



2018 Community Service Trip - Last Day at the Diria Institute

Update on our Partnership: The Study & The Diria Institute

Welcome to the third Nicaragua Project Newsletter!

Since the inception of the Nicaragua project in 2009, The Study has been able to conduct 6 community service trips to our sister school. The goal of the community service trip is one of reciprocal exchange. The Study sends a team of students and teachers who work at our sister school for a week teaching English to the students of the Diria Institute. Study students teach English and also present the yearly donations that are made to the Diria Institute. Our impact on our sister school cannot be diminished. When we first started our partnership, the Diria Institute had an infrastructure built (rooms, tables and chairs) with very little else. Since our partnership began, we have provided the Diria Institute with a potable water tank, sporting equipment, full set of textbooks for each class, microscopes, band instruments, dance costumes, built the science pavilion, laptops, projectors, printer, science supplies, calculators, established a vocational center, ipads and a GoPro. The impact of these donations has been great. In 2022, The Diria Institute earned first place for science in the state of Granada. In 2021 the boys' soccer team reached second place in soccer at the national level. The

school has won many academic and sporting awards over the years and has also been recognized as having one of the top dance troupes. All this is due to the fact that they have been given the basic requirements for an education.

What our students gain on the community service trip is an appreciation of a different culture, friendship and empathy. Our students work with impoverished students and get to witness, first hand, the true meaning of

resilience. Education, for students at the Diria Institute, is a luxury as many of their families struggle just to meet the day to day necessities of life and yet the young people we encounter are happy and optimistic.

It is for these reasons I am so very happy to

announce that **The Study's next community service trip to Nicaragua, for students in grades 9-11, will take place February/March of 2024.**



Changing the World One Girl at a time

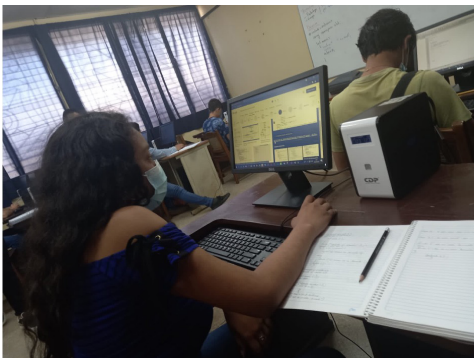
As you know, we offer a full scholarship to a graduating female student of the Diria Institute to go to university. The scholarship is for \$5000 US and covers their 5-year undergraduate degree including tuition, transportation, books and lunches. Students at The Study are responsible for raising the funds needed to send these girls to school and to choose the recipient of the yearly scholarship award. A qualitative and quantitative approach is taken on three categories: grades, community service and degree of poverty. The applicants submit a written application and answer specific questions, which are then read by the student selection committee.

13 scholarship winners have graduated:

- 1 Economist (Bernarda)
- 4 Medical Doctors (Maria Gabriela, Valeria, Belkis & Ashley)
- 2 Nurse Practitioners (Geysel & Estefania)
- 1 Nutritionist (Maria Jose)
- 1 Accountant (Cindy)
- 1 Finance (Candelaria)
- 1 Psychologist (Ethel)
- 1 Surgical Technician (Jennifer)
- 1 Nursing Technician (Shirley)

9 scholarship winners are current university students:

- 3 in Medicine (Angela, Samanta & Emely)
- 2 in Engineering (Francis, Maria Celeste)
- 1 in Dentistry (Jilmara)
- 1 in Teaching (Esmeralda)
- 1 in English (Reidun)
- 1 in Finance (Karla)



Francis Rivas at one of the university's computer labs.



Angela Dominguez (class of 2023) with her classmates.



Maria Celeste and her group working on a project on Hydraulic Energy



JILMARA HERRERA, DENTISTRY (CLASS OF 2023)

"I had many excellent experiences this year. First, I became more experienced at molar extractions, such as a complex patient I had where we had to cut the tooth in multiple pieces to extract the roots that had become implanted into the jawbone. I was able to perform the procedure successfully and the patient went home. Second, I had a patient who needed a dental restoration, and I took the xrays of their teeth on my own, applied anesthesia, and repaired their tooth cavity before applying a new resin to restore the tooth. Three days later, I spoke with the patient and she told me everything in her recovery had gone smoothly, and thanked me for the care I had provided. Third, I have now mastered the technique for making models of my patients' teeth when they need dental prostheses, and it is something I enjoy more and more each time."

Of Note: Each year there are only 10 spots in Dentistry at the National University, and Jilmara earned one.



ANGELA DOMINGUEZ, MEDICINE (CLASS OF 2023)

"This year, I started my full-time rotations in the hospital, completing hospital shifts. I met many of my goals this year. First, I improved at reading cardiac EKGs, where I now feel comfortable interpreting an EKG and identifying the heart diseases that patients may present with. Second, I learned how to perform pap smears and I was able to perform many. Third, this year I learned how to interpret lab values from blood tests ordered in the hospital, so that I can now identify if someone has anemia, for example."

Of Note: Angela comes from Palo Quemado, a small town that is very rural (about 1 hour from Diria), where there are no medical professionals. (She lives near the Anne Frank School). When she graduates, she will be the first resident/local doctor for her community.



Class of 2024



FRANCIS RIVAS, COMPUTER SCIENCE ENGINEERING (CLASS OF 2024)

"This year, we had a computer science lab class. They asked us to fix a keyboard and to take apart a computer, which was exciting and also scary since it was our first time taking these apart. They gave us the tools and we followed our professor. It was a challenging procedure since the inside of the computer is quite complex. We had to identify why the keyboard and the computer was failing. Then we had to assemble everything back together. It was a very nice experience because we got to see a practical side to what we had previously learned in theory."

Of Note: First time a female student in Diriá pursues a Computer Science degree at the University level



MARIA CELESTE RIVERA, CIVIL ENGINEERING (CLASS OF 2024)

"This year, I was able to work directly with the engineers overseeing the expansion of the highway through Diriá, as part of my practical coursework at the university. I was working in the geology laboratory of the supervising engineers to test the resistance of the cement we were using, and I learned a lot about quality control. It was through this new experience that I was able to use all my theoretical knowledge about construction norms and laws. I learned a great sense of responsibility and the problem-solving that a Civil Engineer must have, learning to take decisions under pressure."

Of Note: Won the Diriá High School-level, municipality-level, and regional-level "Best Student Competition" in 2019



Some of the work being done by Maria Celeste.

CLASS OF 2025



SAMANTA PASTORA, MEDICINE (CLASS OF 2025)

"I learned how to interact with and understand better what my patients need. I learned how systematic and complex our bodies are, and how different diseases are caused. Knowing this, I learned how medications work and the effects they have on our bodies."

Of Note: Working at Diriá's local health clinic to help with blood draws, pap smears, and other medical concerns



ESMERALDA JIRON, TEACHING/PEDAGOGY (CLASS OF 2025)

"In my second year, I was able to learn to develop lesson plans from senior teachers, learning from their own experiences and data. In my Education Administration class, I also learned about the work involved in running a school. Finally, I also worked on an end-of-year project on sign language."

Of Note: Starting her internship/stage this year where she will be full-time at a school during the week



Esmeralda teaching elementary school kids

Class of 2026

REIDUN DELGADO, ENGLISH (CLASS OF 2026)

"English is one of the most important languages for professional and personal growth. Since I was 15, I have enjoyed learning this language and my goal is to be able to speak it fluently. This is an important language for earning employment and for learning about different cultures."



KARLA SALINAS, FINANCE (CLASS OF 2026)

"This was my first year at the university and there were many highlights. First, I was elected in my first semester as the Class Leader, thanks to my discipline and responsibility. Second, I learned online tools to develop flowsheets for accounting. Third, in my second semester, I learned how to evaluate a business model and learned tools on Excel that are important for my career."



EMELY MUÑOZ, MEDICINE (CLASS OF 2026)

"This year, I was able to develop my abilities and my empathy, as well as using my knowledge to face new obstacles each day. At first, I was shy about presenting in front of my classmates and in front of doctors, but we supported each other and I grew more and more comfortable with public speaking. I also enjoyed working on a project I developed, where we made chocolate containing iron supplements to treat anemia."



OUR GRADUATES

BERNARDA ALEMAN, GRADUATE IN ECONOMICS (CLASS OF 2015)

Currently working in the Finance and Administration Departments of HMVP, the largest private hospital in Nicaragua.

MARIA GABRIELA ECHAVERRY, GRADUATE IN MEDICINE (CLASS OF 2015)

Currently working as a full-time pediatrician..

CINDY SELVA, GRADUATE IN BANKING AND FINANCE (CLASS OF 2016)

Cindy was hired by the largest microfinance network in Nicaragua after a rigorous selection process.

GEYSEL ALGUERA, GRADUATE IN NURSING (CLASS OF 2017)

Hired by the newest public hospital in Nicaragua, where she is working in the Labor & Delivery Department

MARIA JOSE QUINTO, GRADUATE IN NUTRITION (CLASS OF 2018)

She worked with the Pan-American Health Organization and plans to pursue further studies in her area or other medical fields.

VALERIA RIVAS, GRADUATE IN MEDICINE (CLASS OF 2020)

Currently an intern at the hospital in Granada.

ETHEL ALEMAN, GRADUATE IN PSYCHOLOGY (CLASS OF 2020)

Will pursue a career as an educational psychologist, and wants to work in the public school system to help struggling students

SHIRLEY CARDENAS, GRADUATE IN NURSING TECHNICIAN (CLASS OF 2020)

Shirley will now enter the workforce as a Nursing Technician to help support her family.

JENNIFER CARDENAS, GRADUATE IN OR/SURGICAL TECHNICIAN (CLASS OF 2020)

Will now enter the workforce as a Surgical Technician to help support her family.

ESTEFANIA CANALES, GRADUATE IN MATERNAL-FETAL NURSING (CLASS OF 2021)

She is now completing her internship at a local hospital in Maternal-Infant care. She will now become the primary breadwinner to support her mother and two younger sisters, as her father passed away in an accident 2 years ago.

BELKIS CALDERONE, GRADUATE IN MEDICINE (CLASS OF 2021)

Interested in specializing in gynecology..

CANDELARIA JEAN, GRADUATE IN BANKING AND FINANCE (CLASS OF 2021)

Aspires to become an Investigative Auditor to tackle corruption.



Spotlight Ashley Mendoza



ASHLEY MENDOZA, MEDICINE (CLASS OF 2022)

While at university, Ashley was Involved in medical brigades on many health issues, including: COVID-19, HIV, cervical cancer, breast cancer, mosquito-transmitted diseases. She will be starting her internship year and then pursuing residency in a surgical field (Obstetrics or Orthopedics). She wishes to start her own clinic in Diriá after residency to provide medical care to the town.

From Ashley's Scholarship Application Form:

"Another of my big dreams is to specialize as a surgeon and get experience working in public hospitals. I would like to become part of an association called Doctors Without Borders, which is an organization that performs medical humanitarian actions that help people threatened by armed conflict, violence, epidemics and neglected diseases, natural disasters and lack of medical care."



Impact on a Community

First time that Diriá has 4 medical doctors who are locals

3 more students in the Program are currently studying Medicine – soon to be 7 doctors in the local community!

Only 2 spots in Medicine are awarded for the whole State of Granada each year - 7 of our scholarship winners have taken a spot in Medicine in the last 13 years

First time that rural towns around Diriá have nurses who are locals

Our graduates in Psychology and Nutrition have conducted research at the Diriá Institute and have given workshops to students, giving back to their former high school

All Scholarship students do community service at the Diriá Institute

School Improvements

Each year, we pledge to improve some part of the school. The decision regarding what we will do is established by Study students, based on recommendations/requests that come from faculty and staff at the Diria Institute. Some of our initiatives have included: funding the building of a water tower, providing funds to build and furnish a science lab, providing the school with a class set of books for each subject matter taught, outfitting the school with technology, providing the school with musical instruments, sports equipment and providing the poorest students with shoes so that they can attend to school. In 2018, The Study established a vocational center with its goal being to teach a vocation to students who cannot otherwise afford a university education.



OPEN YOUR HEART WEEK

We are currently organizing Open Your Heart Week. All the proceeds raised during Open Your Heart Week go to either the Nicaragua Scholarship Fund which sends a graduating girl from the Diria Institute to university or the the yearly school improvements that we do for all the students at the Diria Institute.



February 14 - The Toonie Race

Send the girls to school with Toonies!!!! All proceeds raised during the Toonie Race will go to improve the lives of all students at our sister school.

The winning grade that brings in the most money (one in the elementary school and one in the senior school) will get a choice of a pizza lunch or Doughnuts.

February 13 - 17

An online donation form can be found here: <https://www.thestudy.qc.ca/giving/make-a-gift>

Choose General Gift Form

And then the designation: Nicaragua Scholarship Fund

February 17

We will be announcing the recipient of this year's scholarship to the students in Nicaragua at a Study morning assembly.

Designation:

- ✓ Active Outdoor Learning Spaces
- Financial Assistance & Bursaries
- Technology & Innovation
- Professional Development
- Heads Initiatives (Greatest Needs)
- Facilities Enhancements
- General Endowment
- SOGA-Related Activities
- Renate Sutherland Leadership Endowment
- Nicaragua Scholarship Fund
- Other

If you educate a man you educate an individual, if you educate a woman you educate a nation

African Proverb