



INDIGENOUS TRAINING MINISTRIES, INC.
REVC'S NEWS & VIEWS
 by
RevC
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TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!
BLUEFIELDS, NICARAGUA



WOW! This was another trip filled with unexpected experiences, short nights, and great rewards! Sondra Livermore, who helps oversee our CTC programs in Central and South America, has spent considerable time working in Nicaragua. She and our local director, Alfredo Martinez, have established 14 CTC programs! Most recently Alfredo has helped launch our first CTC program in Costa Rica.

One of the CTC programs established in Nicaragua was in a place known as **“Bluefields.”** To get there without making a very long bus trip, one would fly into Managua, the capital, and then take a short flight of just over an hour on a small plane. To save where I could, I left Tampa at 8:30 PM and flew to Ft. Lauderdale, sat for a couple hours then flew on to Managua, arriving at 2:00 AM the next day. I spent a few hours at a relatively inexpensive but unexpectedly adequate hotel where I got a couple hours of sleep, a good shower, and breakfast. I finished my preparations for teaching then met Sondra and Alfredo at the airport for lunch. After lunch, Sondra and I flew on to Bluefields.

Bluefields sits on the coast, has narrow streets with no visible means of widening them, too many cars, and lots of small motorcycles. The streets are filled with shops, small restaurants, the smell of freshly caught fish, crowded sidewalks, and many fruit and vegetable stands. The hotel that our host recommended was also hosting a medical mission team that had filled the lobby with suitcases full of medical supplies. They were only there for a couple days, but it brought back memories of earlier days when I was leading short-term teams out of Countryside Christian Center. In August of 2017, I devoted part of a newsletter to the testimony of how God used a medical short-term mission trip to Managua to change my heart. It was a God moment for me and in many ways set the stage for what God wanted to do through my life as it pertains to our ministry these past 20+ years. For this reason, Nicaragua has



always had a special place in my heart.

When Sondra told me about the two groups being trained in Bluefields, I felt drawn to go and encourage them. Plus, Sondra was already going to be there to teach and then help with two graduations. The first, for 18 of our students, was to be in Managua on Sunday. That meant I could fly in, teach for three days, do the graduation, fly out Sunday night, and be home in time for me to rush from the Tampa airport to the Global Harvest Ministerial Association meeting at New Hope Church in Palm Harbor. As I am on the board of directors and this was our annual business meeting, it was kind of important that I be present.

After arriving in Bluefields, we took this “selfie” of Yali, the pastor’s daughter, me, Pastor Morales, his wife, and Sondra. Yali and her husband manage the two CTC groups. They were



meeting for four days in one week each month, teaching three hours in each group each day. This young couple, Yali and Michael, have two young children to care for as well. Michael loves to

cook, so they prepared a meal and brought it to our hotel. He could easily be a chef — the food was delicious! The two little ones began calling me grandpa almost immediately — some things you just can’t hide even though I do my best to stay in shape.

Each group of students varied in number at each meeting because students would attend whichever fit their schedule. Sondra and I did our best to encourage them to



DAY GROUP

merge the two groups. We could see that the schedule was going to exhaust the two teachers before much longer. Son-

Sondra and I were up early Sunday morning to catch our direct flight to Managua. We boarded a very small plane with maybe 15 passengers, one row of single seats, one behind the other, and a second row of bench seats that held two people each. The plane was packed, but I noticed that the second bench seat from the front of the plane had only one person in it. I managed to get at least the biggest portion of my "Dari air" onto what was left and told myself it was only about an hour flight. To my surprise, the plane took off and went in the opposite direction from Managua. Evidently there were enough passengers who needed to go to "Corn Island." It was about a 30-minute flight to the beautiful little island, filled with homes that looked like they belonged there. Sondra said that they are looking into starting another CTC program on the island. I told her I would most definitely come and teach the first week of class!

dra and I both taught, with me doing the larger portion as she would con-



NIGHT GROUP

Some folks got off and others got on. Fortunately, the passenger in the single front seat deplaned, and I quickly claimed the seat as my own. It was directly across from where Sondra was seated next to a little elderly lady. The pilots were in the two seats directly in front of Sondra and me. We were able to look out the same windows as they did. There was no cabin for the pilots, no toilet, no beverage service, and no flight attendant! We flew over Bluefields and on to Managua arriving over an hour late.



tinue teaching the next week. Our time in Bluefields went too quickly, students were eager to learn, and I hope to return for their graduation. Now it was time to return to Managua for our very first graduation in Nicaragua.

I knew this graduation was very important but not just because it was the first for CTC in Nicaragua. This was a Mt. Everest accomplishment for several graduates who were already pastoring and never had the opportunity to attend a Bible school program. Even with that in mind, I was thinking graduation of 18 students, probably in a small rural church outside of Managua. With graduates, family, and friends, there should be less than a hundred people; we do the graduation, I share a challenge for a few minutes, Sondra translates for me, we have some cake and punch, and we are on our way.

Our new friends in Bluefields tried to tell us that it would not be like that. They both wanted to make the overnight bus trip to Managua to be there for this historic event. I thought it was a strange thing to do just for a little graduation but decided that perhaps it would help them to know what to do when it was time for their students. I was able to cover their bus fares, and they left Saturday evening.

When we arrived at the graduation at about 1:30 PM, we found out some people had been there since 8:30 AM! They had just begun the actual graduation, not knowing if we were going to make it or not. They quickly ushered Sondra and me onto the platform where I handed out the diplomas along with Alfredo.

Friends, I was expecting around 100 people. I was completely blown away by the 800 to 1000 people who had come to this graduation. The long, arc-shaped cement platform was very nicely decorated. The graduates sat in a group with blue cap and gowns with a gold tassel on their cap to move from one side to the other upon their graduation. In addition, each graduate wore a gold sash, one side emblazoned with the emblem of their denomination, the initials for CTC, and their name, and the other side of the sash with the words "GRAD 2020."



When each name was called, the graduate would walk to the red carpet that lined the cement walkway up onto the platform. A member of their family would meet them, dressed in their Sunday best, to escort them down the carpet. When they got to the foot of the platform, they would turn and face the congregation to get their pic-



ture taken by family and friends. From there they walked along the side of the platform and climbed the steps to the top where two flags were positioned, one of Nicaragua and the



other the USA. They posed for another group of photos then moved to the line of dignitaries to

shake hands before coming to Alfredo and me who would give them a hug and



hand them their diplomas. I say diplomas as this was the first graduation in this denomination; thus, each one received a separate diploma for having completed the CTC program in their denomination. A special document holder for each graduate held both diplomas so they could open it and see both diplomas proudly displayed right side up. This moment naturally led to a rush of friends and family to the steps to grab yet another set of photos of them alongside Alfredo and me. They then made their way down the steps to the red carpet for one last photo shoot then back to their seats as we waited for the next person to complete the same process.



When we finished, with Sondra translating, I briefly charged the students from Paul's words to Timothy as he was about to answer God's call on his life. To say it was a big deal is to put it lightly! It was exciting and so encouraging to see everyone filled with joy and beaming with pride in having achieved something that they once felt was impossible. Please be in prayer for this country as the communist leadership is not happy with the Christian influence and is making it more and more difficult for Christian leaders. Having an accredited diploma from the USA will help give them standing.

We want to support Alfredo in the tremendous work he is doing. He is single and has dedicated his life and strength to serving the Lord. He does not own a car and has to depend on bus transportation or rent transportation. It would be awesome if someone felt led to donate the funds to purchase a vehicle for his use. I would expect that \$10,000 would buy him a good used vehicle. If you are not able to do that, perhaps you can help support him for \$300 a month. That is not all he needs but

it will help keep him going. It is hard to imagine someone being able to bring about 14 CTC programs without even having reliable transportation. If you can help Alfredo keep establishing CTC programs, a **\$300** gift will help him do that. Please indicate for **Alfredo** on your gift.

Sondra and Alfredo did a second graduation for 7 students (one could not attend) the following Sunday in Matagalpa. It is hard for us in the USA to fully appreciate the effort that students put forth to earn a religious diploma knowing that the leadership of their country is trying to find ways to eliminate their beliefs. How fortunate we are to have a president who has taken positive steps to help ensure our religious freedom. We need to pray for our leaders and the scriptures admonish us to do.

I had hoped to have some additional information and photos of the new CTC program in Costa Rica but it will have to wait for another newsletter. I do know that there are 11 students now in their third subject studying three evenings each week. Thanks again to Alfredo's effort.



As always, we appreciate you standing with us. Without you making yourself available for God to use in supporting missions, we would not be able to see so many wonderful things taking place. Thank you for being faithful in support of our projects and personal needs. Know we are praying for you as well and doing our best to lay up treasures in heaven for you as well as ourselves.

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