1996, inspired by the Piarist Sadurní Tudela, a resident in Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico, and with the support of the Piarists Manuel Bagunyà and Ferrán Mateos, who lived in Catalonia, the first group of young Catalan volunteers arrived and, together with a group of local young people, started summer recreational activities with the children of Colonia Mexico in Tijuana. They are called VERANOS FELICES (HAPPY SUMMERS). In the following years, the summer recreational activities expanded to Ensenada as BUFAVERANOS and to Mexicali (1998), as CACHIVERANOS, all Mexican cities, and in 2005 they crossed the border and were held in Planada, a town located in California, USA. In 2006, the STELLAR SUMMER was held in the courtyards of the parish of St. Therese. Thus, since 1996, Piarist communities, parishes and other religious and lay institutions have provided children and young people a time for fun, games, learning, and socializing during school vacations.

Inspired by the model of the Colonies Jordi Turull, promoted by the Escola Pia de Catalunya for more than forty years in Catalonia, now in the Californias, hundreds of children are immersed in a fantasy story, which we call "Center of Interest" and enjoy a few hours to play, to play sports, to sing, to sing, to sing, to play sports, to sing, to dance, to learn crafts, to draw, paint and cut out, to perform theater, to go out of their marginalized neighborhoods and visit parks, or museums, or to dive into a swimming pool. All these are not as individual activities but as part of a magical story, which gives meaning and unity to all the activities and excites the child, inviting them to participate actively.

For many children, it will be the first time they leave their neighborhood to get to know realities close to their community that were never within their reach. The children enjoy themselves, and the parents are reassured, knowing that their children are not only in protective hands but also in educating hands.

But there are also dozens of young people, above all, and adults from all kinds of institutions and that made "leisure time educators," they find a healthy and positive environment, they learn to be generous, develop their qualities, to know how to be helpful, to give back what they have received. They grow in the human and beautiful art of solidarity. Our institutions are strengthened. We have promoted, with varied fortune, in each place, ways of training these educators of free time or "uncles" as they are called somewhere in recognition of the nomenclature of Chinchachoma, a Piarist educator of street children, of happy memory. We want to move towards efficiency, towards professionalization. It takes work.

The driving force of these different summers from the beginning have been the young volunteers coming from a thousand corners of the Mexican Republic, from Los Angeles USA and above all from Catalonia who share their time, their money, their knowledge, their skills, their friendship, their longing for a more fraternal world.

FUTURE OBJECTIVES

- We are looking for a general coordinator for the Caliverano program, after that we will work on bimonthly meetings with the coordinators of each site to improve communication and linkage.
- Resume large fundraising events, for example, in Mexicali: Bohemian night and cachi boteo.
- And as we do every year, expand, and open more caliveranos in the communities where they are most needed.
- Resume the bufaverano.



This is my first year coordinating a sensiverano, I have learned things that I didn't know I could achieve, I am taking with me a beautiful experience, a home, a family. Here I met super extraordinary people, people with a noble heart and very nice. I learned that I have a great team and my biggest challenge this year was to coordinate because I was a person who did not believe I was capable of leading a group, and the truth is that I was very afraid at the beginning, I did not say that I did it perfectly because of course I had my mistakes, I had my stumbles, but I made it and I was learning. I have a leading team, a team that I know that in the future can be the future coordinators of a sensi and cachi. I am very happy and very satisfied with the work we did.

Jackeline Urbina
Mexicali, rivera campestre





