



Mission UpReach Newsletter

Finding her worth

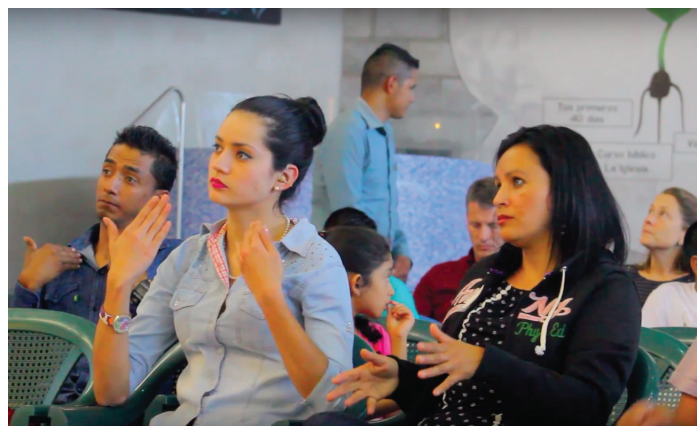


“When I was little, I knew about God. I guess I always knew, but I never understood. I even went to church but since I couldn’t hear, it seemed useless to me, so I stopped going; it wasn’t worth my time. No one helped me understand.” Digna López, 23, was born Deaf in a small Honduran community close to the border of El Salvador. It was a small village without roads, cars, and up until recently, no electricity. Digna recounts spending all day in the house with her Mom. She wasn’t allowed to go to school; no one in the village knew sign language; and when she would make up hand movements to communicate with her sister, they were punished. This is the unfortunate reality for the majority of Deaf in Honduras. They’re pushed into the shadows, hidden from the rest of society, often viewed as the shame of the family. Digna said her childhood was very hard on her. “No one spoke to me; I stayed silent my whole life. In my family there was

never peace. When people would lie about me, it hurt me because I couldn’t defend myself; I couldn’t do anything. There is a lot of pain in my life but coming to the church and learning about God and His peace has changed me.” Digna started learning about Jesus and His power through her sister when she was 18-years-old. A few years later she would begin attending the church of Christ in Barrio Belén thanks to the efforts of the budding Deaf ministry.

The Deaf ministry in Santa Rosa was born out of a realization of the need. On average, three percent of any given population is Deaf. (This percentage drops in first world countries due to access to devices like hearing aids and cochlear

implants.) Meaning, that in a city like Santa Rosa, with a population of fifty thousand people, there are an estimated 1,500 Deaf living behind closed doors. With the vision of Phil Waldron and the help of various North American volunteers including Renee Flemming, the Wilson Family, Matt & Hannah Bridges, and Enrique Gonzalez, an effort was launched in 2015 to reach the oppressed, marginalized, and often hidden Deaf of Santa Rosa de Copán. Digna credits this ministry for shaping her life saying, “I started going to the church and I began to learn the bible and the signs. In time I began to understand the words and meaning, and I’ve been baptized because I finally understand and I believe. Matt Bridges and Abbie Wilson have helped me a lot to find peace in Christ. I really love going to church because its hard being in the world and a lot harder being Deaf, but





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I feel at peace with my brothers and sisters in Christ.”

Digna has been studying with ESPERO, our school for the Deaf and she has completed 1st through 3rd grade with plans to complete 4th and 5th by the end of 2019. She also works at the Moses Project during the day as a seamstress making specialty nets for the Tilapia ponds. We are inspired by Digna's story and proud of how far she's come in the past three years since she first came to church. “I'm very blessed by the community that I've found with the church and MUR.

I'm learning more and more sign language every day. Also coming to church, I learn a lot through the songs and lessons and just by talking among the deaf I realized that I have a choice in my life. I've learned so much in school and I want to continue advancing in my education. Before, I didn't know anything. Now, being a part of the church and the mission, I've learned so much and I want to stay.” Digna, in Spanish, means worthy. We believe,



that through Christ, Digna has finally recognized her worth.

ESPERO begins its third school year

Our school for the Deaf, ESPERO began its third year in February with 21 students; four of whom are first year students. Watching this community grow is very fulfilling and reminds us of the importance of this ministry. The majority of

the students attend church at Barrio Belén and have very similar stories to that of Digna. Watching their lives being transformed through relationships with God's people makes us incredibly proud of each and every one of the Deaf. Seeing

them finally being able to express their fears, frustrations, and dreams gives us a renewed motivation to continue growing this ministry. Please pray for this ministry, the school, and the Deaf community of Santa Rosa de Copan.





DESEO kicks off 2019 school year

As most of you know, the Honduran public school calendar year begins in February. Our team of nine kicked off the school year by visiting all 13 schools that we will be working in this year. The kids were overjoyed at the sight of our green “DESEO cars” and our team was greeted with hugs from the kids, and warm welcomes from the teachers. This is now our 10th year carrying out this ministry and we couldn’t be more excited for the next 10. We are also happy to announce that we have successfully sponsored 73 children in our DESEO Project which launched in October of 2018. Those 73 children received backpacks, school supplies, uniforms and shoes for this year. If you are interested in sponsoring a child, please visit our website at www.deseoproject.org or email us at info@deseoproject.org.



Surgical brigade completes 54 surgeries

Our 4th surgical team returned in February and successfully completed 54 surgeries over the course of four and a half days. They performed gallbladder removals, hernia repairs, and tonsillectomies. The impact of their work went far beyond helping the hospital reduce the number of people on their extremely long waiting list. The individuals themselves who benefited from the surgeries are also grateful and have commented on the high level of patient care and professionalism of participating team members. Lastly, the surgical team has now opened 54 doors to our church planting team. Our church planting team will now do follow up visits for each patient in their home to pray with them and check on their healing progress. We see



many examples in the bible of Jesus healing peoples’ physical suffering so that he can then open their hearts to the cure for their spiritual suffering. We believe that God is doing something very powerful here in Western Honduras and we are blessed to be a small part of it.

CRESCO graduation

We had our 4th annual graduation of our CRESCO program in February with 22 graduates. This program is an intense theology training course that requires class attendance every Saturday for two years and is open for men and women. We now have over 80 graduates from the program. Some use their new knowledge to serve in the children’s ministry, some in the bible studies they have with friends and family, some have even started a church. But all the men and women who have completed this program leave better prepared for service in the Kingdom.





A note from Donna



While writing this note, I am in a town by the name of Lucerna where we are conducting a medical clinic

with the Tusculum Church of Christ from Nashville, TN. Next month we will share some photos and details about the results. But for now I wanted to share how we chose Lucerna for this brigade. During our October orthopedic surgical brigade, and young girl named Mayrim had a meniscus tear repaired in one of her knees. When our church planting team did their follow up visit, they were warmly received by

her and her family. They pleaded with them to visit more often and expressed openness to receiving future visits for Bible studies and prayer. This type of openness by one family has the potential for a future house church leading to further outreach in the community. When asked about bringing a medical brigade to their community, the idea was eagerly accepted with immediate help in coordinating the location as well as the distribution of tickets. This is how it begins. This week Christians from the Tusculum church are meeting needs and sharing the love of Christ. The soil is being prepared and the seed planted. We trust God for the harvest!

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:

Mission UpReach, Inc.
3221 Dundee Road
Longview, TX 75604

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

You can correspond directly with Phil and Donna at:

Phil and Donna Waldron
 Apartado Postal #255
 Santa Rosa de Copán, Copán
 Honduras, Central America
 donna.w@missionupreach.org
 Phone: 706-534-7060



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