



which began in mid-March. During her six months there, she will help set up a sports program at an elementary school on the island nation 1,700 km east of Australia.

For Christmas, the staff at the Canadian San Salvador mission, using personal funds, bought toys for underprivileged children in Usulután, a town 90 km east of the capital. Some 60 children were waiting with their parents at a spot set up by the El Salvador Salvation Army, which arranged the event as part of its Tree of Life program. Consul Bronson Borst remembers the joy he felt as every child's face lit up as they received a gift: "The boys and girls were just thrilled, some running off excitedly before we could even take their pictures. It was a day that reinvigorated my faith in the impact we can have on the lives of others."

For 17 years, the embassy in Santiago has been supporting underprivileged children at a daycare centre in the Chilean capital. The Aldea Mis Amigos centre, which is run by Sister Hélène Gagnon of the Congrégation du Bon Conseil in Chicoutimi, Que., offers classes and meals to young children whose parents—often single mothers working seasonally in precarious jobs—are away from home during the day. Besides relative poverty, the neighbourhood has problems of violence, alcohol and drugs.

At Christmas, each embassy employee buys presents and clothing for a child at the centre—gifts that often add immeasurably to the children's holiday celebrations. The embassy offers books to the centre, as well as used computers for the computer room.



This year, through a silent auction, a photo competition, and the sale of tickets offered to the ambassador for concerts by such Canadian artists as Justin Bieber and Avril Lavigne, staff raised more than \$2,000 to buy supplies and books and to pay for swimming classes and other sports activities for the children.

"We are always delighted to bring help and happiness to the children and their families," says Trade Commissioner Renée Plouffe. "Even after 17 years, it provides personal rewards that we look forward to each year."

Above left: Canada Day in Jordan
photo: DFAIT

Above right: Jordanian women selling preserves, honey and olive oil on Canada Day
photo: DFAIT

Lower left: Thrills at the Parkway Hills Raceway in Canberra
photo: Joel Cléroux/ DFAIT

Lower right: Gideon Lundholm's Mover in New Delhi
photo: DFAIT