

Leon R. Shorey III Expands Humanitarian Effort in Cali, Colombia

Leon R. Shorey III and local volunteers are expanding a food assistance initiative supporting families in Cali, Colombia.

MIDLAND, TX, UNITED STATES, August 12, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- What began as time away from the Texas oilfields has developed into a growing humanitarian effort for Leon R. Shorey III, who is working alongside Colombian community leader Sandra Arango and local volunteers to expand a community-led outreach initiative in Cali, Colombia.

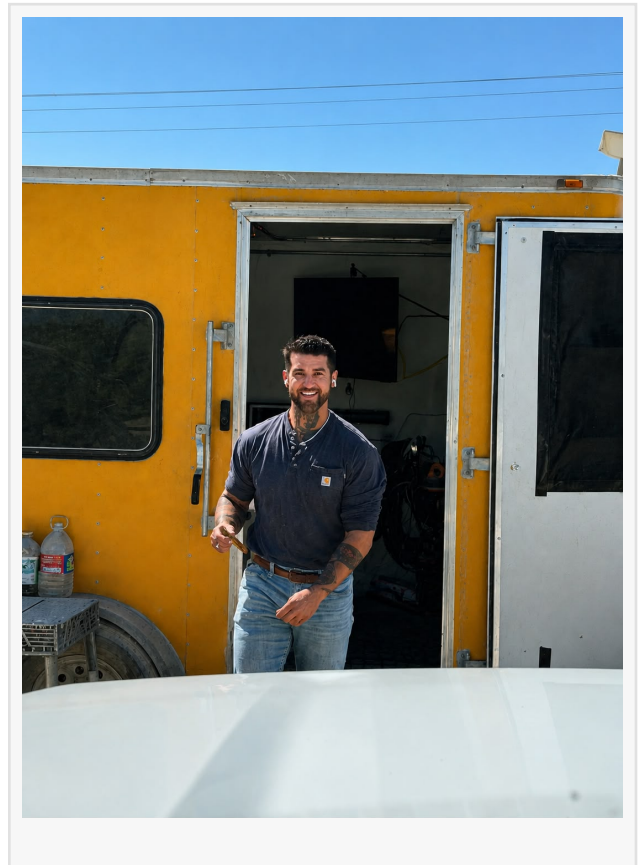
The proposed next phase, 60 Families Forward, builds on an initial outreach that provided food assistance to approximately 60 families. Shorey and the local organizers are now seeking to broaden participation, increase available resources and reach additional families through future outreach efforts.

The initiative represents an unexpected development in Shorey's own story.

A certified crane operator who works extended rotations in the Texas oil and gas industry, Shorey originally began traveling to Colombia simply as a way to spend his time away from work. There was no humanitarian project, fundraising strategy or larger mission behind those early trips.

"I went to Colombia for selfish reasons in the beginning. I enjoyed the country and wanted to spend my time there," Shorey said. "But when you start actually living around people instead of just passing through, you begin seeing things differently. My ideas about success, family, community and purpose started changing."

Over time, Shorey says he began experiencing the country less as a visitor and spending more time around local residents, families and communities.



That experience created a sharp contrast with the long periods he spent working in the Texas oilfields and gradually challenged his understanding of money, ambition and success.

“In the United States, we often live to work,” Shorey said. “We grow apart from our families and communities chasing the almighty dollar. In Colombia, I saw something very different. People work to live. Family and community remain a prominent part of everyday life. That contrast forced me to reconsider what wealth and success actually mean.”

Turning a Personal Experience Into Community Support

That changing perspective eventually connected Shorey with Sandra Arango and a network of local volunteers in Cali.

Rather than attempting to create an outside organization and determine what the community needed from a distance, Shorey chose to support an effort led by people already living and working within the community.

Arango and the local organizers brought the relationships and firsthand knowledge necessary to identify families and coordinate assistance, while Shorey helped provide financial resources for the outreach.

The initial effort ultimately provided food assistance to approximately 60 families.

For Shorey, however, some of the experiences surrounding the outreach became more significant than the number of families reached.

Local organizers told Shorey about two boys, ages seven and nine, who they said had been used to carry packages for local gangs. According to those organizers, the children became associated with one group and later received threats connected to rival groups in other parts of the neighborhood. The reported threats left the boys afraid to attend the humanitarian event.

In the same broader community, Shorey learned about a blind woman living alone who regularly receives help from local children and families. Children in the neighborhood help guide her and assist her with ordinary aspects of daily life without being part of a formal program requiring them to do so.



The contrast became one of Shorey's lasting impressions of the experience: children vulnerable to dangerous circumstances existing alongside children voluntarily demonstrating compassion toward a neighbor.

"That stayed with me," Shorey said. "It reminded me that hardship does not define a community. Sandra and the people working there already know their communities. They know the families. They know who needs help. Money by itself is nowhere close to the most important part."

Announcing the Next Phase: 60 Families Forward

Shorey is now working with Arango and the local team to build on the initial outreach through 60 Families Forward, an initiative intended to expand support for future community-led efforts in Cali.

The objective is straightforward: make the first 60 families a starting point rather than a conclusion.

Under the proposed expansion, Arango and her local team will remain central to identifying needs, coordinating assistance and maintaining the community relationships necessary for the effort. Shorey intends to focus on helping bring additional resources, visibility and outside participation to that existing local network.

The initiative will invite individuals, businesses and organizations interested in supporting the next outreach to participate, contribute or help introduce the effort to others.

The guiding message behind the campaign is simple: You do not have to change the world to help change someone's world.

As the next outreach develops, supporters will also be encouraged to participate in the #60FamiliesForward Challenge through three actions: Give. Share. Challenge.

Participants can support the outreach, share the initiative with others and challenge another individual, family, company or organization to participate.

"The goal is not to arrive somewhere and act like you have all the answers," Shorey said. "The people who live there understand their community better than an outsider ever could. I want to help give Sandra Arango and her team more resources so they can expand what they are already doing."

Specific fundraising goals, contribution levels and the scope of the next outreach are expected to be based on documented local needs and costs as planning progresses.

Redefining Success Beyond the Oilfields

The experience in Colombia has also influenced Shorey's broader personal and professional direction.

Alongside his work as a certified crane operator in the Texas oil and gas industry, Shorey is developing entrepreneurial ventures and continuing work on *Amor Fati*, a forthcoming book drawing lessons from different chapters of his life.

Those chapters extend beyond Colombia and include entrepreneurship, adversity, failed ventures and personal chapters, rebuilding, isolation, relationships, business ownership and the process of redefining oneself following setbacks.

Colombia, however, became an important part of that broader story because of the questions it forced Shorey to ask about the purpose behind financial success.

"Colombia helped me understand that wealth is not only what sits in your bank account," Shorey said. "There are people with very little money who are incredibly wealthy in family, community, purpose and belonging. That was one of the most important lessons I took from living there."

That realization also changed the way Shorey viewed his oilfield career.

The demanding months spent working long hours in Texas provided the financial resources that allowed him to contribute to the first outreach. But the experience in Cali ultimately showed him that funding an initiative and creating meaningful community impact are not necessarily the same thing.

For Shorey, the local relationships, knowledge and participation provided by Arango and the volunteers became as important as the financial resources themselves.

Building Beyond the First 60 Families

The immediate priority is now expanding the next outreach.

Shorey hopes increased awareness surrounding 60 Families Forward will introduce more individuals and organizations to the work being coordinated locally by Arango and her team while creating a sustainable base of support for future efforts.

The first outreach reached approximately 60 families.

The next objective is to build from there.

"I originally thought success was about what you could build and earn," Shorey said. "Colombia challenged that. The people I met made me think much harder about what success is actually

for.”

For Shorey, that question has become inseparable from what comes next in Cali.

Sixty families started the story. The goal of 60 Families Forward is to help write the next chapter.

Give. Share. Challenge. #60FamiliesForward

About Leon R. Shorey III

Leon R. Shorey III is a Texas-based entrepreneur, certified crane operator in the oil and gas industry, humanitarian and author of the forthcoming book Amor Fati. His work and developing ventures explore entrepreneurship, adversity, personal development, international perspective and community impact. Shorey supports community-led humanitarian efforts in Cali, Colombia, in collaboration with Sandra Arango and local organizers.

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