

Bridges of Hope International

"Making a Difference, One
Person at a Time"

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2010 Itinerary

- Cartagena, Colombia
Jan. 30-Feb. 6, 2010
- Managua, Nicaragua
Feb. 27-Mar.6, 2010
- San Salvador, El Salvador
Mar. 13-Mar. 20, 2010
- San Jose, Costa Rica
June 5-12, 2010
May 29-June 5, 2010
(overflow trip)
- San Salvador, El Salvador
June 19-26, 2010
- Cartagena, Colombia
July 17-24, 2010
July 24-31, 2010
- Bogota, Colombia
Sept. 11-18, 2010

January-April 2011

Trips Announced:

- Cartagena, Colombia
Jan. 29- Feb. 5, 2011
Medical trip: Physicians,
dentists, healthcare pro-
fessionals, and support
staff needed
- Managua, Nicaragua -
March 5-12, 2011
- San Salvador, El Salvador
March 19-26, 2011
- Guatemala City, Guatemala
April 2-9, 2011

**Watch for
information on the
Harvest Banquet,
coming on
November 20, 2010.**

The Bridge

**Your Personal Connection to
Bridges of Hope International**

Volume 1, Issue 1

April 2010

Making a Difference through Micro-Enterprising Initiatives

About 18 months ago, BOH was contacted by the National Police in Cartagena to form a partnership with them in focusing on a high risk community. The goal would be to reduce crime and bring hope to this marginalized community. Our program of micro enterprising was publically introduced to approximately 200 residents on a hot July afternoon.

Afterward, a dear lady brought her son to me. He was 22 years old, deaf, and could not speak. He had contracted an ear infection as a small child, and since they had no money, they were unable to get medical attention. The result was the loss of his hearing. His mother told the heartbreaking story of how Jose had remained in his home for his whole life, having limited contact with the outside world. He had few friends, did not

attend school, and lived in a state of hopelessness and depression. His dream was to learn computers, and one day he hoped to be the owner of his own small business. Jose enrolled in the systems technology program at Actuar por Bolivar as the first step toward achieving his dream. Twelve months later, he completed his first level of classes and received a high school diploma, participating in the school's formal graduation ceremony...all because a "bridge of hope" was built into his life.

Two weeks ago, Jose was loaned his first used computer. Over the next several weeks, he will receive instruction in business practices and other hands-on training, another step toward achieving his dream. BOH now has 42 students enrolled in the vocational training school from Cartagena, in a



community which showed little promise of changing or contributing to society. As you can imagine, funding is needed for this project. A donation of \$300 will provide literacy classes, training to learn a life skill enabling individuals to become self-sustaining, and the purchase of the item(s) needed to begin a small business. Half of the donation is placed in a fund as a micro loan which will enable the business owner to enlarge and expand his business as it grows. Please contact our office at 317-581-9569 for additional information.

Blessing the Lives of Thousands through Bridges of Hope



A team of physicians, led by Dr. Alfredo Lopez and Dr. Bryan Perkins, nurses, nurse practitioners, an ultrasonographer, and a dentist, along with several non-medical individuals, had the privilege of spending the first week of February in Cartagena, Colombia, on a medical mission's trip through Bridges of Hope. As someone who is

not in the medical field, I felt honored to be a part of this wonderful group of people that God had undeniably brought together to do an incredible work. Over the course of just four days, we had the opportunity to help meet the physical and spiritual needs of over 1400 Colombians. We set up makeshift medical clinics in four different barrios, or neighborhoods, in the poorest regions of Cartagena. Men, women, children, and babies all came, desperate to get some form of medical treatment that they otherwise would most likely never receive. Some came more for the spiritual rather than physical mending we offered them: on the second day of our clinics, a man showed up who had planned on ending his

life that day. After spending a great deal of time talking with Janet Michel and Dr. Alfredo Lopez, he changed his mind and his heart, as he came to know Christ. He even stayed around that day to help serve our medical team their lunch.

One of our physicians, Dr. Bryan Perkins, had the privilege of performing 35 surgeries that week in the maternity hospital there in Cartagena. Another one of our physicians, Dr. Kevin McAree, was able to perform a much needed surgery on an indigent patient, and several of our other doctors gave lectures to the local medical students. This was an exciting step for Bridges of Hope to take to be

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A Greater Cause

After a recent mission trip to Nicaragua, one of our volunteers, Patricia Karina, shared wonderful insights at <http://patriciakarina.com/blog/>. Below are some excerpts from her writing. Please visit her blog for more.



March 9—I was 12 years old the first time my parents took me to Nicaragua, and even at such a young age, I could see, smell, and even sense the scars a revolution and fourteen years under communist reign had left behind. Ignorant to the political, economic, and social reasons to why there were barefooted children begging on the streets, I grabbed a handful of apples sitting in the back of our SUV and began handing them out. With grateful hearts and humble expressions, those barefooted children devoured the apples. It was at that moment that I learned what it meant to be poor in spirit...

This past week served as a reminder of what it means to be poor in spirit. I saw it in the eyes of an 80 year old woman who got a new home, a 6 year old girl who was sold as a sex

slave by her mother for \$7.20, an orphan abused and abandoned by his parents, and children living in a dump (literally) but playing and learning cheerfully....at school!

March 10—Bridges of Hope doesn't re-create the wheel, they partner with local grassroots organizations in each country and support their work and their causes. So we got an early start this day and ventured out to one of the poorest and most dangerous neighborhoods in Managua called San Judas (St.Jude). We met up with 9 local college students who volunteer with Un Techo Para Mi Pais (A Roof For My Country), an amazing organization that builds homes for slum residents who live in extreme poverty. In this case, BOH collected enough funds to sponsor the construction of a home for an incredible 80 year old woman named Alba. Her faith in God put mine to shame, her gratefulness and sincerity inspired me, and her excitement over a home the size of the shed in my backyard humbled me. We quickly got to work with the direction



of the college students who definitely knew what they were doing! There were no power tools or fancy equipment, just some shovels, nails, hammers, hand saws, and elbow grease! The cost to build a home like this is \$1,500.

March 10—James 1:27 says, "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." Maria Jose and her staff at Puente de Amistad (Bridge



of Friendship) are living out this verse. After spending most of the day at Casa de Esperanza (House of Hope), we stopped by an orphanage located just outside of Managua and dropped off bags of clothes, shoes, and school supplies. We came flashing Dum Dum Suckers and quickly made friends with a group of four and five year old boys. I was comforted in the fact that they have a safe place to play, a safe place to sleep and, most importantly, a safe place to be kids.

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able to partner in this way with the local hospitals. Students from a local high school, and the local university joined us each day to help translate, which was a tremendous help. We have grown to love the Colombian

people as a whole and are already anticipating our return in February of 2011. I have been able to witness firsthand how God is blessing the ministry of Bridges of Hope, but more importantly, how God is blessing the

lives of thousands of people, including the lives of my very own family members, through the work of Bridges of Hope.

Adapted from an article by Yvonne Perkins

