

FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

September 2016



GENERAL UPDATE

This month 8 new volunteers from the German Red Cross came to stay and work with us for one year. We enjoyed our first weeks and some introduction activities with them. Also two more German volunteers joined us to stay 6 and 8 months. Today Kristina and Max two of the new ones will introduce themselves to you.

Kristina

My name is Kristina and I am from Germany. I am 22 years old and, since the beginning of September, I am part of the NGO Management team of the Fundación Aldeas de Paz. I will spend the next year here in Samaná - doing a government-funded voluntary service called “weltwärts”, coordinated by the German Red Cross.



In the first weeks I got initial impressions of what Aldeas de Paz is doing. Furthermore I started to help in different projects like the Mama Elba School and computer classes for the locals here in Samana. Now I am looking forward to manifold new tasks during the next 12 months. At the weekends we have time to explore the country. We already did some very adventurous trips to El Limon, Cayo Levantado and Puerto Plata.



I am glad that I decided to go abroad for a year to help other people. Moreover I am thankful for the opportunity that I have: To get a deep insight into this beautiful country with its people and their culture.

Max

The first days in the Dominican Republic had a really strong impact on me. It was hot, everything was green and the ocean glimmered and I realised that now I was in the world I only heard of before. Now I had to become acquainted with the situation.



I applied to work on the NGO Management. It's an area with a lot of different jobs so I first got introduced to every area the organisation works in. The coordinator took me to the school where I observed other volunteers working with the children. I also visited the hospital, the

English classes, met doctors, teachers and other volunteers. It's called shadowing and serves to get a general overview. There is a productive and adventurous atmosphere. On daily meetings we plan the specific projects, we discuss problems and find solutions. After the first weeks I've found my projects. I work with the children I give English and Computer classes where a lot of people come looking forward to learn something what gives me a lot of energy

I start feeling home. During the day I work and in the evening I go to the gym or sit with locals on the beach to eat, talk and think about the day. I'm looking forward to the next five months and my future projects.



SCHOOL

In school we learned with the children about the culture of the different continents painting flags, maps and special things of every country. We also talked about our bodies and why hygiene is so important for us.

Nicole introduced a new activity to improve the children's motoric skills which consist in putting pegs on a rope. It's really easy but the children enjoyed it and learned a lot.

Another activity Nicole introduced were the backstories where the children and the teachers had to renarrate a story with their hands on the back of the person in front of them.

We offer now also English and Computer classes for adults in the morning and the afternoon. This classes are very popular and every day full of people.

EXCURSIONS

This month we have had only one big excursion to Sosúa and Puerto Plata. In Sosúa we went to snorkel and in Puerto Plata we visited Brugal which is one of the most famous rum brands here in the Dominican Republic. We have also been to the amber gallery and we did the cable car to get to the Isabel de Torres Mountain. On other weekends we have visited las Galeras, las Terrenas, a few times Cayo Levantado, Playa Rincón and the national park Los Haitises. To welcome the new volunteers we have arranged on a Saturday a barbecue and a trip to el Limón what we enjoyed really much.

NICOLE ABOUT OUR DAY TRIP TO EL LIMON

At the beginning of the month we did a great trip to the waterfall El Limón which is about 40 minutes away from Samaná. The new Red

Cross Volunteers who arrived a few days before, joined us so that we were quiet a big group but not big enough to fill a whole "guagua" even though some of us thought we would. There is always some space for one, two or even 5 more people.

We decided to walk instead of going by horse and after leaving the street behind us, we found ourselves on a muddy and rough but beautiful way with amazing viewpints. During the walk our guide showed us different plants like coffee and chocolate. After another 40 minutes we arrived at the top of the 51m high waterfall and had a first view on it and its beautiful swimming hole at the bottom. Only the steep steps separated us from the cold and clear water.

After taking some pictures and swimming around -some even jumped off a 3m high cliff into the deep water-, we began our way back which was a different one that offered us another amazing view on the waterfall and led us numerous through the river El Limón.

Tired but happy and full of new impressions we arrived at the guagua that took us back to Samaná.



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