NEWSLETTER

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LaCaravanaEscuela

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THE LCE RESPONSE TO THE EARTHQUAKES OF JUNE 24 TH, 2026

As you know, for more than seven years we have worked non-stop in several rural communities and technical schools in Venezuela, driven in part by a severe economic crisis. We went out into the field as **"metallurgical paramedics"**, attending to the desperate urgency of entire villages due to the lack of tools for planting and harvesting.

Equipped as an expedition, under a canopy of tents, we have trained hundreds of farmers and forged tens of thousands of tools that have improved the quantity and quality of crops, significantly transforming the quality of life of those who produce the food we depend on for a living. Without them working the fields we will starve.

Since the beginning of 2019, this purpose has kept us busy and inspired, training and improving our responsiveness to each new challenge. On June 24, 2026, on the central coast of Venezuela, the earth shook. Without warning, within seconds, an unprecedented two earthquakes took us by surprise. Thousands of people lost their lives instantly, and others were trapped under the rubble. In the midst of uncertainty, people came to the rescue with their hands, without tools or equipment to save their loved ones trapped under the rubble, while we, from M**érida, more than 600 miles away, wondered how we should act. Thank God, in our Base Workshop we have a large inventory forged tools and equipment that we knew would be providential for the delicate rescue maneuvers during the first and shocking hours of the tragedy.**

The problem was that Merida's willing rescuers were poorly equipped to operate in collapsed structures. **We quickly managed to equip four units of elite rescuers (from the Andean Rescue Group and the Enrique Bourgoin Rescue Group) with hundreds of chisels, dozens of prybars, long lever bars, potato hoes, gloves, safety glasses and even a large bolt cutter.**

These tools which we had forged together with rural communities from recycled automotive steel made a difference in the effectiveness of manual labor in the early days of the disaster rescue.

This left us with a deep reflection: if we couldn't prevent huge buildings from being built in risk areas, and we did not cultivate an anti-seismic consciousness in the population, we must at least be prepared to improve the effectiveness of those rescues that can only be done by hand, using hammers and chisels to break, and bars to move and remove debris. Understanding that saving a survivor trapped in a labyrinth of remnant concrete demands extreme delicacy because, paradoxically, the use of heavy machinery could destabilize the structure and take their lives in seconds.

With the raw tragedy of the earthquakes so fresh in our minds and hearts, **La Caravana Escuela** have created and will continue to develop a new production line focused on disaster response, in order to maintain a wide inventory of rescue tools to save lives when the country needs them. Once the arduous recovery work at ground zero is concluded, we will use the direct testimonies of the rescue teams to perfect the designs and effectiveness of the tools.

These tools, born for farming work and construction, have now become instruments to save lives, and should be an indispensable part of every rescue brigade in Venezuela.

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WE NAILED IT

There is news that is written in ink and others that is sculpted with hammer and fire. At **the Fe y Alegría School in San Javier del Valle**, in the Andes of Mérida, second-year high school students, joining forces with **La Caravana Escuela,** are taking on a historic task: to forge by hand, one by one, the nails to restore the ancient and enormous doors of the Minor Basilica of Mérida, one of the most beautiful cathedrals in the country.



It is not an industrial job; it is a manual process of preservation and respect. These are very specific nails, with a square section, a pyramidal tip and a faceted head, designed to replace the original nails, now worn by the years. The new nails must be able, as a whole, to support a weight calculated to be 2,000 pounds: each new nail must be thicker, stronger and slightly longer than those originally forged between 1944 and 1960.

WE NAILED IT



These new nails are forged using round bars of AISI 1020 steel with a diameter of 9.25 millimeters.



For the first pair of doors **we are making 400 nails, each forged with deep Love,** Faith and Joy by young people from at least eight rural communities in the country, who study and reside in this technical boarding school nestled in the beautiful mountains of Merida.





«A nail for my school»

With this campaign aimed at the technical schools that work with us, **we propose that each student, when lighting the forge of the school workshop, begins their day by forging a square nail, which will be stamped on the head with their school's logo.** By the end of the year, hundreds of hand-forged nails will be sold generating income for the school, helping to keep the workshops in a circular way, and improving education. Because a youth who forges a nail, not only forges a useful piece: **he also forges himself.**



ALIGNED WITH NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS

For seven years, La Caravana Escuela has been showing in practice what the 2025 **Nobel Prize winners in Economics Joel Mokyr, Philippe Aghion and Peter Howitt affirmed:** *True sustainable development does not depend only on large financial capitals, but on living ecosystems where technical and practical knowledge circulates, adapts and accumulates in the community.*





Desde 2019, el tejido colaborativo de **La Caravana Escuela** ha logrado que los herreros del campo y estudiantes de las escuelas técnicas no sólo **reÅ suelvan las necesidades inmediatas de la tierra y la construcción, sino que ya estén fabricando herramientas y utensilios de cocina con altos estándares de calidad.**



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THE SCHOOL: THE ART OF INHABITING *momentum*

In a world dazzled by screens, which celebrates and at the same time is conditioned by Artificial Intelligence, the forge emerges as a sanctuary of absolute presence. **La Caravana Escuela** does not teach from obedience or doctrine; **it educates from curiosity, self-discovery and horizontal respect** among equals. Thus, **when forging a piece of iron, character, friendship and mutual trust are also forged.**

Unlike a weaver who can undo a knot, or a carpenter who can glue the wood, **the blacksmith works to the rhythm of fire and the plasticity of steel** that, only when it is very hot, allows it to modify its shape. Hot iron does not admit hesitation. When the metal leaves the forge red hot, a mystical window opens for just a few seconds. If you make a mistake, you ruin the piece or get burned. It is the momentum where the brain, **eye, and hand must come into focus in order to operate together and become one.** This repetitive practice generates in the Blacksmith a neural network that allows him to transcend the forge to encompass the individual and his community. That is why we assume blacksmithing as a foundational



trade, and we propose that in each community and in each technical school of the country a Forging Workshop be established.

We are a school, but also a productive factory with a profoundly inclusive and developing circular educational model: our **Rural Forging Workshops** show that value and livelihood can be generated even without depending on electricity.



THANKS

to the support and donations of our allies, we can continue to operate to continuously improve and expand our model, planting forges and anvils in agricultural communities and technical schools, growing progressively throughout the country.o del país.

METALLURGICAL HARVESTING





TODAY, OUR PRODUCTION CONSISTS OF FOUR MAIN LINES:

Agricultural Tools:
Horseshoes, sickles, potato hoes, sweeps, ploughshares, staples, farming machetes, palm knives, as well as special tools that are not offered in hardware catalogs, and that are developed in real time according to the needs of the field, all sized and modeled by the farmers and for the countryside.

Construction tools:
Hammers of various types, chisels, awls, square nails, prybars and lever bars, all forged and tempered from alloy steels of excellent quality, tested for years in the hands of masons and workers who have attested to their quality on the jobsite.





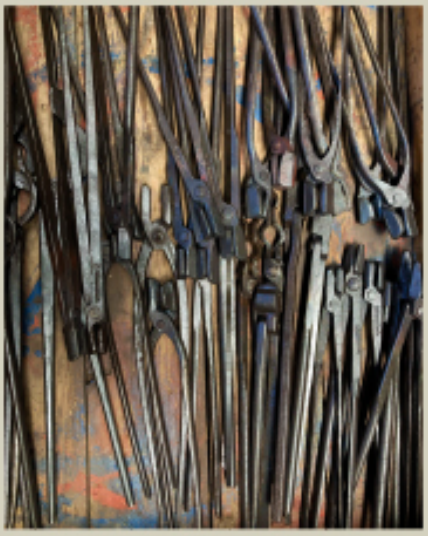


Rescue tools:
Recently adapted for emergency use, our construction and farming tools became essential for rescue operations in the aftermath of the earthquakes. Hammers, chisels, prybars, long lever bars and potato hoes showed efficacy when utilized by rescuers and fire fighters. We now propose to keep developing them as part of the basic gear for every rescue brigade in the country, to be ready when needed, bringing the soul of **our rural smithies** to disaster zones.

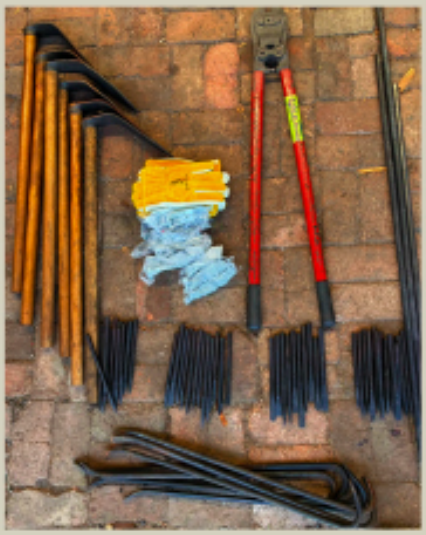
Kitchen utensils:
In conjunction with our Rural Workshops, and to protect the health of the family, we have begun to forge beautiful skillets from 1020 1/8" steel sheets. **In the Base Workshop** we use an old 120-ton mechanical friction press to draw the bowls at 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit, heated in a propane gas forge and tempered in vegetable fat, using a special mold release agent for food environments. Meanwhile, our rural blacksmiths forge the handles by hand in pedal forges, stamped with the name of their village.













Once finished, these handles are sent to the Base Workshop where we stamp the year of manufacture and the LCE logo before punching and bending, cure and hot rivet them.

Our steel skillets are cured with vegetable fat, are suitable for any kitchen (even induction and wood), made to last, non-stick by nature and have a lifetime guarantee.



A LEGACY FOR THE AGES



We are not inventing anything. We are reclaiming a millennial legacy focused on three material pillars of the History of Civilization:



The Nail, which gave structure. Without it, there would have been no galleons that crossed the oceans or the railroads of the Industrial Revolution. The nail democratized carpentry and transformed loose pieces into integrated systems. Its legacy is not seen, but it is what brings the wood together and holds together much of what surrounds us.

The Hammer and the Chisel. They were the tools that sculpted the Parthenon, the pyramids and the Gothic cathedrals. More importantly, the chisel engraved in stone the first laws of Humanity (such as the Code of Hammurabi), bridging abstract thought and material reality.

The Frying Pan. Forged from noble materials that will outlive us all. By allowing fats and oils to be used at high temperatures, the frying pan changed the way we cook and unleashed the chemical reaction that made food more digestible, thereby creating more energy that allowed the human brain to expand.

The nail bound the boat together, the hammer and chisel built the temple, and the frying pan nourished the body. Today, in the valleys of Mérida, we continue to forge that same promise of growth and well-being: sovereignty and persistence under the seal of "Forged in Venezuela".



BE PART OF THE ECOSYSTEM



After more than seven years of continuous effort, **La Caravana Escuela** shows that technical knowledge can develop the field and **save lives** in times of disaster. In order to achieve full self-financing of **our Rural Forging Workshops**, supply the national salvage inventory and continue lighting school forges, we need **new partners, allies and donors committed to education and to the technical development future of the country.**

We invite you to purchase our commercial tools, to equip your kitchen with a skillet for life or to join as an active donor of this ecosystem of horizontal trust.

