

September 2012 Newsletter

Spotlight on Alice Zients, Hospitalito Atitlan, Guatemala

With only two months under my belt, Guatemala has proven to be exhilarating within the confines of a typical sleepy town. Santiago Atitlán sits on the south bay of Lake Atitlán in the Departamento of Sololá. We are situated at 5200 feet on the banks of a volcanic lake surrounded by 3 volcanoes. I work in Hospitalito Atitlán, a private, non-profit hospital servicing the 50,000 T'zutujil Maya who live in Santiago. We are the only 24-hour Emergency facility and also the only facility that can transfer patients to the National Hospital, a 2+ hour drive away. Since being in Santiago, I have been adopted into a new family, slowed my own pace of life, and learned to enjoy the natural beauty that surrounds us everyday. Going to sleep at night by the sounds of dogs barking and waking up every morning to the rooster who lives in the same compound I do have become the comforts of home that everyone looks for when they move to a new place.

Working in Hospitalito Atitlán, I have been given a number of duties to fulfill that have me trying, sometimes succeeding, and always learning. I am working with all of the volunteers that come to the Hospitalito, with them from the moment they exit the plane until they leave for however long they are here. Volunteers, both clinical and non-clinical, have been very important to the Hospitalito since its early days. My friends call me the "Volunteer Concierge" because of my detailed tours of town and welcome packets that are always ready and waiting in the home of the visiting volunteer the moment they get there. Giving tours of town has allowed me to meet so many people outside of the Hospitalito community and really integrate myself into the culture. It is always exciting to be able to say hi to people in the central square because that is when you really know you are a part of the community.



The best part of my job is working with the Maternal Infant Program and directly interacting with the sponsored mothers. My main focus has been finding sponsors to pair with expectant mothers then keeping the communication open and constant throughout the sponsorship. I go on home visits and speak with the potential mothers about their stories and their needs, and am invited into their home to see their lives and meet their families. I have found that this is the best way to not only learn about the culture, but to share it with others. This process is showing me how warm and caring the people are here and makes me only want to help more.

Recently, one of the sponsors of one of our toddlers in the program wanted to buy her a birthday present that would be something she needed. The family has never had a bed until her sponsor decided to surprise her with one for her second birthday. Bringing the

bed to the house without them having any prior knowledge of the gift was one of the most gratifying things I have ever been able to be a part of. Watching the toddler and her brothers jump on the bed once we set it up and explaining to her that it was her bed was completely amazing.

Despite the naturally warm nature of the people here, there have been some challenges that have remained constant and will continue to be an obstacle during my time here. The memories of the civil war, one of the worst Latin America has ever seen, has left the people in Santiago constantly guarded with outsiders. With patience, empathy and understanding I feel more comfortable each day and am able to make a difference. Especially in the Hospitalito, my co-workers have become my Guatemalan family and I could not be happier to be working in such a warm and welcoming place.

All in all, life in Santiago is great! I am excited to learn more about the culture and lifestyle during my upcoming months. As every day passes, I am amazed by the generosity I have found here. If I had to choose one place to begin my life after college, I don't think I could have picked better than Santiago.



The Old Hospitalito Atitlan, Destroyed by a Mudslide in 2005



Volcano of Santiago Atitlan, as Viewed from Alice's Office

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Evan Gogel, Endeavor
Abra Metz-Dworkin, HRW/CELE



Hank Song, Saude Crianca



Melissa Tran, Endeavor Colombia 2011-12

¡De una! One year in Bogotá at Endeavor Colombia

De una, short for *de una vez*, has quickly become my favorite Colombian phrase. The literal translation for *de una vez* is “all at once,” but in Colombia, the phrase has a meaning that is closer to “Okay! Let’s do it!” or “Yes! I’m all in!” For example, a common response to a friend’s invitation to lunch would be a wholehearted, “¡De una!” After a year living and working in Bogotá, *de una* has also come to embody the optimistic spirit that I love about Colombia and its people—a willingness to embrace opportunity and say yes to challenges without hesitancy and with passion and enthusiasm.

One year ago, I came to Bogotá to begin a yearlong fellowship at Endeavor Colombia through the Princeton in Latin America program. Since then I have been working with the Search and Services team to help search for, select, and support high impact entrepreneurs in Colombia. The Endeavor selection process begins with a series of interviews between entrepreneur candidates and our accomplished business mentors. Our team facilitates these interviews in which mentors scrutinize and evaluate the entrepreneurs’ businesses for innovation, growth potential, and fit with Endeavor. Entrepreneurs that make it through this rigorous process and past a local selection panel have the chance to present their companies at an International Selection Panel along with candidates from Endeavor offices around the world. Before each International Selection Panel, I work with our entrepreneurs to write a detailed company profile, which describes their personal history, as well as outlines all aspects of their company’s business model. Through my interactions with our entrepreneur candidates, I have learned that what distinguishes high impact entrepreneurs is a *de una* attitude—that is, an ability to embrace opportunities without hesitation—as well as the propensity to think big and a desire to promote social and economic change in their country and the world.



With co-workers at the 43rd Endeavor ISP in Cartagena in May 2012 (Photo courtesy

Luckily for me, my PiLA fellowship happened to coincide with Colombia’s turn to host an International Selection Panel in May. The ISP, as we call it, is an event that represents the pinnacle and culmination of the Endeavor selection process, where candidates pass their final rounds of interviews and are selected to become Endeavor Entrepreneurs. The process of plan-

ning this large scale event—hosted in the beautiful Caribbean coast city of Cartagena, and involving over 100 participants from around the world—was both challenging and rewarding. After many months of planning and coordination, it was amazing to convene such a talented and impressive group of entrepreneurs, mentors, and Endeavor staff from all over the world, and to see the Endeavor model at its very best in action.

Besides accompanying entrepreneurs through the selection process, I also had the chance to work closely with selected entrepreneurs as



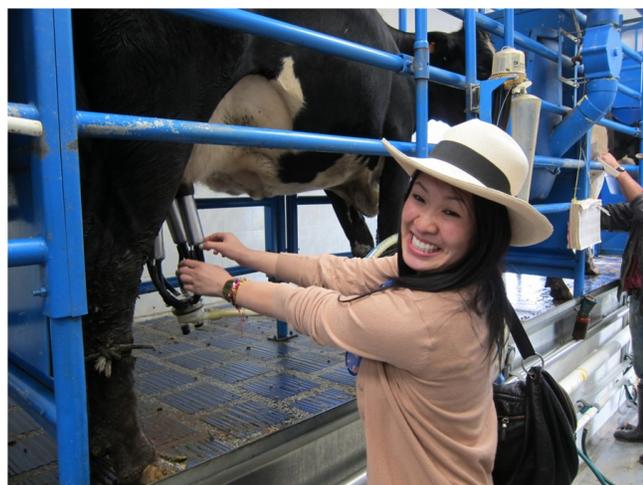
With the lovely ladies of Endeavor Colombia

work closely with selected entrepreneurs as part of my work with Entrepreneurial Services. Once entrepreneurs have been selected to become a part of the Endeavor network, we help them identify challenges that their companies are facing, and then match them with mentors within our network that can help. Through facilitating mentorships and work sessions, we work with our entrepreneurs on such diverse projects as launching a new line of business, designing a new media marketing plan, and expanding their companies internationally. It has been a truly humbling and inspiring experience to work with and learn from the many talented Endeavor entrepreneurs and mentors who are setting positive examples for future generations of Colombian entrepreneurs.

Fortunately, my year in Colombia wasn't all *trabajo* and no play. Colombia is a country of amazingly diverse landscapes: from the expansive highlands of the *antiplano*, to the lush plantations of coffee country, and the jungle-lined sparkling beaches of the Caribbean coast. Here in Colombia, I discovered that half the fun of traveling is being open to adventure and embracing the unexpected and unknown. Five-hour truck ride with 19 other Wayuu passengers? An exploding game of *tejo* with locals at 2am? Salsa dancing outside with 10,000 people in Bogota's largest central plaza? ¡*De una!*

Reflecting on this last year, the highlight of my time in Colombia has definitely been the many wonderful people that I have had the privilege of meeting. Colombians have a reputation for being some of the friendliest people in the world, a title that is very much deserved. I am especially grateful for my co-workers who have been so patient with me and have inducted me into the world of entrepreneurship and business in Colombia. Even though I was foreigner and a recent college graduate, my coworkers welcomed me as a respected member their team and always took my ideas and opinions seriously. They, and the many other Colombians and *gringos* whom I met during the last year, have made this experience worthwhile for me.

As I am wrapping up my one year in Colombia, I now catch myself using *de una* almost as much as a Colombian! More significantly, though, I have also adopted the Colombian approach of facing new opportunities and challenges with enthusiasm and passion. I am very thankful to have had the experience of living and working in Bogotá for the last year, and I hope that I can approach my next adventure with the same *de una* attitude that Colombia has taught me.



Visiting a client of Colombian Endeavor Entrepreneur company SFA CEBAR,

Spotlight on Emily Hedin, Arias Foundation, Costa Rica

As I reflect on the 10 months I have spent with the Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress in San José, Costa Rica, I am overwhelmed with gratitude to PiLA and the Arias Foundation for this immensely valuable experience. As a PiLA fellow, I have developed a better understanding of the intersection between development, inequality, and insecurity in Latin America, while having the pleasure to work with an organization whose profound commitment to its mission makes it an example for others to follow.

For my first project, I helped the Arias Foundation expand the concept of “dividends of peace” by calculating the socio-economic development Latin America would enjoy if it weren't for unnecessary spending on arms acquisitions and high rates of armed violence. I presented the results of my research at a workshop for Central American journalists as well as at a conference of the region's parliamentarians. This work contributed to the Foundation's efforts to promote the need for more effective regulation of the arms trade among the region's media actors and decision-makers.

In October, the Foundation asked me to help coordinate its ongoing efforts to establish a Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution, which will contribute to development in Latin America through research, educational initiatives, and direct mediation of social, political and economic conflicts. To establish the methodological framework for the Center, we organized a workshop in the city of Bogotá in March, which convened representatives from the United Nations, the Organization of American States, and leading nonprofits such as the Carter Center and the International Crisis Group to share experiences in conflict resolution and brainstorm innovative approaches to growing insecurity in the region.

Finally, I have worked closely with other Arias Foundation staff members to encourage governments to support the proposal for an Arms Trade Treaty, a legally-binding document that would help alleviate the devastating humanitarian consequences of the global trade of illicit weapons. I am looking forward to accompanying the Arias Foundation to New York City in July to participate in the final UN negotiations of the treaty's text.

My experience at the Arias Foundation has taught me a great deal about the international arms trade and the threat it continues to pose to the full enjoyment of basic human rights. However, perhaps more importantly, this experience has shown me what a transparent, effective, and sustainable nonprofit looks like. By speaking out on behalf of society's most vulnerable members while upholding rigorous standards for public service, the Arias Foundation staff and Board of Directors have provided me with limitless inspiration for the years to come.



Emily with President Oscar Arias and Arias Foundation E.D. Luis Alberto Cordero

Many Thanks to our 2011-12 Donors!

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Mai Ann Healy (Endeavor '10) now working in Chile with a sustainable sea-food company.

Letter from the Director

Dear Friends and Alumni,

It is with great enthusiasm that we have sent out the Class of 2012-13! Already, reports are coming in, as you will see with Alice Zients' essay on her work at the Hospitalito Atitlan. Further, we have two more essays by 2011 fellows, Emily Hedin (Arias Foundation) and Melissa Tran (Endeavor-Colombia). I hope that you will enjoy reading about all three women's work as PiLAs.

This marks our 10th year of sending fellows to Latin America and we are celebrating this milestone with an event in New York City, honoring our great supporter Arminio Fraga. We hope that you will join us there! Here is a link to our website, in which you can learn more about this exciting event and buy tickets: <http://www.princeton.edu/~pila/tenthanniversary/index.htm>

If you have any questions about the 10th Anniversary Celebration, please contact me: pila@princeton.edu This will be a wonderful opportunity to meet our program alumni, some current partner organizations representatives, and the board of PiLA.

Stay tuned for future updates, when we will be hearing from Fellows at new placements, like World Food Program and the Azuero Earth Project, as well as long-standing partners like Amazon Conservation, Arias, and Convivencia Educativa (know now as EIMLE).

Saludos cordiales,

Claire Brown

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Thank you!



Joe Lerman, ProPeru 2011-12