

Daily Reports
July 3, 2010

5:45 came early this morning just as I expected. After quickly getting dressed and eating breakfast, we got on the Daihatsu for another crowded ride. The trip has already been awesome. I'm surprised at how evident God has already been in just the last two days. God has continued to answer our prayers, blessing us with smooth travel, good food, and great weather. Also, I know he has his hand on the Dominicans, helping them understand us. I'm surprised at how welcoming the Dominican families have been. Lastly, I can tell God is directing the Manna program just the way He wants it. The program is making a huge difference in this area. After unloading from the Daihatsu in the city of Rio San Juan, we sat on the side of a loud and busy road for 'quiet time'. We proceeded to mix concrete for a few hours. It was very hot and reminded me of mission work in New Orleans. The water was extremely refreshing even though it was hot. After returning to the compound, we ate a wonderful lunch and headed out to a creek for an enjoyable swim. I talked to a little boy for a short time in the creek and although I understood little of what he said, his smile brightened my day. We returned after swimming for a competitive game of volley ball. After volleyball we ate and finished the day with a devo. It is easy to see Jesus in the missionaries and interns here. They love the people and encourage groups who come to help. Yesterday, we went home with VBS kids to visit their families. I'm thankful to have had Evan in my group because there is no way I could've found my way back after following kids through multiple alleyways and shortcuts. I truly enjoyed watching Evan interact with the kids there because it was so obvious that he was doing exactly what the Lord wanted. I have already seen the Lord at work in so many ways and I look forward to seeing it even more.

Please continue to keep us in your prayers, Nathan Commers

It turns out that a Saturday morning in the D.R. starts off a lot different than the relaxing Saturday mornings we are used to. The sun was up and waiting on us at 5:45 along with many bags of concrete. We took our Daihatsu ride into Rio San Juan, which is a different experience every ride, to find a small crowd of Dominicans waiting for us to arrive. We spent the next 4 or 5 hours mixing concrete on the sidewalk with an indescribable amount of scooters and motorcycles flying by. I was amazed how fast the time seem to go by doing such hard work in such intense heat. I think a lot of it had to do with how amazing it was to see so many of us strange white people mixing with the large number of Dominicans that had gathered to help work, make friends or just have a conversation with somebody new.

After the work project a boy who had been working with us wanted to come hang out with us for the rest of the day. So Matt Dolberry and I joined one of the interns Carter on the walk back to Angels house so he could change clothes. I was amazed to see the excitement in the kids of the neighborhood as we walked the streets. They would do anything to wave or just to be able to catch up to touch our hand.

As we entered Angels house he was so excited to have three older white friends come home with him as he scattered to gather chairs and invite us in. As we grabbed our seats and he went to

change clothes a woman followed us in and stood in front of the three of us. She was waving money and different hand gestures that none of us could pick up on. The only thing obvious was how she was dressed and that made things pretty clear. We sat the not sure what to do until she finally just left. As the boy Angel returned to the room he informed us that she was offering herself to us for 700 pesos. At first we got a laugh until we realized that a boy only about 12 years old had just explained to us what had just taken place and that we were within 5 feet from his bed. In a place we call safe and comfortable at in the states, prostitution was going on there. Near his bed where he should be safe, he wasn't. That's why the work they do here is so wonderful. The church or Christian center is the ONLY safe place these kids have. God is doing great and amazing things here.

Josh McAlpin

Today was work day so it was an early morning. We were prepared to mix and lay concrete which I have never had the opportunity to do, but it's always good to experience something new. I wasn't the best at it but it was a good opportunity to build team connections and be out in the community helping out. It was a lot of hard work but it was something we all did together us as church group, the Dominicans, interns, and missionaries.

We also went to the river to cool off after working, which was pretty much awesome! It was just a great time hanging out with each other and relaxing. I actually felt like a kid again swimming around and waiting for someone to make a surprise attack on people from underwater. The river was everything put together crazy, awesome and refreshing.

We then came back to camp and played card games and an intense game of volleyball Clear Creek vs. interns. We won't get into details of who won or lose, but it was a fun and interesting game. I think that's my favorite thing so far about this trip: how comfortable and chill everything is. We work when we need to and play or sing whenever we get the chance-literally. We met amazing kids who have a great outlook on life and pure joy just to be where you are. And everyone has a story to tell and it's great that we can all share and be open enough to want others to hear about it and hopefully get something from it. Everyone is also so friendly and welcoming that I've met and it is uplifting to me and I pray that I am just as uplifting when I am with others.

Jennifer Downs