In 2006, Manna experienced many firsts. We established a partnership with Worcester State University (WSU) to provide service learning experiences for students. In 2006, the first group of students traveled to Nicaragua to support the development of our microfinance program (pictured above teaching a finance lesson). As a result, we awarded our first round of microfinance loans to help start multiple successful small businesses that are still operating today.

Our chapter at Vanderbilt University began organizing various events to raise awareness and funds to support the work being done in Nicaragua. The first ever hunger lunch was held and the campus chapter’s annual silent auction/benefit dinner (pictured above) was officially named “Mannafit.”

The impact of these firsts are still being felt today. WSU has sent over 150 students to work on various projects, including a group who worked with our jewelry cooperative in Nicaragua just last week. Our microfinance programs continue to improve, expand and provide loans to small business owners. In March alone, we awarded 10 loans to participants in Nicaragua and Ecuador. The Mannafit at Vanderbilt University is now an event recently organized by our campus chapter and has raised an average of $10,000 each year.

If you’d like to find out more about our microfinance and small business development programs visit the Ecuador and Nicaragua pages on our website.

UNC Volunteers Host First Ever Health Fair in Nicaragua

Volunteers from the University of North Carolina planned, organized and executed our first ever health fair at the public school of Chiquilucas. Approximately 100 community members visited 10 different stations each focusing on different health issues, such as a healthy diet, the importance of drinking water and recycling.

Read more about the health fair and UNC’s time in Nicaragua.

Guatemala Spring Break Volunteers Build Playground & Paint School

Our Vanderbilt University spring break volunteers worked alongside community members in Chajkyaja, Guatemala to build a playground at the local pre-school. Together they installed swings and a jungle gym made of tires. Meanwhile, the University of Georgia worked with the Parent Committee to paint another local school. Our spring break volunteers also had the chance to immerse themselves in daily life celebrating carnaval and playing soccer.

Read their blog to learn more about the two group’s work in Guatemala.

Alumni Spotlight: Maria Domanskis

PD Year: 2005-2006
MPI Site: Nicaragua
MPI History: Former MPI Board Member, Girls Soccer, English, Art, and Literacy classes.
Where she is now: Law Clerk, US District Court for the Northern District of Illinois
Read Maria’s full bio here.

Women’s Exercise hosts 5k in Nicaragua

On March 29th our Women’s Exercise & Nutrition program in Nicaragua will host the first annual forwardHEALTH 5k benefiting the Cedro Galán Clinic and our health initiative.

Proceeds will support our efforts to improve the quality of health in this community.

Visit our Facebook page to see updates from the weekend.

Community Center Celebrates 5 Years

On March 8th Ecuador celebrated the 5th anniversary of our Community Center in Rumiloma. With the help of our Vanderbilt spring break volunteers, the day was a huge success.

Click here to open a sidebar.