



### ROYAL RESORTS FOUNDATION, CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY

From support for the sick or impoverished members of society to conservation, pioneer Cancun resort group Royal Resorts® has been helping those in need for 40 years. Through the Royal Resorts Foundation (Fundación Royal Resorts A.C.), it is seeking more ways to give back to society by promoting health and education, contributing to sustainable development in the state of Quintana Roo, and by protecting wildlife.

Throughout its history, Royal Resorts has supported social causes such as cancer relief, orphanages, shelters for the victims of domestic violence, charities for physically and mentally challenged children, and conservation. And since its inception in 2006, the Royal Resorts Foundation has given continuity to this philanthropic work with regular donations to the Red Cross, the Cancún-based conservation NGO Amigos de Sian Ka'án A.C., Grupo Desafío A.C. Cancer Relief and the Ciudad de la Alegría A.C. (City of Joy), a community center on the outskirts of Cancun comprising a hospice, old folks home, school, orphanage, a women's refuge and food distribution center.

Royal Resorts Foundation has chosen five key issues to be the beneficiaries of its fundraising initiatives: children's education, the fight against cancer, physiotherapy for children with physical and neurological challenges, conservation of the Mayan Jungle and a relief fund for employees to turn to in times of serious illness.

#### *Scholarships for Children*

Despite universal access to public primary and secondary education in Mexico, due to poverty many children still miss out on school altogether or are forced to abandon their studies to help support their families. In an attempt to address this problem in Cancun and surrounding areas, the Ciudad de la Alegria opened the Mano Amiga School in 2009 to give marginalized children the opportunity to study and for a better life. It now has over 1,000 eager students on its roll.





The Royal Resorts Foundation provides scholarships for 35 children in first grade so that they can continue their studies at the school, fulfill their academic potential and pursue their dreams. This is a way to transform their lives and give them a better future.

### *Campaigning against Cancer*

The Royal Resorts Foundation has made the fight against cancer one of its key causes in alliance with a Cancún-based charity Grupo Desafio de Quintana Roo A.C. Founded in 1999 by a group of women who have all fought their own battles with cancer, Grupo Desafio started life as a support network for breast cancer patients. Its mission is now to help all those living with cancer, regardless of sex, age or type of cancer. Since 2004, it has been the Quintana Roo state representative of the AMLCC (Asociacion Mexicana de la Lucha Contra el Cancer), the Mexican Cancer Association.

The group gives seminars on cancer, risk factors and the importance of early detection in colleges, the workplace and to community groups in Cancun and the Riviera Maya. It aims to discredit taboos about cancer and spread the word that the disease is curable if caught in time.

Thanks to the support given by the Royal Resorts Foundation and other donors, Grupo Desafio provides cancer screening and treatment for patients from the poorest sectors of society, giving them the weapons they need to combat the disease and a second chance for life. In 2017, Royal Resorts Foundation donations funded vital breast cancer screening, mammograms, ultrasounds or treatment for more than 400 women on a low income.

### *Employee Relief in Times of Need*

The Royal Resorts Foundation also gives a helping hand to employees in times of need. It supports the Royal Resorts Employee Relief Fund, which helps staff cope with grave illnesses such as cancer, major surgery or accidents and to provide care





for the terminally ill. Aid is given on a case-by-case basis and alleviates the burden on the household at a time when problems seem insurmountable. In 2016-2017, it helped 12 employees with health problems, including treatment for scoliosis, eye surgery, epilepsy medication, speech therapy for a child with Down's syndrome and providing hearing aids.

### *Protecting the Mayan Jungle*

Covering vast areas of the Yucatán Peninsula, Chiapas, northern Guatemala and Belize, the Great Maya Jungle is an ecological treasure house, widely regarded as one of the world's biodiversity hotspots and an important green lung. Yet its riches are under threat from urban sprawl, deforestation, forest fires and pollution. Rare species such as the jaguar, tapir, spider and howler monkey, parrots and toucans face habitat loss and poaching.

The Royal Resorts Foundation is participating in a regional initiative launched by Amigos de Sian Ka'an and the Mexican National Forestry Commission (CONAFOR) to safeguard four million hectares of tropical forest in the state of Quintana Roo not currently protected by reserves. And the goal of this campaign goes far beyond safeguarding the jungle and its inhabitants.

Beneath the forest floor and hidden deep in the rock is a network of underground rivers – the longest and most complex discovered to date anywhere in the world. This vast aquifer is the only source of fresh water in the limestone landscape of the Yucatán Peninsula and is also Mexico's most important water resource for future generations. The jungle must be protected and urban pollution prevented in order to keep the water pure.

The Royal Resorts Foundation is raising money in support of Amigos de Sian Ka'an's work with rural communities and *ejidatarios* or small farmers and landholders to protect the forest instead of clearing it for development. They receive environmental services payments for leaving the land untouched. In addition to





conserving the forest and the creatures that inhabit it, such actions increase carbon capture and help to offset the devastating effects of climate change.

Through the environmental services payment program coordinated by Amigos de Sian Ka'an, 22 landowners in Ejido Juarez and four in El Eden reserve in northern Quintana Roo are receiving grants in return for preserving the forest on their land for posterity instead of clearing it for agriculture or cattle ranching. To date, 400 hectares of forest have been saved using this system. Not only is the forest protected for the rare animals and birds that inhabit it, it represents the capture and storage of 30 percent of the carbon dioxide emissions generated by water production, water treatment plants and pumping in the Benito Juarez municipal district where Cancun is located.

El Eden reserve is of vital ecological importance in the area. Straddling a natural fault line, it is a zone of jungle and marshland peppered with cenotes, underground rivers and lagoons where water is plentiful year-round, attracting wildlife. It is home to forest and wetland birds, whitetail deer, peccary, spider monkey, jaguar, puma, ocelot and anteater, among others. Biologists have detected that it is a breeding area for jaguars and a refuge for female jaguars to rear their cubs in.

The goal is to expand the environmental services program in the north and center of the state, linking larger areas of forest to the Sian Ka'an biosphere reserve and creating natural wildlife corridors for threatened species like the jaguar.

#### *Therapy for Physically Challenged Children at the Cancun CRIT Clinic*

In November 2016, Royal Resorts Foundation made a donation to the CRIT Rehabilitation Center in Cancun (Centro de Rehabilitacion e Inclusion Infantil Teleton) to cover the costs of physiotherapy for six children with motor, bone and neuromuscular diseases.





The CRIT Center is run by a Mexican charity called Fundacion Teleton, which has 23 CRIT Centers all over the country and a Children's Cancer Hospital, and provides coverage for 294,172 children.

### *Spreading Happiness*

The Royal Resorts Foundation also has a Spreading Happiness campaign with the local community. Its goal is to help those in need and bring a smile to their faces. To date, Spreading Happiness initiatives have included Toy Drives at the resorts to collect toys for children's parties at Christmas, Three Kings Day on January 6 and Children's Day, events for the elderly and visits to poor communities to distribute food and groceries.

### *Royal Resorts Foundation Race*

Every February, the Royal Resorts Foundation organizes an annual charity race to raise money for a cause. In 2016, the cause was to build a home for a child with brittle bone syndrome and in 2017 to rebuild the house of a 74-year-old man with a wife and son with serious physical challenges. In 2018, 700 runners took part in the race over 10 or 5 kilometers or the 3k walk to support the construction of a kitchen at a community center for vulnerable young people in one of Cancún's poorest neighborhoods.

### *Royal Resorts Foundation Fundraising & Activities*

In 2017, the Royal Resorts Foundation raised over USD\$378,000 for its community and conservation causes through the Dollar a Stay campaign at the resorts (an optional US\$1 donation is charged to guests' bills), additional donations by members and employees, fundraising events organized by staff, the sale of recyclable trash and more.





*About Royal Resorts*

Founded in 1975, Royal Resorts is a pioneer in the Mexican tourism industry and has four beachfront resorts in Cancún: The Royal Cancun<sup>®</sup>, The Royal Caribbean<sup>®</sup>, The Royal Islander<sup>®</sup> and The Royal Sands<sup>®</sup> and one in Playa del Carmen, The Royal Haciendas<sup>®</sup>, located at the heart of the Riviera Maya. The latest member of the Royal Resorts collection is Grand Residences Riviera Cancun<sup>®</sup>, a luxury beachfront resort affiliated with The Leading Hotels of the World<sup>®</sup> to the south of the traditional Mexican fishing village of Puerto Morelos.

For further information contact: [media@royalresorts.com](mailto:media@royalresorts.com)

