



Newsletter No. 2
February 3, 2019

Hi everyone,

Preparations are going smoothly for our trip in March - Yspaniola and Richard Weber, our logistics partner, have been doing a fantastic job organizing our visit. Below is additional information regarding the trip - I encourage you to read it (and any prior communications you have missed) and reach out to me if you have any questions. João is working on the directory and we will be distributing it soon.

Orientation call

We will be holding a brief orientation call - approximately an hour or so long - on Saturday, February 16th, at 11am EST/8am PST. (Apologies for the early hour for those of you on the west coast, but it is challenging to find a good time for everyone.)

The call isn't mandatory, and you won't miss any crucial information if you can't make it, but I encourage you to dial in if you can. It will give you a chance to learn more about Batey Libertad and Yspaniola's work in the community.

We will be distributing details regarding joining the call via internet or dial-in (using Zoom) the week beforehand.

Release forms

Please send João your release forms if you have not already done so.

Arrival/departure information

As I mentioned in my prior email, we will not be arranging group transfers from the airport to the hotel - the hotel is quite close to the airport, taxis are plentiful and inexpensive, and the hotel will provide transfers if booked with them in advance. (To schedule a transfer, you can contact the hotel at <mailto:reservashgc@hodelpa.com>.)

However, we do need your flight arrival/departure information for planning purposes, and to help you in the event you encounter any difficulties. Please send your flight arrival information to me and to João as soon as you can.

Videography/photography

We are looking for volunteers to help with videography and photography. If you have any expertise and would like to help, please let me know.

Update on projects

The project leaders and I are working closely with Yspaniola to plan our service projects in the batey. Hopefully you have been in touch with your project leaders - they have been reaching out to the respective teams, and in many cases are seeking your input on shaping the projects. Please respond to any queries they have - we would like to take your interests and expertise into account in planning projects. Although the planning is still in process, and subject to change, I thought I would summarize below the current thinking with respect to each project. Please reach out if you have any input you would like to provide with respect to any of the projects (including those being undertaken by a team other than your own).

Public health - Liz and Sheila have been soliciting information from members of the public health team so that we can tailor our program to the expertise of the team. We are currently hoping to provide a variety of programs to the community, including: an oral hygiene/dental project to work with children and mothers of babies, a first aid teaching series, information sessions for expectant mothers and new babies, a project to teach people to check blood pressures and a sexual health/HIV awareness program.

Construction - Jim and Lee have been working with Yspaniola to plan some improvements to their pre-K facility, including construction of a concrete block perimeter wall, painting and the addition of some murals (to be coordinated with the arts team). They are also looking into building some wooden containers to hold trash collection bins. Trash is a recurring problem in the community and we would like to help the community address this issue - not only by helping to set up trash collection points, but also by promoting the proper disposal of trash and recycling.

Arts and Education (and athletics) - Georgia and Randall have been working on coordinating an arts and education program for the kids. The principal and teachers at the local school are giving us full access to the children in the school for the week we are there, both mornings and afternoons, so we need to come up with some fun, engaging activities for them. In the mornings, we are planning to hold art and education classes and to play baseball or another sport with them. Judy Crawford and Ann Kennedy are coordinating a class on coding, using bee robots. Georgia and Andrew Garling will be teaching a class on color theory, and we are hoping to do classes involving music and drama. We would like to provide some additional classes on poetry, other creative writing and possibly a fun math class. In the afternoons, we plan to engage kids in additional activities, including mural painting, music and dance.

Business/career/life skills counseling - Alicia is coordinating with Yspaniola to identify people within the community, young people as well as other potential local entrepreneurs,

who would like counseling, and to determine what topics would be of most interest to them.

More information about Yspaniola

Attached below is Yspaniola's 2018 fall newsletter, which gives you an update on the progress of their literacy program and other activities.

Map of Batey Libertad

Below is a Google Map image of the batey, to give you a better sense of where we will be working. As you can see, it is a small self-contained community in the midst of agricultural fields, immediately off of a local highway. All the places we will be working are a short walk from one another.

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Please let me know if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions regarding the trip.

Best,

Perry