



**DOS
PUEBLOS**
New York–Tipitapa
Sister City Project

Delegation Report 2013

TRAVEL WITH US TO TIPITAPA AUGUST 3–10, and learn how our communities advocate for improved health through education, potable water projects, workshops and cultural exchange. For information please visit www.tipitapa.org, email info@tipitapa.org, or call 917-776-4246. Limited availability.

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IN THIS ISSUE...

A Cross-Country Friendship

by James Nightengale

We may only be a few months in to 2013 but already we have so much to share. This year marked the first official Youth Delegation from New York to Tipitapa, and the stories, successes and intercultural connections that have emerged are deeply inspiring—we were able to gain a better understanding of our many Nicaraguan youth supporters, and hear first-hand their concerns for the future of Nicaragua. We are very impressed with our youngest ambassadors as they take on global scale issues. Did you know youth's from ages 13-24 comprise 26.3% of the world's population? Let's support them—there's power in numbers! James Nightengale, one of ten teens who headed to Tipitapa in February 2013, shares his story.

I was part of a group of teens and parents who traveled out of the country for a nine-day stay to Tipitapa, Nicaragua, where we were hoping to experience cultural exchange and maybe even learn some more Spanish. But for me, the highlight of the trip was the time we spent with a group of Tipitapan teens who played on a local softball team called the 'Arcoiris' Team ("rainbow" in Spanish), and who were all about the same age as us. When I first met them, I thought I was never going to make friends because of the language barrier. But it turned out that it

didn't matter that we spoke two different languages, we ended up connecting in a special way, and it felt good to make new friends and just have fun, in whatever form that fun took. Now that I think about it, it's amazing how even though we spoke different languages, lived in different countries, in different conditions with different politics and different rules, we found a way to become close friends over the span of nine days. We met their parents, ate together, swam together, and even worked together to build things for children in need, which only made us become closer and more comfortable with each other. We realized that, despite all our differences, we liked the same things and had the same hobbies, and suddenly it was just a group of teenagers having fun. It wasn't until I saw the way my newfound friends lived – sleeping on cardboard beds, cramped, and without electricity – that I realized how different we were and how lucky I am to have the things I have. I feel like this was more than just a cultural exchange. This was a kind of bonding that happens very rarely, and I'm really excited that I was able to be a part of it. I've made friends there that I will always keep in touch with. A part of me will always be in Nicaragua, and I will never forget the time I spent there.



At the Adaptive Design Workshop in New York James learns how to make a versatile, strong and multi-use step stool out of cardboard. Below, the Youth Delegation designed and made ten step stools with their Tipitapa peers to use in the Dos Pueblos libraries for kids with disabilities. More importantly, there's interest from parents and local communities in building more products to improve kids' participation in learning environments. And it's fun!



Paving the way for a medical partnership

Edited by Helen Shannon

When Dos Pueblos was contacted by Dr. Amy Pandya (pictured, right) from The Institute for Family Health in New York, to see if Tipitapa could be a potential destination for an international, cross-cultural medical partnership, we couldn't wait to find out more. The promotion of preventive health is fundamental to all of our grassroots programs, and one of the most effective and sustainable ways to encourage communities to plan for a better tomorrow.

In January 2013 we headed to Tipitapa to investigate local opportunities, holding meetings with the new Tipitapa Hospital Director, Dr. Jorge Betancourt and his staff (pictured with Amy) to explore how we can work together to strengthen preventive health services especially in rural, isolated communities where access to medical care is scarce.

We are very excited about this partnership as it would be the first of its kind—an American clinic that offers high quality, affordable healthcare for all—working together with Nicaraguan medical professionals to bring quality healthcare in high need communities.

"I joined Dos Pueblos on the January 2013 delegation in hopes of offering my medical expertise to aid the community of Tipitapa in their public health struggles. Within my experience, I learned that not only do the communities in Tipitapa have the drive and the passion for improving access to health

care despite their limited resources, but also that Dos Pueblos shares the goal of improving medical care sustainably by educating and empowering local leadership and volunteers. I plan to return for the August delegation, as I believe that Dos Pueblos' focus of creating a sustainable preventive health model will create long term health gains." —Dr. Amy Pandya



Some Words from Our Delegates:



"Our delegation's week-long involvement in the efforts of Dos Pueblos indicates that this wonderful Nicaraguan-New York collaboration should continue in its notable work facilitating access to potable water for the "colonias" around Tipitapa and working with these communities, leaders, and local government toward enhancing the physical, economic, spiritual, and ecological wellness of their citizens". — **Dr. Paul Martin**



"The citizens of Tipitapa were amazingly open to showing us their successes, problems, and living conditions. This must reflect both their positive and cooperative attitudes and also the long-term intensive work of Dos Pueblos and Rosa and others in building confidence and relationships. People like Marina and Estela were unbelievable in their dedication and it was an honor to meet them". — **David Ment**

Please support our work. Send in your 100% tax-deductible contribution today. Your gift contributes to a world of better understanding while providing improved health, education, and economic opportunities to so many.