

Costa Rica 2019

Front Row – Ana, Daya, Liz, Cara, Mariah, Shannon. Back – Dr. Gene, Ernesto, Nick, Adam, Tony, Dr. Eva, Mike, Nate, Mark and Carlos

A bigger than normal team, for a bigger job!!



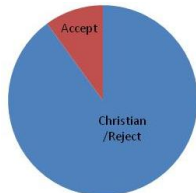
ToBe... in Costa Rica – We trained 25 people who are working with the sex workers in San José with the ToBe... material. Several mental health workers in the audience will now add Heart Charts to their work with the women they are helping to rescue. The “Deer” in the picture (below right) is a psychologist working with teens that have been rescued from sexual abuse. The “Lion” on the left is a lawyer who helps immigrants and homeless. God has assembled a great team there. Below left is a Heart Chart with a brother who came to Christ with our team 2 yrs ago! He is working on a new life-giving belief.

So much Fruit – We saw 284 patients

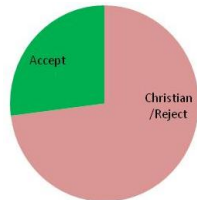


and 123 of them prayed to ask Jesus to pay for their sins so they could be “given the right to be called a child of God.” Yes, that percentage is correct – 43%. Typically we see 10%, last November we saw 27.5% pray. So 43% is hard to explain. We did add one piece to our system - **Daya and Ana doing PTSD assessments** (below right). But the Luke 10:9 system works – “Heal the sick and tell them the Kingdom of God is near. Below are a few of the stories of these changed lives as a glimpse of our experience.

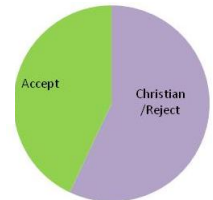
Typical Trip Results



Nov. 2018



August 2019



But just know that your support of this trip means this is about your faithfulness as much as ours.

Old Friends - We have seen and heard about so many of the people we ministered to over the last 2 years. Berto (right with Tony) has continued to grow in his faith and is now chief chef at a resort restaurant far from San José. He was in the streets last November!



Jasenia pictured in the red shirt, is doing great!! Since we met her, she has gotten her children back, is working, and is off the streets. She recently told Gomez, "You may not see the fruit right away, but it is helping people more than you know. Keep doing what you are doing."



Eva's heart broke 2 years ago when this lady described how at age 50, she had to start selling herself to survive. She came to Christ, has a job, and is now doing well. But, like all of these women, her trauma needs dealing with professionally.



Old Friend / New Bible – This woman asked for a replacement for the Bible we gave her last year

because it had gotten wet. She put the new Bible in a waterproof bag to take back to her home on the streets. She is faithfully going to Bible study each Wednesday - **you bought that Bible for her!!** So many we met in previous years are still following the Lord even living on the streets. Mathis (pictured with her) was such an effective 10 year old translator. Most people he translated for accepted Christ.



Off and sitting - Monday started VERY slowly. We had one patient in the first 3 hours – so Guillermo (pictured right) got all of our attention. He is a 55 year old journalist who was tortured by an El Salvadoran gang for his reporting; now he lives on the streets of San José. After him, we went out into the streets to gather people and saw 63 more people in the next 6 ½ hrs. So the medical room was hopping (below)!!



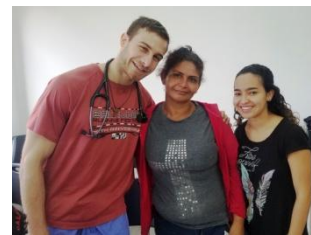
Tuesday it was the Gospel room that was hopping. We saw 64 people but almost all of them were in the first 4 hours; it was back to back with all 3 gospel teams never getting a minute break. Each visit was so much longer and so much deeper because 26 prayed to receive Christ!! But that was nothing compared to the next day when we had 4 gospel teams going all day.

Mental Health Needs - Kathrin (no picture) was a particularly heartwarming story. She came in with major depression, sleeping 15 hrs a day, and a lot of brokenness and guardedness. Daya listened to her pain, Shannon loved on her medically, then we were able to share how Jesus understood her loneliness because all of his friends, and even his very Father abandoned Him on the cross. That is why Jesus promises never to leave us or forsake us if we invite Him to be Lord of our lives. **No one understands total abandonment better than Jesus!**

Suicide attempts Rampant - We were overwhelmed by the number of people we met who had tried to kill themselves in the last month - quite a few this week!! This highlights the need for a **Mental Health Clinic** here. This sweet lady to the left tried to jump off of a bridge on Monday. Mike and Ana helped her jumped into Christ's arms with eagerness on Wednesday. But she needs follow up support. Dr. Nate wanted Mrs. L (next page right) to come back to make sure the pills she had taken to hurt herself were doing no lasting damage – she too found hope in the arms of her brand new savior.



Rehab, a job, friendship, a church, even salvation are wonderful and all necessary, but unless the underlying trauma is dealt with everyone's recovery continues with fits and starts.



Wednesday –It started slow and rainy with almost no patients all morning. But Casta (left), was a good example of someone hurting in the extreme. Her son disappeared 1 ½ years ago. It was a powerful and heart-wrenching visit, but she has put her hope now in Jesus and even made an extra trip back Friday to get a Bible since we had run out Wed. Wednesday afternoon, it picked up a lot. We saw a total of 41 patients in 3 hours, and 21 of them accepted Christ as their savior. That is the ratio of any day in 15 years of doing this work!!



Thursday was supposed to be a half day, but when we got to the church, there were 100 people waiting for us. We saw 67 of them and 23 prayed to receive Christ. Some came back

Friday, and some wandered away when they realized it would be all day before we could see them. This mom and dad from Nicaragua prayed together just after a Mom and her 2 daughters prayed together. We celebrated whole families coming to Christ together and look forward to them joining the church to continue to grow.



Mike had a hard day Thursday, so when Cindy (not pictured) came to his station he was just ready to leave. But God had other plans. She shared that she came in empty and was planning to go back on the streets and get drunk. After their visit, she said she felt full and would not return to alcohol. Pray for our new sister to be strong in the face of temptation! Katelina (left) also told Mike, "Do you know why I am feeling so emotional? I think this is God telling me something." He was, and she received it with gladness!

American Raised – We saw several men Thursday who were brought to the states at age 2-4 and lived in the US for 30-50 years before being deported to Nicaragua under the last administration – they were all valid reason, but fairly minor. But by God's grace, René (in the red and blue cap) and Alex (with Dr. Gene and Cara) were so eager for the Gospel and the changed life that comes with it that Adam couldn't share it with them fast enough. Before Adam could tell René about a life lived with purpose with God, he asked, "what can I do now to serve God and help others know Him too?" Both men came back and translated for us all day Friday. We helped both of them get cheap cell phones so that they could be in contact with potential work. Alex has his official refugee status, but René's hearing is not until November 27th.



Men's Day – Friday we saw mostly men because Jovany, Alex and Rene got busy brining the men of the streets to experience God's love from our team. Foolishly, we doubted their openness to the Gospel, but the Lord got busy with the 47 people we saw and led 19 of them to himself!! But the brokenness in these men was immense. So many tears, so many heartbreaking stories.



Saturday Night Church – Nine (9) of the people we met attended church!! We believe even more will attend on September 1st when the first Sunday morning church is opened for the people on the streets. Saturday evening is a hard time for the homeless to attend because they have to be in the shelters / dorms by 5pm to get a bed.

Vision implementation – I reported last November that the team was trying to get funding to open a dorm for women. Well funding happened way differently than they thought. The new women's dorm will be in a free space that has been a men's dorm, but will now be for women 3 nights a week (all permits, sponsors for food and clothing is in place) – Gretal will have her first real job helping with this dorm plus a dorm on wheels with showers. The group that is doing Chepe se Bana (right) is giving them a bus for women only. It will move from one part of town to another each week to maximize their impact.



Economic Update

CR's economy has stabilized due to the lowering of interest rates but more people are striking because the new government continues to reduce benefits. Carlos felt like this was all well past due, but the strikes cause major disruption in many different industries.

Honduras streets are on fire because the President was caught using drug money. His brother had a long history of association with drug lords, but now the President is in hot water over conspiring to protect those same drug lords in exchange for campaign contributions.

Nicaragua continues to struggle economically, but Ortega has let most of the prisoners out of the political jails. He has also withdrawn the undercover special forces operatives from the streets of San José who were tracking down political refugees. So the flow of Nicaraguan refugees have slowed considerably. With that said, we still met MANY people who had arrived in the last 6 months. Upon returning to the states, Tony met a campus ministry worker at Virginia Tech who met Ortega in 1972. She reports that he is so different from the idealistic person she met all those years ago. Power corrupts.

Total Health San José - Total Health is planning to partner with GCLA San José to create a **Mental Health Clinic** to provide psychological counseling to the ladies they serve.

- 100% of the patients are dealing with extreme trauma (PTSD) that makes it impossible to recover without help. We must deal with what got them on the streets in the first place if we hope to continue the success Carlos' team is seeing.
- To date 10 of the 13 people they have helped are still off the streets and out of the life (the normal success rate is 3%, so this is a great place to invest).



We will need to raise about \$24,000 a year to start this Mental Health Clinic.

- Gretel wants to be the first client for our counselor 😊 Watch her video below:
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bT2vPCYXVSk&feature=youtu.be>

Please pray about supporting this clinic – if just 24 people pledge \$100 per month, this clinic can be up and running.

<https://totalhealth.org/donate/>