

ENGLISH CAMP 2008

Shari and Jose Salazar

CAMP FACTS:

19 teenage students, from ages 12 and up

Live near Guatemala City dump where their parents work

Camp is a reward for passing all of their classes in school

This camp was used to motivate them all year to press on in their classes

These students attend school in the mornings and then go to Potter's House Ministry in the afternoon for tutoring and discipleship.

CAMP ACTIVITIES:

Daily Devotionals and worship time

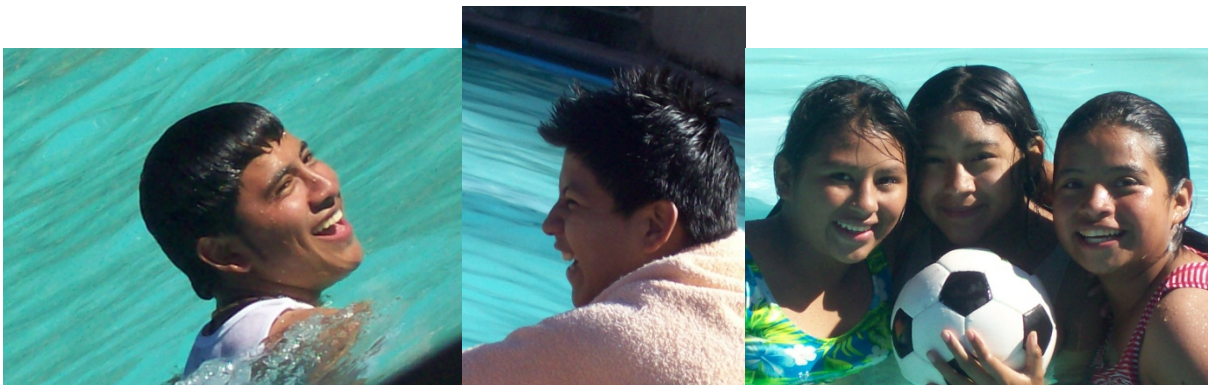
English lessons (6 hours of class a day)

Special classes: art and swimming

Outdoor afternoon activities

Evening Activities: soccer, movies, praise and worship, baking cookies, and bonfire.

Special Day Activities: Thanksgiving meal prepared and enjoyed by students, work project for Casa Salazar, Trip to Lake with boat ride and swimming, Visitation by parents and Potter's House staff.



An amazing group of young people attended camp this year. We are so proud of their hard work before even arriving at camp. It is a difficult task to pass all of their classes. It is an accomplishment because in many cases the teachers may not even care if they pass or not, and parents may not have gone past elementary education themselves. I had more than one student tell me that they had to really put forth a lot of extra effort or they would not have passed, and one of the girls told me that the thought of returning to camp was her motivation. Now on top of what they accomplished before arriving at camp, we were so proud of their hard work during their time at camp! We plan many fun and special activities, but still the core of camp is studying English! They worked so hard and really did learn a lot. This year we split the students into 2 classes: Beginner's and Advanced. We were amazed to see how much the advanced students had retained from previous years at camp. We gave them an end of camp exam and we were very proud of their accomplishments.



Cooking a Thanksgiving meal with 19 teenagers could really be a head-ache, but it was the complete opposite with this special group! It was a joy for us as well as for them! We had groups so that everyone would have a chance to cook, yet not be in the little kitchen all at the same time! The pies were made the day before. The girls in that group were perfectionists and the crusts came out looking lovely! The next day we made turkey, mashed potatoes---they peeled so many potatoes!!!, green beans, homemade rolls, and sweet potatoes. The rolls and turkey were the favorites. We even had a group for decorations so we were able to enjoy the meal together with a beautiful ambiance. Many of the students said this was their favorite part of camp.



The work project this year for camp was very special for Jose and I because our students were able to help us with Casa Salazar! We emphasized that no matter how much or little we have we always have something to offer to someone else, we can always give/do something for others. They helped to make the concrete roof of the addition. The concrete was made on the ground and then in an assembly line carried up by buckets to the roof and dumped. We also had groups cleaning up around the house and the land. With the camp students along with missionary friends we had about 40 people working that day! So much was accomplished! What a blessing! The students were proud of their work and even brought their parents up to see it on visitation day. The parents were surprised to see that their kids were able to serve in this way. Happily surprised!



Thank you to all you helped and supported this camp!!! I believe the smiles on the faces of the kids in these photos are a way of letting you know how much it was appreciated!!!

The lake trip was another very special activity for the students. Most of them have never been to a lake and have never been in a boat either. The ones who were brave enough to jump off the boat and into the lake (with life jackets!) were so proud of themselves and said that it was the highlight of their camp experience. I know they will always remember this day. At lunch one of the boys asked if we could take a picture of his plate of food because no one would ever believe he had eaten this meal. Nothing was taken for granted. It was thoroughly enjoyed and I am sure will always be remembered.



Potter's House Ministry:

Saying goodbye to these kids and knowing what they are returning to after camp is the hardest part for us. However it is possible because we know that they have the help of Potter's House all year long. This ministry works with the kids daily after school. We are glad to be able to come alongside them in this way each year. If you want to know a little bit more about Potter's House, you can look at their web page:

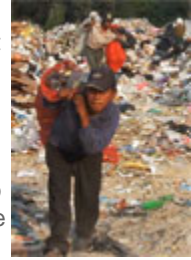
www.pottershouse.org.gt

We read some really interesting information from Potter's House webpage and wanted to share it with you:

The Situation

Our Treasures...

They are contemptuously called "the Scavengers", because their work consists of scavenging through the filthy rubbish, collecting bits of plastic, cardboard, glass and metal waste... anything that could have some value... At the end of their fourteen hour work day they sell their findings for a few pennies. Harsh sun, pouring rain, sharp objects, infected garbage... it's all part of the normal work environment for our community. This is the Guatemala City garbage dump.



But at Potter's House, we see the scavengers as God does: precious treasures. When they come to us, they find people that treat them with dignity. They find a place where Jesus lives... a place where they learn to see themselves as we do and as God does: as Treasures.

Solution

Many people have looked at the garbage dump and said: "Why don't they just fix it? Cover it up? Shut it down? Or Move it?"

From an outside perspective, it seems so easy. But the garbage is not just around the people that live and work there; it has penetrated their hearts and minds. Many of the Scavengers believe that garbage is all that life has to offer. Others believe that they themselves are garbage, worthless and invaluable. Still others would rather work in the garbage than to beg in the streets, and to them, these are the only two options.



Potter's House Association works not only to remove the people from the garbage, but to remove the garbage from the people. Through five programs, we value the Scavengers as Treasures, and we teach them to value themselves. We have identified 8 types of poverty that keep the Treasures enslaved to the garbage. We work to liberate the Treasures from all types of poverty so that they can experience true freedom and fortune.

Treasure Story

Lorena's Story

It's six in the morning. Darkness fills our tin shack. I think for a moment about my husband, silently screaming at him for dying and leaving me and not sharing the burden of providing for our five children. But, then I remember who he was, and I am glad he's gone. He loved drugs and gangs more than he loved us. At least he can't hurt my children anymore.

Time to wake up the three oldest kids. I didn't make very much yesterday, so it will just be tortillas and salt for breakfast today. My children are helpful. They splash water on their face, brush their hair and walk off to school together. Sometimes, when the money is short, I long for them to work with me...but they are smart. They should go to school. Maybe they will have a better life than I.

7am--time to get water. The line is long...10 other families. My two youngest kids are still sleeping. Hopefully they will stay asleep a little longer. I have 6 buckets to fill for the day's washing. The line is long.

9am—I am finally done carrying water. The youngest have been up for a while. Cynthia is only 5, but she can take care of her little brother. It is time for me to go to work. I put on my handkerchief and my hat. It is hot.

I say a prayer. "God, help me to make enough for food today." The stench is strong—probably from yesterday's rain. The trucks are already coming.

The garbage truck from the supermarket is here. I run to get in line. "Thank you Lord." There is left-over chicken and meat from the butcher. The fruits and vegetables only have a little mold. We have food.

The trucks are coming fast. Today is a good day. I have four bags of glass already and two bags of aluminum. No time for lunch. I hope my oldest kids will save some of their



lunch at Potter's House for the two still at home. I wonder what they are doing right now. I love them so much.

6pm—the trucks have stopped coming. I am tired. My hand is bleeding from the broken glass. I am glad it didn't rain. Last week a truck tipped over in the mud. It fell on a woman. I prayed for her. I hope she is okay. My two oldest come down to the dump to help me carry my findings. We sell it to men at the entrance. He will sell it to a company. Today is a good day. We made four dollars. We will eat tomorrow.

Education

Education is the path to a new way of thinking, and it is the way our communities are freed from their earthly poverty. With the change that is brought about by Education, recipients will be able to serve their community, helping their peers develop themselves as individuals no matter their circumstances, with the help that God himself gives.



-Eswin Garcia

Introduction

Ignorance is like blindness. It affects every aspect of a person's life. The Education program combats ignorance with knowledge and purpose. An education gives our Treasures a chance to overcome.

Description

Our Education program reaches out to the community in several ways:

- Christian Private School: Pre-school and elementary school
- Tutoring: Pre-school, Elementary, Jr. High, High School
- Literacy Program: Adults
- Special topical training for community members
- *School for Life*: Training for parents of our Treasures
- Scholarships for students to attend Elementary, Jr. High, Sr. High, & University

Objectives

- To promote formal and informal education through basic education
- To encourage achievement and self-worth in our Treasures based on the Word of God.
- To encourage our Treasures to appreciate the value of education