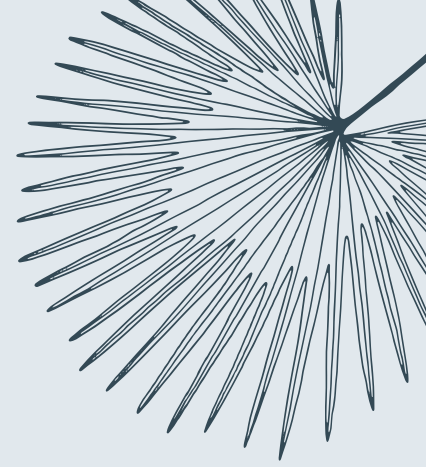


HOLISTIC HOPE

IN THE JUNGLES OF ECUADOR



NOTICIA DE LA CASA ESPERANZA

I can't believe we made it to June! With a few bumps in the road (thanks COVID), La Casa Esperanza has managed to reach the end of the school year with 37 full time students, 7th grade and up. And now, the girls are just a few weeks away from their summer vacation.

It took a little while for us to get in the groove, but the Well-Being Department is finally up and running! As of the end of May each girl had completed 2 (or 3) full psycho-social group educational units, ON TOP OF their COVID in-home schooling. Before Christmas we completed a Self-Esteem unit, and this semester we've covered Defining Healthy Relationships and a unit on Responsibility. We started our last unit of the school year this week discussing Goals, Dreams, and how we plan for the future! While starting the program has been a challenge for me, it has also been incredibly stretching in my language ability, in my engagement skills, and in forming personal relationships with each girl. The work is testing, but each day I am thankful for the lessons they, and God, teach me.

RACHEL GIRDLER, MSW

Missionary Associate

CONTACT ME:

rachel.girdler@ma.agmd.org

+1 (502) 526 - 6472



PARTNER WITH ME:

giving.ag.org

Account Number: 2983757



BIG NEWS & TERM UPDATES

What a weird first term! As you can imagine, the COVID pandemic messed up most everyone's plans for the last year- including mine here in Ecuador. After getting stuck in Costa Rica for three additional months, I arrived in Ecuador to more complications. Another 2.5 months without church... 4 months without the girls in school. There were weeks that passed were I neither spoke to nor saw anyone. There were lots and lots of frustrated tears. Many nights, I honestly just wanted to go home and ask God (and AGWM) if I could have a redo. A full restart to this life overseas. But through the faithful timing of God, things slowly began to change.

Constantly shifting restrictions and being unsure of what I could do here in Ecuador, I began to pray several months ago about where God was possibly leading me. I watched as other doors opened and eventually closed again. As much as I (at times) wanted to start over and couldn't see the reasoning for this year, the peace of knowing God directed me to Ecuador for a purpose, never wavered.

After months of long, hard prayers, discussions with my team, my family, and my friends- I can finally announce:

I'M EXTENDING MY TIME IN SUCÚA FOR ONE MORE YEAR!

I thank each of you for your support over the last two years. I can't wait to see what comes next.



PHOTO CAPTIONS:

PAGE 1: TOP : Celebrating Hermana Edilma's birthday with all the Tías and a surprise party.

BOTTOM : The girls have the chance to earn points throughout the units. This month they chose assorted snacks/candies as their point's prize.

PAGE 2: LEFT TOP : Girl's playing a blindfolded team building maze game. (Faces covered for privacy.)

LEFT BOTTOM : 'Cheesin' after a night playing basketball. (Faces covered for privacy.)

BOTTOM RIGHT : At one point this spring, there were a total of 23 animals living with me! Including a litter of 8 puppies and a litter of 6 kittens born within a week of each other.

