

Nicaragua alumni

Alumni Spotlight

“Giving Back to My Community”

Lilliam Perez, Youth Ambassador Alumna

As part of the Youth Ambassador Program in 2008, Lilliam learned that being a volunteer is a lifestyle. She wanted to come back to Nicaragua and help out in her community. She had an idea in mind.

As soon as Lilliam returned from her U.S. experience, she felt invigorated and wanted to play an active role in society. What she learned paved the way for her current project “Lend a Hand to Education” that started in 2011 and is ongoing. With this project, she and peers have collected money and in-kind donations (books and school supplies) for kindergarten and primary school kids, as well as teaching materials in Zoila Aurora School, a very poor school in the rural of El Viejo, two hours away from where Lilliam lives. Also, the project contemplates the creation of a small library for the kids to promote reading as a recreational activity. This is the final part of the project in which she is working on. She strongly believes that this project is an opportunity to improve the learning process of the kids and their study environment.

She also joined the Youth Ambassadors Alumni group and became the Vice-President of this alumni group in 2011. Now she is the President of the group. She will be in office for all of 2012. While in office, she has participated in various activities such as the donation event for a small school in Tipitatapa, a whole team effort to bring toys, school supplies, snacks and a piñata for the kids. Also, she undertook

the task to organize the annual virtual bike/hike event in 2010 where 130 people participated. It was an activity where people donated money and depending on the amount that was the amount they had virtually travelled in bike/hike. All the funds were to continue more social projects in Nicaragua through the Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners Volunteers. Networking with her friends from Wisconsin she coordinates in kind donations made by the Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners Volunteers for her current project “Lend a hand to Education”. As part of her fundraising efforts, the local Rotary Club is on board with the project also.

Going even further, she and her fellow Alumni Francis Vargas, worked together to teach English to youth and kids, charging almost nothing. This generated some funds for the project “Lend a Hand to Education”. She coordinated the free venue and so they were giving English classes for five months from April to August, 2011.

Lilliam learned during her home stay in Wisconsin that volunteerism is a necessity in any society. Giv-



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ing a hand strengthens your civic duties and moral values. What she learned she has put into action in El Viejo. By her actions, she is telling them about staying in school, reading, and volunteering. All the same values shared by Americans and Nicaraguans alike.

Lilliam is a highly motivated young lady. Aside from her university courses, she finds the time to devote to social projects like "Lend a Hand to Education". It takes place two hours away from where she lives, but as she says, "I don't mind, it might require a lot of time to buy the materials, organization for the different fundraising activities, logistics work to deliver the materials, but in the end what matters is that I make people aware why this is important and necessary". She is definitively setting an example to the kids in Zoila Aurora School by becoming an active part of their learning process.

Lilliam is very active and always looking for spaces to share her experience and motivate others to develop projects in their communities. In August 2010, during a barbeque event for all Youth Ambassadors Alumni, she talked to the audience about what the Youth Ambassadors had done so far, and also presented her "baby" project "Lend a Hand to Education".

She encouraged everyone not only to take part in this project, but to work together in other ideas to help the needier. In the most recent Youth Alumni Reception, in November 2011, again she was one of the speakers at the event to talk about social work and the project "Lend a Hand to Education".

"Being a Youth Ambassador was a great experience, since I had never travelled outside of Nicaragua. During my home stay, we made home decorations to sell at a local church to raise funds for less fortunate children. It was great to meet other people, to know other cultures. But I think that what I liked the most was learning about leadership and voluntarism."



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What's going on...

Recent Alumni News

➔ Access Program interviews

Several alumni collaborated with the U.S. Embassy in the interview and selection process of the new group of Access students. Thank you to: Julio Roa, Fulbright alumnus; Danik Garcia and Nellari Madrigal, both CCI alumnus; Jerry Berry and Deyvon Ordoñez, from the SUSI Young Leaders program. It was great to have you on board!



➔ Welcome Access alumni!

Very recently, the first Access group of 108 students graduated and joined the network of alumni. Congratulations to all!!!



➔ College Horizons in Nueva Guinea

UGRADER Salvador Orozco has been an instrumental partner in the planning and interviewing process of the College Horizons Outreach Program (CHOP) group in Nueva Guinea. He will also be one of the English teachers contributing to the learning process of the students.

➔ Alumni helping the environment

IVLP Alumnus, Fabio Buitrago, also the drum player of a local popular rock band “Cuneta Son Machin”, joined U.S. Embassy’s efforts to raise awareness on environmental issues. Fabio coordinated the Carrera Verde (Green Race) - a three phase event that included a race, a concert and reforestation. Close to 2,500 people participated in the race, and some other thousand participated in the environmental festival and concert activities. UGRADER Alvaro Saavedra and his rock band, Mika Lazada, participated in the festival. Other alumni joined this effort and volunteered their time to help in the logistics of the event: CCI alumna Ivania Zelaya; Jacksiny Reyes and Octavio Roca both Youth Ambassador alumni.



Photo Gallery



Access Alumna, Carmen Selva (far right) promoting the Access program on TV.



Youth Ambassadors 2012 met with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton during their visit to Washington D.C.



Fulbright Alumni Leda Charvarria and Socorro Brenes promoting ECA exchange programs at ExpoEduca.

Calendar of Activities for May-June

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
20	21	 22 Music Workshop: Wind Instruments May 22-25, 2012	23	24	 25 Liberty Winds Concert at Teatro Ruben Dario	26
27	Embassy Closed	29	 30 Mother's Day	31	JUNE 1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	 13 U.S. Film Festival June 13-18, 2012 at Galerias Santo Domingo	14	15	16
 17 Film Festival	18	19	20	 21 June 21, 2012 Photograph Exhibit at INHCA by Margarita Montealegre Fulbright Alumna	22	23

CALLING ALL ALUMNI!

We want to hear from you. You are our best source!

- * Send us your photos and impressions during your U.S. exchange experience.
- * Tell us about your recent projects and achievements.

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Happening NOW!
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⇒ [Hubert H. Humphrey Program](#)
Deadline: May 21, 2012

⇒ [Web 2.0 Skills](#)
Deadline: May 18, 2012

⇒ [ECO Camp for students](#)
Deadline: June 3, 2012

Information and applications available online:
http://spanish.nicaragua.usembassy.gov/programa_becas.html

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