

Bonner Querschnitte

Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

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Schirmmacher met Oscar Requena during his visit to Toledo Christian Academy in Belize' tropical rain forest

(Bonn, 23.06.2025) Thomas Paul Schirmmacher congratulates His Excellency Oscar Requena on his appointment as Minister for Education, Science and Technology of Belize. He stated verbatim, "The expert on education, passionate teacher and former school dean, who is involved in training future school deans, is now in a position where his expertise will benefit the whole country." Schirmmacher met Minister Requena last year when he visited the Toledo Christian Academy Belize in the rain forest of Belize on behalf of the donor organizations Giving Hands (Germany) and SOS World (Belgium).



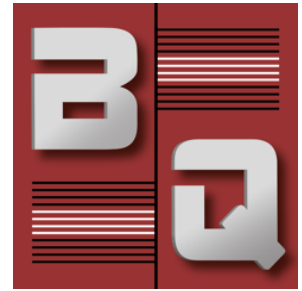
Minister Oscar Requena with Thomas Schirmmacher near the Toledo Christian Academy © BQ/Schirmmacher

The Toledo Christian Academy Belize (TCAB) was founded in 1994 by the Toledo Church and Bible Center, a group of missionaries who saw the need for a Christian school in the the poorest province of Belize with the largest population from Mayan origin. Their original purpose was to provide a quality, God-centered education to children in the Toledo district, focusing on both academic development and spiritual growth. The school started with just 22 students and has since grown 103 students.

The school writes about itself: "TCAB serves children from Pre-school through Standard VI (equivalent to 8th grade). We follow the A Beka Book curriculum, a respected, God-centered, American-based educational program, and supplement it with additional materials as needed, especially for teaching national history and culture. We intentionally keep class sizes small, with an average of 15 students per class, to provide a more engaging and personalized learning experience. We currently have 103 students

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Evangelical Review of Theology (New York, Bonn) theology.worlddea.org/evangelical-review-of-theology

Giving Hands – International Charity (Bonn) gebende-haende.de

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International Institute for Religious Freedom (IIRF) (Bonn, Vancouver, San José – Costa Rica) iirf.global

International Journal for Religious Freedom (IJRF) (Bonn/Toronto) ijrf.org

International Secretariat of the International Society for Human Rights (ISHR) ishr.org

Islam and Christianity journal.islam institute.net

Martin Bucer Seminary (Bonn, Zürich, Tirana, São Paulo, Helsinki, Istanbul, Delhi) bucer.org

SOS World (Brussels) sosworld.be/page-daccueil

Theological Commission of the European Evangelical Alliance europeanea.org

Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft (VKW) (Culture and Science Publ.) vkwonline.com

WEA book series: Global Issues Series / World of Theology Series theology.worlddea.org/global-issues
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enrolled, and our staff is primarily made up of dedicated Belizeans who are passionate about serving the children and community. Despite the school's growth, we face significant financial challenges. Unfortunately, we receive no financial support from the government, and the government now requires all teachers to have formal qualifications in education. This means we are required to pay our teachers according to the government's pay scale, but we are unable to meet that pay scale due to limited funds."



Thomas Schirmmacher with the Dean and the Manager of Toledo Christian Academy with flag of Belize © BQ/Schirmmacher

The manager of the school, Zelda Rose Tanner, who took Schirmmacher on a detailed tour through all classes, has been with TCAB since 2004 and was the first graduate from the high school when it existed. She writes: "Although the high school is no longer operating, my commitment to TCAB has always been rooted in ministry, not just a job. My heart for the school and its mission is central to everything we do here."

During the visit, Schirmmacher also met with the Minister for Education, Science and Technology, Hon. Oscar Requena, near the school. The executive government consist out of the Prime Minister and four Ministers.

Hon. Oscar Requena graduated from the Toledo Community College and went on to the Belize Teacher's College where he earned distinction as a trained teacher and Principal. He attained his Bachelor's Degree in Primary Education from the University of Belize and has dedicated his life in the education of his people of rural Toledo. He has been a teacher and Principal for nine years and has been the Curriculum Officer and District Education Officer as well as the Vice Principal of the Big Falls R.C. School. Through his work in the rural communities, and the neglect he witnessed, Oscar saw the need for better representation of the people on a political level, and he became the Area Representative in the federal parliament in 2012, where he became a strong and demanding representative of rural Toledo including the Maya people living there. was sworn in as Minister of Labour, Local Government and Rural Development of Belize in 2020 and as Minister for Education, Science and Technology in 2025.

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page 2/3

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Downloads and Links:

- **Photo 1:** Minister Oscar Requena with Thomas Schirmmacher near the Toledo Christian Academy © BQ/Schirmmacher
- **Photo 2:** Thomas Schirmmacher with the Dean and the Manager of Toledo Christian Academy with flag of Belize © BQ/Schirmmacher
- Picture gallery of the visit: <https://thomasschirmmacher.net/?p=23906>
- Website of the Toledo Christian Academy Belize: <https://tcayemerigrove.com>

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page 3/3