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**Helping coffee-farming families improve the quality of their lives.**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**GREEN MOUNTAIN COFFEE ROASTERS MAKES \$500,000 COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION IN NICARAGUA**

(Santa Fe, N.M.) – Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, Inc. (GMCR), of Waterbury, VT, has committed nearly \$500,000 over four years to Coffee Kids, a Santa Fe-based nonprofit dedicated to helping coffee-farming families improve their quality of life. The funds will be used to support scholarship projects in Nicaragua.

GMCR is committed to supporting quality of life initiatives in coffee-farming communities and is a longtime supporter of Coffee Kids.

“Nicaragua is one of the countries with the greatest need in the Western Hemisphere. As part of our mission, we are dedicated to helping the families at coffee’s origin,” said Rick Peyser, director of social advocacy and coffee community outreach at GMCR. “Coffee Kids helps families reduce their dependence on coffee and supports innovative development efforts in coffee-farming communities.”

According to Unicef, 24 percent of children in Nicaragua are not in the school system. Many families are caught in a cycle of poverty as children are forced to leave school at a young age to help their families in the fields.

In the city of Matagalpa, Coffee Kids supports a scholarship program managed by the Center of Coffee Cooperatives of the North (CECOCAFEN), which represents 2,553 farmers. The Society of Small Producers for Coffee Export (SOPPEXCCA) in Jinotega, which represents 650 coffee farmers, manages a youth leadership and environmental education program.

With GMCR’s support, the CECOCAFEN program will be expanded and SOPPEXCCA will add a scholarship component to their efforts. The scholarship programs are based on the work of the Rural Children’s Education Foundation (FHC) in Costa Rica.

In 1996, Coffee Kids partnered with COOCAFE, a cooperative in Costa Rica, to create this unique foundation that provides high school, vocational school and university students with scholarships. Since its inception, FHC has provided over 2,000 high school scholarships, more than 800 university scholarships and nearly 250 elementary school grants in 50 coffee-farming communities.

**-NEXT-**

### **GMCR-Coffee Kids Donation – ADD ONE**

In the first year of GMCR funding, Coffee Kids will facilitate an exchange between leaders from SOPPEXCCA, CECOCAFEN and FHC to learn about creating and implementing similar scholarship programs.

Throughout the four years of the project, more than 820 scholarships will be awarded to students at the middle school, high school, technical and university levels. Additional funds will be directed to sustainability initiatives that will ensure the long-term viability of the projects.

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Coffee Kids, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of coffee-farming families. Founded in 1988, the organization works closely with partners in coffee-growing communities to create community-based programs that respect the values, cultural integrity and ingenuity of the communities.

Coffee Kids supports economic diversification, education, and healthcare programs in Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Peru. To learn more about Coffee Kids or to make a donation, please visit [www.coffeekids.org](http://www.coffeekids.org) or call 505-820-1443.

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