

Mission UpReach Newsletter

Hector's journey

At 16-years-old, with one best-friend murdered and another in jail on drug charges, Hector began to realize that he wouldn't last long on his current path. Hector started drinking, skipping school, and smoking marijuana with his friends when he was only 13 years old. Hector's father decided to abandon the family emotionally, which included withdrawal of any financial support, refusal of interaction, and unfaithfulness to his wife. He continued to live at the house and when he returned each night, he would eat the food in the refrigerator, turn on the television, and sleep in his own room. Hector didn't like spending time in his home so he would choose to spend his time with friends, mostly getting high. When he was 14, Hector was recruited into a gang. The gang offered a sense of belonging, protection, and family; something he was longing for but couldn't get at home. Hector would attend soccer games in Tegucigalpa, where many times violence would break out between the gang members and other fans. Hector recalls his time spent with the gang stating, "They made us do a lot of things, like beat up rival gang members, rob people to collect money, and even deliver drugs. My life was in shambles; I just didn't know it yet. I was still having problems with my family so I just kept seeking acceptance and comfort in my friends and in drugs."

When Hector was 16, his best friend was kidnapped by a rival gang, tortured for five days, and ultimately murdered. Within the week, a different friend of Hector's was arrested for possession of drugs with the intent to resell and is still serving time in

prison. Hector quickly realized that the world of gangs, drugs, and alcohol only had two outcomes: prison or death. While he couldn't cut ties completely with the gang, he started focusing on his schooling, which he used as an excuse to skip out on gang-related activities. He was now in high school and started making new friends outside of his gang family. Two of his new friends, Cesar and Franklin, began inviting him to an exciting new youth group on Saturday nights at a local church of Christ. Franklin lived at the Moses Project and Cesar had just started attending church with his sister Sarahi. Hector talks about the impact that his first night at youth group had on his life saying, "That first Saturday night I felt completely free to be myself. I felt like I had finally found the community and acceptance that I had been longing for; I wanted to be a part of this family. Little by little, I started leaving toxic friendships behind and started attending worship services as well as youth group. I started to truly understand the love of God and the true purpose that He has for my life."

Hector was soon baptized and offered a temporary job at the Moses Project in 2016. After seeing Hector's work ethic and hearing a little bit of his story, he was placed on the DESEO team in 2017. The now 21-year-old, hardworking, passionate, role-model today is a testament to how God can work in someone's life. Hector says, "Thanks to God I have been able to leave my old life completely behind. The people who helped me, the church,



and of course the various programs of MUR, were all fundamental in establishing and fortifying my faith. The advice and Bible classes given by the North American missionaries, the Bible Bootcamps at CREO, and the service I get to be a part of with DESEO have all allowed me to feel like I belong to a real family; one with unconditional love." Hector loves working with DESEO and would like to continue working while he finishes his education at the local university. Hector enjoys hunting, hiking, and serving. In 5 years, he would love to have his own little coffee farm. "God's love is so immense and powerful that it can transform anyone's life no matter how lost they are. The world offers things the easy way, but God is the one who will truly edify our lives."



A season of “firsts”

This spring brigade season was a time of “firsts”. Tusculum Church of Christ (*top photo*) kicked it off with a medical brigade in Lucerna, Ocotepeque, our first time doing a clinic in this community. Over the course of three clinic days, the group attended to nearly 900 people. Lucerna received the group with open arms and our evangelist team will certainly find open doors, thanks to Tusculum’s hard work.

Next, the Belton Church of Christ (*middle photo*) youth group came and conducted a VBS on forgiveness in the schools that our DESEO team works with. This included songs, activities and a skit about the prodigal son. In the afternoons the group stayed busy working out at the Moses Project and working with our basketball league. For multiple members of the group this was their first mission trip, and for others, it was even their first time out of the country! We know that their first experience in missions will not be one they will likely forget, and they certainly had an impact on the children they worked with.

Finally, Lipscomb University (*bottom photo*) brought a medical group and held 3 clinic days in Corquin, Copán. Since we have been working in Corquin for the last few years, this is certainly not our first time doing a medical brigade there. However, after a scouting trip last year, Lipscomb University decided to send their first ever group to work with us. The group dove into the week’s activities with energy and enthusiasm, and we are so excited that this will likely be the first of many Lipscomb University trips. This spring season of ‘firsts’ was an incredible blessing for our work here and we are so grateful for all the groups who came.



DESEO begins afternoon activities



Now that the school year is underway, DESEO has begun its usual afternoon activities, providing productive opportunities for children who might otherwise be left to fend for themselves at home.

One of the most popular afternoon activities is our basketball league. There are currently 52 children, ages 10–13 learning basic basketball skills as well as participating in daily devotionals, prayer time, and scripture memory.

The afternoon tutoring program is currently serving 29 children, ages 7–10. Many of those children are struggling to read and write and the hours the DESEO team is able to spend with them helps get them on track towards educational success plus builds relationships, which is one of the primary objectives of our DESEO programs.

If you would like to help us continue to provide these kinds of services and even expand it to include more children, consider visiting our deseoproject.org site and sponsor a child. If you would be willing and able to promote sponsorships at your local church, please contact Donna Waldron at donna.w@missionupreach.org for more information.





A note from Donna

As I write this note, I am sitting in our son Harrison's room at the Shirley Ryan Ability Lab in Chicago, Illinois. Harrison has been here for 3 weeks with 2 additional weeks to go. The team of physicians and therapists have been working hard to move Harrison towards higher function and independence with medication adjustments and cutting-edge therapies. We have been so pleased with Harrison's positive reaction to these changes.

As he goes home on April 13th, Hayley, his wife, will have new therapeutic approaches to implement with the hope that Harrison will continue to progress towards recovery.

As his mother, I could not be prouder of him and his never-ending hard work, good attitude, and trust in the Lord. When I get discouraged and feel hopeless, Harrison lifts me up and reminds me that our trust is in God and Him alone.

As a family, we are so grateful for those who sacrificed and donated to helpharrison.org, making it possible for him to spend 5 weeks at the best facility in the US for the past 28 years. While we would rather not be on this journey, we are constantly overwhelmed by the many ways that God provides for Harrison's need as well as ours.

Please continue to pray for him

and Hayley as they fight the good fight and bring glory and honor to God by their testimony of love and faith.



2019 Brigade Season

January 5-12	VCOM	Medical
February 9-16	Surgical	General and ENT
February 16-19	Pine Tree	School sponsorship
February 23-March 2	Tusculum Church of Christ (TN)	Medical
March 9-16	Belton Church of Christ (TX)	Youth-VBS
March 16-23	Lipscomb University (TN)	Medical
May 18-25	Oklahoma State (OK)	Construction
June 1-8	Snellville Church of Christ	VBS
June 8-15	Pine Tree Church of Christ	Medical/VBS/Construction
June 15-22	University Church of Christ	Medical
June 22-29	Burnt Hickory Church of Christ	Medical/VBS/Construction
July 6-13	Lexington Church of Christ	Medical
July 6-15	VCOM	Medical
July 20-27	University CofC Youth	VBS
July 20-27	Disciple Trips	VBS
July 27-August 3	Southside CofC (TX)	Medical
Sept. 28-Oct. 5	Surgical	Orthopedic
Oct. 5-12	VCOM	Medical

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Other Giving

Mission UpReach is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. We can assist you to designate MUR in a corporations' matching gifts program, or giving through a United Way campaign, or as you prepare wills for your estate.

Please contact us:

Our mailing address is as follows:

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Please send all checks, donations and correspondence to this address.

You can correspond directly with Phil and Donna at:

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