

NEW JERSEY MEMBERS HOLD RELIEF DRIVE FOR COLOMBIA

The members of Liberty District in Englewood, N.J., were determined to do something to support the people of Colombia after the devastating earthquake there. Upon investigation, they learned that the most needed supplies were food, dry milk, flash lights and batteries, water and baby supplies. Their spirit and determination soon spread throughout the entire New Jersey Region, and a relief drive was in progress. In all, New Jersey members shipped 1,600 pounds of supplies to Colombia.

Maria Billa, representing the consul-general's office in New York, came to the New Jersey Community Center on March 7 to accept the donations on behalf of the people of Colombia. More than 200 members greeted her with a cheery "*Bienvenito*" as she entered the room. Especially touched to see the children who had lined up to greet her, Ms. Billa said: "To see so many people gathered today makes me very happy. It is very nice to see the children, and to see that someone cares for children in other places. In Colombia, we are finding out that we are not alone through examples like this today and others throughout the world.... I can see that people here have a big heart and have service as their life."

The simple action of a young girl touched the hearts of everyone gathered at the community center. Ten-year-old Raven Hobson approached Ms. Billa following the ceremony, hugged her and whispered her sincere concern for the children of Colombia. "To see that children who have nothing to do with Colombia [are involved] is very touching," Ms. Billa responded.

— MARY MACK