



The Miles Family

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Discover more about us on our blog at
www.respondtochrist.org

Life in the D.R.

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So back in the States, the college football season is winding down and I [Pat] have still yet to catch one single game on TV. How much of a contrast that is from last year when I was on hand for every Chattanooga Mocs home game and then tried to catch my Michigan Wolverines on ESPN when I wasn't working. If someone were to ask me what are some of the things I miss the most, behind family, church and friends (and maybe Chik-fil-A and a large sweet tea) I'd have to admit that I miss college football. But at the same time, we saw that the weather has also gotten colder there as well, and while I have always loved the fall weather, it's hard to complain when it's November and we just got back from swimming and playing at the beach (not trying to rub it in...too much - ha)!

It's been about 12 weeks that we've lived here in the Dominican Republic, and as of yet we are still adjusting to the "transitional living" of being a missionary in a third world culture. There are many things to which we have already gotten quite acclimated- such as weaving in and out of motorcycle infested, pot-holed traffic (well...me at least, Jenni's learning how to drive our stick shift truck but she's getting there), waking up at 6 a.m. to the sound of that lovely rooster next door and the sun's penetrating rays beaming down on our eyes through our window, eating Dominican style rice and beans almost daily, our weekly trips to La Sirena (the D.R. version of a Wal-Mart), and even getting the hang of some Spanish.

But there are quite a few challenges (okay frustrations) with which we are also dealing. At the time of this newsletter we still do not have internet at our house and we have been talking back and forth to the company here for several weeks. It's definitely aggravating that customer service is just not taken seriously here in some instances. This has been especially hard for Jenni as she has had very limited interaction with her parents and good friends (I at least can check my email and our Facebook page while at school). We have also had various water issues at our house (our cistern/well running out of water, water pressure problems and our hot water heater isn't working). But even a greater pain has been the swarm of small-bird-sized mosquitos (not kidding) everywhere...outside and inside the house.

Needless to say, life is definitely different. But in each challenge it's been a great lesson on letting go of our American expectations. And it's been incredible to further our dependency on the Lord in our daily lives. So far, that has been the greatest gift of serving here.

For more family news, check out our blog at respondtochrist.org.

More on the reverse.

Some Highlights from Our Ministry Work with Makarios

We are well into our fall semester at Colegio Makarios and it's been a whirlwind. We'll share a bit below about our ministry, but additional highlights can be found on our blog as well - www.respondtochrist.org.

We serve about 80 students (half Dominican, half Haitian) in our PreK-3 through 2nd grade classes (five classes total this year). We have two lead American teachers (Dena in kindergarten and Sarah in 1st grade) but the other three teachers and six teachers' assistants are Dominican and Haitian (those pictured at right include L-R Marnelia, Johan, Bella, and Genesis). In addition to these staff, we also have an American librarian (Miranda), a physician's assistant (Lauren) and an ESL teacher (Imani) and two Haitian cooks (Odilcia & Monica). And if you include Andy (our facilities manager) and Josh and Jen (area director and host couple), that is our staff! They work really hard to reflect God's love while working on the children's behavior and education, which sometimes is tough when considering their home environments.

Each week we visit the neighborhood villages to talk with our students' parents and also to be present to just share God's hope and love. The typical day is quite busy and noisy with classroom lessons, songs, prayers and their laughter (and occasional cries). We start out each morning at 8:30 with a staff devotion and then when the kids arrive (8:45) they start out with songs and prayers. Then they head to breakfast before they are off to their classrooms for the day. The students get lunch before they head home (around 1:30). After the students leave the staff has prep time. There are more details to this which we'll share on our blog and in future updates. Needless to say we sleep well each night. It's exhausting and humbling service.



Some of the PreK-4 girls cheesin' it up.

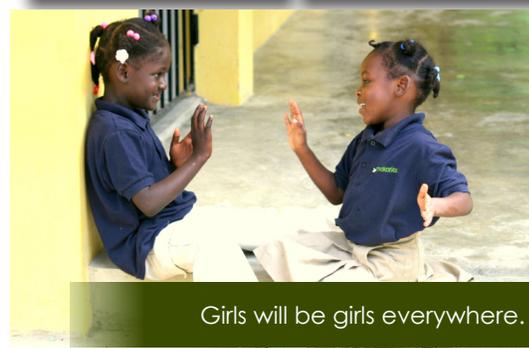


Four of our Dominican teachers.



Fabio

Isabel in Chichigua



Girls will be girls everywhere.



Eduardo giving me a smile during morning time.



A visiting medical team helped Lauren (at left) offer checkups to our students and their families.