

Beat: Music

Shakira Helping Build Schools in South America

Singer Founded Pies Descalzos Foundation

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USPA NEWS - Colombian-born musician Shakira is being hailed for helping to build a seventh school in the poorest districts of South America.

Her organization, the Pies Descalzos Foundation, has built seven schools in Colombia since it launched in 1997. The most recent is the Institucion Nuevo Bosque, opened in her home town of Barranquilla in 2019. The educational accomplishment is in partial thanks to the foundation's collaboration with the FC Barcelona foundation and the "La Caixa" Banking Foundation.

In 2016, 25.7% of the area's population lived below the poverty line. While announcing plans for the new school, Shakira made a point of explaining how educating a community is the best way for it to overcome poverty. "When we started to build schools in Colombia 25 years ago, we chose remote areas where there was absolutely nothing at all. No infrastructure, roads or even potable water," said the singer in a statement. "We built schools where the government was absent and thousands of children didn't have access to quality education. The transformation was immediate. Jobs were generated, malnutrition plummeted, and the students responded well academically."

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Wendy writes for the United States Press Agency and is a former columnist with the Fulton County Expositor, Wauseon, Ohio.

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
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