

A Few Basics

• Where are we going?

The island of Hispaniola lies in the Caribbean between Puerto Rico and Cuba. Two countries share the island: Haiti and the Dominican Republic (DR). For generations, there have been divisions between the two nations.

• Brief history of the DR.

There are many injustices in this world. In the DR, injustice takes the form of the oppression of Haitian people. In the past, workers from Haiti poured into the DR to support the vast production of sugar, where they were treated like slaves. Dominicans, determined to deny any opportunities to Haitians and their families who have lived in the DR for generations, try to ensure that Haitians remain undocumented, without rights as citizens. Many of the places the Haitians came to work for have now been closed and families live from day to day, often not knowing where the money for their next meal will come from. Now there is unrest in the country of Haiti and many are fleeing the country. They are coming into the community of Las Colinas and are very needy. The church is overwhelmed with all of the help that is needed. God in his sovereignty has placed this ministry in this place with a calling to unite together, educate, inspire, and to grow in Christ.

• Why would we be going to the DR : A brief history of the ministry partnership

For over 20 years teams have traveled to San Pedro de Macorís working alongside our brothers and sisters in Christ (those from both Haiti and the DR). In that time we have been blessed to share in the the construction of a dormitory, a school, three churches, a home for those in need, as well as family homes, and even developing the early stages of a clinic. We go as partners in ministry as we work alongside our Haitian and Dominican brothers and sisters in Christ.

While there has been a great deal of construction, the building of relationship has been the highlight of this ministry. There are ample opportunities to grow as we worship together, serve in the local hospitals and prisons, come alongside and encourage both the formal and informal the education process. You can read more about Pastor Tanis' vision and the project at www.colegiomoriah.org

• What would we be doing in the DR?

This is a great question. Team leaders work alongside Pastor Tanis and Ester to consider how their teams can use the gifts that God has given them for his glory. This can take many shapes. One reminder is that God is the head of this missions program and that He is already at work in this place. Whether we accomplish a massive task or have lots of small interactions with our hosts all can be used for his Kingdom and to give God glory.

• Finances

There are many costs associated with a trip of this nature; airfare, room, board, travel to and from the airport, construction supplies, and ministry opportunities. Please do your best to pay/raise the amount your team leader sets and send it in a timely fashion to the address your leader provides. The Lord can provide; seek and trust Him.

• To travel to the DR you will need a Valid Passport

These can be gotten at most major U.S. Post Offices. Start this process soon so you have plenty of time. You may even be able to get or renew your passport online. *Your passport must not expire within 6 months of travel dates.*

It is wise to make 2 copies of your passport, keep one copy home, and take the second photocopy along with you (have the leader hold onto the copy or put it in a separate place from your passport (just in case your original is lost or stolen)

Airport Adventure

- Don't forget your passport and your e-ticket
(follow this [link for more information on the e-ticket](#)) *Make sure that you do not pay for this; it is free for all travelers. There are many scams out there. This E-Ticket should be free. You can print out the QR code or save it on your phone.*
- Be sure to keep all your documents in a safe place
(including tickets and baggage claim tags)
- The goal is to get to your departure gate. Be sure you have your tickets and passport with you and that you don't exit (otherwise you'll have to go through security again)

While traveling, please be: respectful, honest, serious in security areas, aware of the time, and your stuff. Travel can be challenging and require patience.

When you exit the plane in the DR, find a good spot to get out of the way and wait for the rest of the team. There is a bathroom before customs if that is needed. Go through customs and ultimately find the luggage. Plan to leave the baggage area together & we will meet our hosts.

• Time in the DR

Time in the DR is a bit different than time in the US. If you are used to a very scheduled day, begin to prepare yourself to be flexible. Take a deep breath and enjoy the relaxed life of the DR; have a conversation while you wait or sit and watch the world go by.

Days in the DR may include regular meals, work, conversations, Bible studies, lots of opportunities to attend services, team devotions, small group opportunities, and many ministry moments.

While in the DR

Be aware of your health

- If you are not feeling well, let your team leader know ASAP!
- Wear Sunscreen to protect yourself from the sun, and a hat too.
- Don't drink the water from the tap AND Drink water (clean water that is)
- There are medical supplies in the Dorm in the DR

Dorm Life

- There is a men's dorm room and women's dorm room please do not enter the other genders room unless well announced
- When moving between the bathroom and dorm rooms, please be dressed (mens this includes your t-shirt).
- There is a night time lock on the gate to our dorm space. In general this will be locked at 9pm
- Respect the quiet hours the team establishes. Please be kind to the neighbors, although they may be loud late into the evening. Remember you represent the Lord and the ministry in the DR. We want to model the example of the Christian community and have consideration for those elderly people in the area and others who work very early and need to have their rest.
- Clean up after yourself. Keep our area as clean as possible.
- Turn lights and fans off when not needed

Food

- Let the team leader know of any food limitations (vegetarian, lactose...)
- If there is something you don't like at a meal, please try not to make a big deal about it. There is often PB&J and other simple foods available.
- When out in town eat only fruit that you peel, if at all.

Packing list

- FYI There will be opportunities to have your laundry done while in the DR. It is possible in the humid climate you will change more frequently.

- **Clothing** ~ While we are on this missions trip we are representing the church in the DR. We have been asked, by our hosts, to dress respectfully & modestly. In general this means clothing that doesn't expose a great deal of skin, no low necklines or spaghetti straps, & is not overly tight. Dressing nice for church is an expectation; pants (not Jeans) and a button up shirt for men, skirts and a nice top or a dress for the ladies.

Remember we are not going to the DR for our own comfort, but to serve.

Some items to consider packing

- Soap, Shampoo, Towel; bath towel, wash cloth, shower flip-flops
- Light blanket if you wish
- Bug Spray, Sun Screen, Chapstick,
- Water bottle, Ear plugs, Flashlight/headlamp, Sunglasses
- Book, Bible, notebook, pens

- Shirts, Shorts, Undergarments
- Socks, Hat, Flipflops/Sandals
- Comfortable shoes you don't mind getting dirty

- Nice clothes for church (our brothers and sisters really dress up)
- Dress/Skirts for ladies
- Buttoned shirt and pants (preferred) for guys

Should the opportunity arise we may visit a local beach

- Beach apparel (one piece "modest" suits for women)
- Beach towel (maybe one you'd leave behind)

If a work trip bring

- Solid work shoes, sneakers, or boots
- Work gloves
- Work clothing, perhaps 2 pairs

Other General items

- We have been asked to not leave the walled complex without letting a leader know where you are going, and preferably with someone from the area.
- Be kind and encourage one another (consider 1 Thessalonians 5:11)
- Look to help each other out, take genuine care for one another
- Work hard when it is time to work. Be ready to serve - be willing to do whatever you can to help.
- TP goes in the trash cans not the toilet due to the septic system requirements
- Remember you are representing the Lord and the church in the DR.
- If you take medications, bring a extra weeks worth of (just in case)

Communication

Be sure to let those know at home that there will be limited contact while you are away. There is internet available from time to time, however, please use sparingly and make the most of the opportunities to connect with your team mates and new friends.

Studies show that it is highly beneficial **to take a break from our technology**. Checking in with family from time to time is ok, but please enjoy putting the phone down. It is only a week; perhaps jot your memories in a journal and load up pictures when you return home if you want to share your trip experience. Use the time in the Dominican talking, reading, playing card/games, sitting in “silence”, and observing God’s creation. Bring a book. Have a conversation... To be clear our “screen time” should be very minimal (if at all) while in the DR.

What tools will I need?

This question has several answers. If you are a skilled individual in your field you may have certain tools that you want to be sure you have with you. Be aware you may be asked to leave tools behind or feel compelled, so you may wish to bring those you are willing to share. There is a tool cabinet in the dorm area with cordless drills, saws, grinders, sander, jig saw etc. There is also a wired saw, sander, router, drill bits, saw blades, and numerous hand tools.

Donations :

Historically, team members have brought down a variety of items to donate. We have listed some items below and want to encourage you when seeking donations to be sure they are of good quality. Each extra bag may cost the team money and can weigh only 50 lbs. Instead of paying for an extra bag, you could donate the funds to the ministry.

Over the years we have asked for a list of items that would be helpful donations, here are some ideas...

- sneakers for both men and women, adults and children are always a need
- staplers, staples, large and small paper clips. double-sided and regular tape
- clothes are as well something people ask for - (especially now that there are many immigrants who are new in the area.) Baby items, nice dress clothing
- toothpaste, tooth brushes, washcloths,
- Flashlights, laptops
- Financial donations are welcome too, however please do not give any money to the community, or the friends that you make. The wise decision would be to allocate those funds to Tanis and Esther or the church deacons. They have extensive expertise in helping those in need. They know the genuine needs.

Things to be aware of

Male and Female Relationships

* From experience we have seen good friendship grow between the team and those who live in the Dominican Republic. A caution is to not allow those friendships to go beyond that. Being friendly could be translated into looking like you are interested in more of a relationship. Guard yourself. Please don't give more information (phone numbers, emails, socials) than needed.

Money

* You may or may not feel like you have a lot of money. However in the DR we may look like we have lots. Be careful when you take out your money to pay for things. (One idea is to keep the bulk of your funds in one place, and a small amount in another pocket)

* We can exchange money while in the DR

* There is an offering taken at each church service.

* Towards the end of the trip we collect "tips" for the cooks, cleaners, etc.

* Just because we like the sound of music on the street and while we may not be able to translate the words, those around us can, so be careful what you "rock out" to.

Preparing your heart and mind is very important. Please take time to prayerfully consider the following video series and the principles listed below.

Video series “Helping without Hurting” Parts 1-6 at the following [link](#)

Gods Principles for Successful Short Term Missions Trips

By the AEC Borquist 2000

God is the head of the Mission Program

- You (We) are not taking God to this place, rather God is taking you (us)! (Gen. 12:1-3, Ps. 139: 1-10)
- God has been at work in this place long before you (we) arrived.
- God has a plan for this community, these people. (Jer. 29:11; 1 Tim. 2:3-5, 2 Peter 3:9)
- Follow God’s lead, not yours (ours).
- God will always be with you (us). (Matt. 28:20b; Rom. 8:38-39; Heb 13:5)

Open Heart, Open Hands

- An open heart is free to be filled by the Holy Spirit and overflow with Love. (John 14:15-17; Acts 13:2-4; Rom 5:3-5)
- An open heart is free to be broken by the injustice and poverty of the world. (Deut. 15:7-8; Ps 9:18; Ps 82:3-4; Gal 2:10)
- An open hand is ready to receive.
- An open hand is a sign of good will and humility. (Gal 5:22)
- An open hand cannot clutch a clock, a schedule, a shovel, a stereotype.

Take a deep breath when things don’t start or end on time; there are more important things in life than sticking to a schedule.

- Be flexible - things will rarely go as you planned.

Doing is Less Important than Being

- Be like Jesus, walk as Jesus walked. (1 John 2:6; Matt 5:1-16; John 15:1-14)
- Be human beings not human doings! (1 Thes. 5:11)
- Focus on people, not just on the task. (1 John 3:18)
- Work on building relationships, not monuments. (Rom 12:9-15)

A servant’s Heart

- Learn from your hosts; honor them and God by serving them (John 13:12-17).
- Find out what your host prays for and then commit to praying for it, too (James 5:16)
- Accept the leadership of your hosts. You are not the one in charge.
- Practice humility! (Luke 22:24-27; James 4:10)
- There are many ways of doing things; yours is only one and it may not be right for this time or place.
- Be adaptable - try new things, set aside biases, and work on fitting into the culture

* Spanish is the language of the Dominican. We are however serving alongside Haitians whose primary language is Creole. It is quite possible that some folks have only recently arrived in the Dominican, so they may have limited access to Spanish. Sometimes the church services are in Spanish, mostly they are in Creole.

Basic Spanish

Please	Por Favor (por fah-VOR)
Thank You	Gracias (GRAH-see-ahs)
I'm Sorry	Lo siento (lo see-EN-tow)
Pardon Me	Perdon (pear-DOAN)
God bless you	Dios te bendiga(dee-OHS lay ben-DEE-gah)
What is your name?	¿Cuál es tu nombre?
My name is...	Me llamo (may YA-mo)
How are you?	¿Cómo está? (como es-tah)
What's up?	¿Qué pasa? (kay passa)
What is this?	¿Qué es eso? (kay es ES-tow)
Where is...	¿Dónde está...(DOAN-day es-TAH)
the bathroom	...el baño (el BAHN-yo)
the house	...la casa (la CAH-sa)
Your/my friend	...tu/mi amigo/a (too/mee ah-MEE-go/gah)
the shovel	...la pala (la PA-la)
the wheelbarrow	...la carretilla (la car-ay-TEAR-ah)
the cement	...el cemento (el ce-MEN-tow)
the concrete	...la concreta (la con-CRAY-ta)
the sand	...la arena (la ar-AY-na)
the rebar	...la barra (la BAR-ra) roll the R
How do you say	¿Cómo se dice (como say DEE-say)
How much does it cost?	¿Cuánto cuesta? (CWAN-to CWES-ta)
I don't have any money	No tengo dinero (no TANG-o dee-NEHR-o)
I need more water	Necesito más agua (nes-eh-SEE-tow mahs AHG-wa)

Basic Creol

Please	Tanpri
Thank You	Mèsi
I'm Sorry	Mwen Dezole
Pardon Me	padone m
God bless you	Bondye beniw
What is your name?	Kijan ou rele?
My name is...	Non mwen se...
How are you?	koman ou ye?
What is this?	Kisa sa ye?
Where is...	Kote
the bathroom	twalèt la
the shovel	pèl la
the wheelbarrow	brouèt la
the cement	siman an
the concrete	beton an
the sand	sab la
the rebar	rebar la

How do you say	Ki jan ou di
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Upon Return to the US

Consider how can share your mission experience with others?

- You will come home filled with many blessings and memories. Share these with your family, and your church family.
- Take time to think through the many things that you have learned.
- Continue to pray for the ministry, the school, the people you met, and the ongoing work of the Lord.
- We have many donors that help support the school, but we are praying and trusting the LORD for more! You can continue to do fundraisers, or encourage others to sponsor a child. If you are on a mission board, encourage your church to set a budget category for the school and ministry in the DR.



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