

Our YOUTH

Working on the Court in DR

Ten students and two staff members from Cristo Rey Brooklyn H.S., Flatbush, traveled over 1,500 miles to La Guama, Dominican Republic.

This summer marked the school's first international service trip, with the full intention to continue the tradition.

The Cristo Rey Brooklyn team joined three leaders from two nonprofit, mission-driven organizations, Courts for Kids and the Peace Corps, as well as the La Guama community to build a multi-use basketball court.

The service partnership with Courts for Kids was a student-driven initiative. Gaining interest from peers and Cristo Rey Brooklyn staff members, the driven young adults raised over \$20,000 to cover the cost of transportation, court supplies and housing.

In addition, the students had no hesitation connecting with the hospitable community members.

"I feel like this trip has changed me because now I am aware of the things I have taken for granted," said rising senior Ofelina Rodriguez. "The community members of La Guama Arriba have to search for clean water to bathe, cook, wash clothes, etc. In New York, we don't have to worry about running out of water because we have an unlimited resource of it unlike the people from this community."

The students also had their fair share of fun on the trip.

"My favorite memory is dancing bachata or merengue every night even though all of us were hot and tired," said rising senior Kimberly Delgado. "I enjoyed seeing members of the community come together in the space where all of the houses connect. At first I never danced at all, then I danced a little, now I love it! As a Hispanic, I never liked the culture except the food.

I've learned to embrace it more."

"I learned that this community is nowhere near like New York; everyone helps no matter what the situation is, and they care more about the neighbors than themselves," Delgado said.

"When I would go to the river, a daughter of one of the Dona's left my dirty, muddy shoes spotless! Like brand new! I tried once, but it never came out the same. The students look forward to continuing the relationships they made with members of the La Guama community and their Courts for Kids and Peace Corps leaders."

"This service trip made me learn a lot about myself," said rising senior Reina Felix. "I real-

ized that when I'm around the right kind of people that can help motivate me and push me, I can accomplish anything. Sometimes I felt exhausted and thought that we would never finish the court, but seeing everyone put in hard work made me have hope.

"The most difficult part of going home is having to say goodbye to all the wonderful people I've met and not having the Dona's breakfast, lunch and dinner. Also, leav-

ing the country that I have grown to love behind."

"The people of La Guama have very little, but they are like the happiest people on earth," said rising senior Melody Roberts. "Everyone in La Guama looks out for one another. They care. They are one big happy family."

Almost half of the students participating in this international service trip have family from or in the Dominican Republic.



▲ The team comprised of Cristo Rey Brooklyn H.S. students, Courts for Kids and Peace Corp pose on the completed multi-use basketball court.

A WYD Message from the Bishop

The following is the text of a memorandum from Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio to deans, pastors, administrators, ethnic apostolates, campus ministers and youth ministers.

It is my pleasure to announce that the Diocese of Brooklyn has contracted the services of Peter's Way Tours Inc. to assist us with our arrangement for World Youth Day, Poland. The Opening Mass is scheduled for Tuesday, July 26, 2016 and the Closing Mass with our Holy Father, Pope Francis, is on Sunday, July 31, 2016.

As in the past, it is my wish that any group making arrangements to travel to Poland should be doing so with the Diocesan Contingent and traveling with their Bishop. In addition

to having a unified presence traveling together, I would like to remind you of some essential requirements. In keeping with the norms of the Office of Safe Environment, each pilgrim and chaperone must be screened by that office prior to travel.

Traveling with the Diocese of Brooklyn also ensures that your group is covered through the Parish Service Corporation. Also, only those pilgrims traveling with the official diocesan contingent will be eligible for scholarships offered by the Futures in Education Foundation.

To that end, we have scheduled an information night for group leaders to be held at St. Sebastian's Parish Center on Thursday,

Sept. 25 at 7:30 p.m.

I have asked Father Gerard Sauer, Diocesan Director of Pilgrimages, to schedule this meeting after the completion of his site inspection in Poland so that he may give you firsthand information. He will be joined at the meeting by Paul Morisi from the Office of Faith Formation and representatives from Peter's Way travel who have already secured space in Poland.

In the meantime, you may contact Father Sauer at St. Mel's Rectory at 718-886-0201 or Paul Morisi at 718-965-7300, ext. 5556, should you have any questions.

Please know that I appreciate your continued support as we begin to prepare for World Youth Day, Poland in 2016.

Youth VIEWS

What trait do you wish people to remember you by?



Sonia Morreira, junior, St. Joseph H.S.

Sociable – I try to give cozy first impressions. Maybe in 20 years, people will remember me and say that they did enjoy knowing me.



Daniela Luna, sophomore, St. Joseph H.S.

I want to be remembered by being positive and helpful.



Nadine Martinez, junior, St. Joseph H.S.

I want to be remembered by others as loyal and dedicated. As a junior, school work becomes almost impossible to accomplish, but I want people to know that I have done my best to accomplish my goals in expressing leadership.