

Reach Out/Yspaniola March 2010 Trip

Leader: Gideon Mausner

Dates: 3/6/10 – 3/16/10

Cost: \$700-\$750

The Reach Out/Yspaniola trip to the Dominican Republic has five parts: New Haven, Santiago, Dajabon, Batey Libertad, and Santo Domingo.

New Haven: In the months preceding the trip, the group will complete several fundraising projects. We will also have weekly meetings to discuss readings and preparation, screen movies, and meet with experts on the Dominican Republic.

Santiago: We fly into Santiago, arriving mid-day on Saturday, March 6th. We will spend the afternoon at Santiago's central market and preparing for our trip to the border. That night, we will have a group dinner, visit the Monument of the Heroes, and possibly check out the Santiago nightlife. We will stay in Hotel Colonial, and the next morning travel by bus to Dajabon, the town on the border with Haiti.

Dajabon: After arriving mid-day on March 7th and checking into our hotel, we will explore the town for the afternoon and meet with the UN guards on the border to talk with them about their duties. The next day, we will visit the border market, when thousands of Haitians and Dominicans descend on this small town to exchange goods. After the market, we will travel to Batey Libertad.

Batey Libertad: Batey Libertad is a community in the Valverde Province of the Dominican Republic, a short ride from the municipality of Esperanza (and close to Santiago). The batey has a population that varies between 500 and 1,000, depending on the time of year, since many migrants move with the agricultural season. In the Batey, participants will stay with host families for 5 nights. During the day, we will take tours of agricultural fields and factories, visit the local Free Trade Zone, schools, meet with international developers who reside in the Batey and hear about their work, visit a nearby waterfall, and play soccer. We have no central “service” component of the trip, as the money we fundraise will go to the Batey to send our hosts and friends to school. However, if the group decides to undertake a project as well, we would complete it during this time. On Saturday March 13th, we will travel to Santo Domingo by van.

Santo Domingo: In Santo Domingo, we will spend one day in the Colonial Zone, visiting historical and cultural sites with a bit of shopping mixed in. That night we will check out Santo Domingo’s nightlife. The following day, we will visit the Faro a Colon in the morning, possibly visit Campo Las Palmas, the Los Angeles Dodgers player academy based near Santo Domingo, and go to Boca Chica, a beach half an hour east of Santo Domingo. The night of the 14th, we will travel by van to Santiago, and fly out early on the 15th.