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NICARAGUA

*Service Trip
January 6-13th 2018*

FEINSTEIN ENRICHING AMERICA PROGRAM | OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

Applications online: Wednesday, February 10

Applications close: Wednesday, March 22 at noon



Held annually during winter break, the Nicaragua Service Trip is run through Mustard Seed Communities, an organization that works with the local Catholic church to serve the needs of abandoned or orphaned children with mental and physical disabilities.

Cost Approximately: \$1,700 (Financial Assistance Available)

Table of Contents

History	3
Student Learning Outcomes	3
Office of Community Service Staff.....	4
Nicaragua Service Trip.....	5
Nicaragua Timeline & Checklist	6
Money Matters.....	8
Passport	10
Health, Wellness, & Safety.....	11
Travel Tips.....	12
Packing List for Nicaragua	13
Pre-Trip Meetings.....	14
Frequently Asked Questions	15
Course Credit	17
Formstack Online Application.....	18
Sample Schedule	21
Created by	23

History of Salve's Partnership with Mustard Seed

In August 2012, The Office of Community Service at Salve Regina University sponsored the first service trip abroad to Nicaragua. While in Nicaragua and working with Mustard Seed Organization, student volunteers were able to help serve the community by building and playing with the local children. On this first trip 16 students participated and raised \$15,200 for Mustard Seed Organization. The Office of Community Service has been able to sustain the Nicaragua service trip abroad because of the growing interests from the Salve students.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students who participate with Office of Community Service's program will:

- Develop leadership and communication skills and strengthen self-confidence
- Develop critical thinking about social issues
- Develop a life-long sense of civic responsibility
- Work and communicate effectively across differences
- Plan and implement community-based service activities or programs
- Integrate the values of service and social justice into career and life goals
- Use reflection as a means for learning and personal growth



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Nicaragua Service Trip

January 6 – 13, 2018

Service Trip Description

Held annually during winter break, the Nicaragua Service Trip is run through the Mustard Seed Communities, an organization that works with the local Catholic Church to serve the needs of abandoned or orphaned children with mental and physical disabilities. Participants will work with children and young adults at Hogar Belen-Diriamba Orphanage while staying in a dorm-style mission cottage on the campus. A majority of the orphanage's residents cannot speak, so participants will learn to communicate with the children through other means.

Mustard Seed Communities (MSC) is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to caring for the most vulnerable populations in society. MSC began in 1978 as a home for children with disabilities on the outskirts of Kingston, Jamaica. They have since expanded and built additional facilities in the Dominican Republic, Zimbabwe, and Nicaragua in 1999. The majority of their programs are dedicated to the care of children with serious physical and mental disabilities such as Down syndrome, hydrocephalus, cerebral palsy and muscular dystrophy. MSC also cares for children affected by HIV/AIDS in Jamaica and Zimbabwe. In Jamaica, they have a home for teenage mothers and their babies. The vision for each apostolate is to create a loving and caring environment to aid in the physical, mental and spiritual development of their residents. In Nicaragua, Hogar Belen Managua opened in 2000 and is currently home to over 35 children ranging in ages from infants to adolescents. Hogar Belen Diriamba opened in 2006 and is home to over 40 children and young adults.

In addition to caring for their residents, MSC is involved in numerous outreach and community development initiatives in the countries where they serve. MSC employs over 300 local workers, offering jobs, training and economic viability to people who would otherwise have no opportunity to break out of the cycle of poverty. MSC strives to introduce skills into the community and to empower its people. MSC is working towards helping their apostolates become fully self-sufficient through sustainable agriculture. The hope is that this will improve the quality of life for their residents while fostering a sense of responsibility within the local community.

Mission Statement of Mustard Seed Communities:

“Inspired by the healing and caring Ministry of Jesus Christ, we aim through the positive interaction of caring, sharing and training, to uplift the most vulnerable members of society, especially handicapped and abandoned children, and marginalized communities. We are committed to the fostering of homes and communities, which will lead us all too loving service and mutual respect and which will bring us joy, hope and dignity.”

Details from Mustard Seed about the children, packing lists, and fundraising:

http://www.mustardseed.com/site/PageServer?pagename=mustard_seed_index

Nicaragua Service Trip 2018 Timeline & Checklist

- February 10th**: Applications live on Salve Regina Webpage
- Wednesday, March 22nd** at noon (12pm) applications are due
- March 24 – April 7th**: Applicant Reviews/Selection
- Monday, April 10th**: Notification of invitation to interview with Director
- April 20th – April 27th**: One on One Interview Process with Director of Community Service, Kelly Powers
- Friday, April 28th**: notification of acceptance (and waitlist activation if needed)
- Friday, May 5th** : Special Forms Due
 1. *Participation Agreement form (with an added Parent/Guardian Agreements and Release)*
- Friday, July 7th**: Fundraising accounts released \$15.00 set up fee to Mustard Seed Website
- Friday, July 7th**: \$700 Airfare Down-Payment due to Business Office, with short term participation agreement and deposit form signed by student.
- Friday, July 7th**: Waitlist activated
- Friday, September 1st**: Mustard Seed \$500 fundraising due in your online Mustard Seed Account
- Copy of passport:** colored copy of your passport due to Wakehurst 202.
- Tuesday, September, 19th** – First Nicaragua group meeting, Wakehurst 202 from 5-6pm

- Tuesday, October, 17th** – 2nd Nicaragua group meeting, Wakehurst 202 from 5-6pm
- Wednesday, November 3rd**–All of your vaccinations must be completed.
- Tuesday, November 7th** – 3rd Nicaragua group meeting, Wakehurst 202 from 5-6pm
- November 17th**: Your total payment of \$950 for your Nicaragua Service Trip is due in your online Mustard Seed Account
- Tuesday, December 6th** – Final Nicaragua group meeting, Wakehurst 202 from 5-6pm – Pre trip participant question survey
- Service Trip:** January 6-13th, 2018
- January 16th** – Post trip survey online
- Nicaragua Trip Reunion:** Spring 2018, February

Money Matters

Financial Information: *Please note that the following figures are estimates only and are computed using the current exchange rate. We believe them to be reasonable estimates but reserve the right to change the fees should the flight rate change.*

***All students will pay a \$700 airfare before July 7th 2018 and fundraise \$950 online through the Mustard Seed Communities.**

The Program fee of \$1700 includes:

- Round-trip air fare Boston to Managua, Nicaragua (\$700)
- Round trip van transportation from Salve campus to airport
- 7 nights lodging (Students and faculty will be housed at Mustard Seed Communities in Hogar Belen-Diriamba in a dorm style mission cottage on the campus.)
- All in country transportation, and airport fees.
- Most meals in country (not including travel days in airport and recreational day in Nicaragua).
- Project construction materials
- 24/7 Bilingual Mustard Seed Communities staff

Students outside anticipated cost:

- All recreation, cultural, and tourist activities (Last year's cost was about \$40 per person).
- Airport food on travel days (Saturday, January 6th & Saturday, January 13th)
- Personal Doctor vaccinations
- Personal Passports
- You will also may to bring an additional \$80-\$100 (in small dollar bill amounts) of personal spending money for any souvenirs you purchase when you go to the markets in Nicaragua.

Financial Assistance: Students can send a letter of request and are required to meet one-on-one to request financial assistance, with the Director of Community Service. Financial assistance will only be given to cover partial cost of the flight cost. No financial assistance will be given to the Mustard Seed \$950 fundraising portion of the trip. Financial Assistance will be given on a case by case basis.

How to pay for my flight: The \$700 airfare down payment is due before July 7th through the Business Office at Salve Regina University. Students can pay the business office by VISA, MasterCard or by electronic check through their portal. If by check write "Nicaragua Service Trip" and the student's full name written in the memo line.

The Mustard Seed Fundraising: All participants will create a personal account on the Mustard Seed Communities webpage. By July participants will be given a team passcode to register and start their personal profile.

- All donations to Mustard Seed Communities will be tax deductible.
- If a donor mails you a check for your personal fundraising account, make sure to have them make the check payable to Mustard Seed Communities with your name in the memo line. You, as the participating student, will later mail all deposits to Mustard Seed Communities headquarters. Details will follow regarding address.
- Remember to mail personal thank you cards to your donors.
- For more information on your personal Mustard Seed fundraising account, check the link below.

http://www.mustardseed.com/site/PageServer?pagename=mustard_seed_index

Refund policy: the \$700 deposit is not refundable under any circumstance. The Mustard Seed Fundraising of \$950 is also non-refundable.

**To be an eligible participant on the Nicaragua Service trip all students must adhere to the timeline application process, and have all required documents submitted on time. You will receive an electronic notification of all completed requirements to confirm your place on the trip.*

Passports

Passports: Give yourself plenty of time! The process can take a couple months in the heavy tourist season. Applications are available at most Post Offices and some County clerk offices, or visit: <http://travel.state.gov/passport/>. Follow the instructions on the application carefully. You will need:

- two recent identical 2" x 2" pictures (full face, front view)
- full payment of passport cost
- an official birth certificate with a 'raised seal.' If this is not available, a baptismal record or an affidavit from someone who knows when and where you were born, or a census record may be submitted.

The Office of Community Service will need a copy of your colored passport by September, 1st to Wakehurst 201 or emailed to Community.Services@Salve.edu

Health, Wellness, and Safety

Please be advised that this trip involves a significant level of physical activity. We will be doing ALL of the building ourselves (in collaboration with Mustard Seed Communities!) which requires digging, carrying and placing cement blocks, mixing and carrying cement, water, sand, etc., and will also be doing a fair amount of walking and using non-handicapped accessible buildings and vehicles. You must be physically fit and in good health to take this course – unfortunately, Nicaragua does not have an equivalent to the American Disability Act making universal accommodations for those with mobility disabilities. We are staying at a local residence, maintaining our own living quarters, preparing the majority of our food, and all living quarters will be shared. The bathrooms are not handicapped accessible. Please remember that we focus on being ‘guests’, integrating ourselves into the community, and will avoid, to the extent possible, being ‘tourists’.

Health Information: As with travel to any developing nation, we will need to take certain health precautions to ensure that our trip is healthy and safe.

- **Immunizations:** Generally, a current Tetanus Shot, Hepatitis A, and Hepatitis B are required. Check <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/nicaragua.htm> or ask your personal physician for additional immunization recommendations. Please note that some vaccines are a series of shots, so plan accordingly. You must pay for any personal Doctor immunizations.
- **Water:**
 - *Mustard Seed Communities uses bottled water exclusively for drinking and cooking in Nicaragua. We will have an abundance of bottled water available for our use.*
- **Health Insurance Information:**
 - We must have the name of your health insurance provider with all appropriate policy numbers. It is the responsibility of the student to provide for the treatment of pre-existing conditions, such as allergy shots.
- **Medical treatment provided in-country:**
 - We will use a well and widely recommended physician at the local medical clinic. More serious illnesses or emergencies will be treated by the same physician we have used in Nicaragua for years and/or at the regional hospital. Our cost does not include the cost of medical attention that may be required during the program. Often physicians abroad do not accept insurance.
- **Safety Precautions**
 - When traveling overseas, there are a number of precautions that you should follow in order to travel safely. You should also consult the US State Department Travel advisories that we will continually refer to throughout this pre-departure briefing. Travel advisories are available by country at: http://travel.state.gov/travel_warnings.html. We suggest you visit this site frequently for updates.

Travel Tips

- Be cognizant of your surroundings.
- Do not carry large sums of money or place all of your money and credit cards in the same place. Do not place your wallet in your back pocket as this is the easiest target for pickpockets.
- In some countries, taking pictures of government, security and transportation facilities is not allowed.
- Trust your instincts, if something doesn't look or feel right, avoid it.
- Do not leave sensitive documents or equipment unattended out in the open in your room.

Especially for women:

- Research your destination to understand its customs, views and laws pertaining to women.
- Female travelers should pack feminine hygiene supplies as these can be hard to find or ill packaged in certain locations. Toilet paper and sanitary wipes may be useful as well.
- Women should consider using inconspicuous luggage that does not denote affluence or femininity.
- Women should use a purse with an inner zippered pocket and a strap that is too thick to be easily cut. Wear the strap across the body, against the stomach.
- Use local women as a guide for appropriate dress. Avoid revealing clothing as this could bring unwanted attention or problems in more conservative countries.

Packing list for Nicaragua

WHAT TO PACK: A backpack or duffel bag is easiest to carry. Please do not over-pack. You may also want a separate (drawstring bag) to hold an extra shirt, water bottle, camera, etc. You will not have a place to lock up your belongings during the trip, so it is suggested you limit what valuables you bring to those which can be carried in your day pack (a small drawstring backpack is fine).

CLOTHES: The weather in Nicaragua during January can range from high 50s at night and up to 90s during the day. Shorts, jeans, lightweight shirts, and a jacket or sweatshirt for layering are best. You will need clothes and shoes which can get dirty at service projects. *Anything you pack, you can donate on the last day!!

- 2-3 outfits for service projects (these may get dirty).
- 1-2 t-shirts
- 1 long-sleeved shirt or sweatshirt
- 1-2 pairs of shorts
- 1 pair of closed-toe shoes for service projects/ropes course (sneakers) **Again, these may get dirty.**
- 1 pair of shower sandals
- Swimsuit & Beach Towel (for the day at the lagoon)
- 1 Rain Jacket or Poncho

TOILETRIES (Airplane size)

- Toothbrush/Toothpaste
- Deodorant
- Soap
- Shampoo/conditioner
- Medications
- Contacts/case/solutions
- 1 Roll of Toilet Paper

LINENS (*We will be sleeping indoors on bunk beds & blankets will be provided)

GEAR: ESSENTIAL

- Sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher)
- Mosquito Repellent
- 2 Personal Water Bottles
- Sunglasses/hat
- Additional Copies of your passport
- Small \$\$\$ bills (Ex: \$1/\$5/\$10) for touring day

OPTIONAL

- Camera
- Cell phone (USE OF CELL PHONES WILL BE **VERY LIMITED**)
- 1 Flashlight

What to leave at home:

- Laptops, iPods, etc.

Pre-Trip Meetings

*All participants are required to attend the 5 pre-trip meetings before going on the Nicaragua Service Trip. No exceptions will be granted.

September TBD – International Program Meeting with the Office of International Programs

Tuesday, September, 19th – First Group NICA meeting, Wakehust 202 from 5-6pm

Topic: Trip overview & team building

Tuesday, October, 17th – 2nd Group Nicaragua Meeting, Wakehust 202 from 5-6pm

Topic: Q & A panel of past participants

Tuesday, November 7th – 3rd Group Nicaragua Meeting, Wakehust 202 from 5-6pm

Topic: Donations and packing

Tuesday, December 5th – Final Group Nicaragua Meeting – Pre trip participant question survey.

Topic: Travel details

Frequently Asked Questions

What can I expect from a mission trip to Mustard Seed Communities?

Mustard Seed Communities has hosted short term mission trips since 1993. They have established a highly developed program for volunteers which is based upon meaningful interaction with our children; tangible work projects; and participation in an inclusive Christian community.

Mustard Seed Communities' mission program exposes volunteers to the reality of poverty in the developing world and is deeply grounded in spirituality. Our Catholic based program provides opportunities for daily prayer, adoration, and reflection while at the same time maintains an ecumenical approach.

What makes a Mustard Seed Communities' mission trip unique?

Mustard Seed Communities cares for children who are disabled, forgotten, abandoned, and marginalized. Our children reflect the image and likeness of God just as you do. So when you look into a child's face or feel the gentle touch of a child's hand, know that God is also touching you and looking at you through their eyes. They in turn are seeing you for who you really are and God's presence in you.

Who participates in Mustard Seed Communities' mission trips?

Mission trips are available to anyone who is at least 15 years old and willing to step outside of their "comfort zone" to follow God's call. Our trips are open to people of all faith denominations. Groups from colleges, universities, high schools, and parishes participate; teens and adults from 15 years old to 80. No prior experience is needed; most mission volunteers are people who have never tried anything like this before.

What safety measures are in place to protect mission volunteers?

In addition to a driver and security personnel who travel with the group, a mission representative supervises all volunteer activities and stays with the mission group as well. All homes are secured and gated and have security 24 hours a day. The safety of our mission groups is our first priority.

What is the financial commitment to participate in a mission trip?

It is required that all mission volunteers to raise a minimum of \$950.00 per person excluding airfare. Many groups and individuals set goals that far exceed the minimum requirement. Mustard Seed Communities provides fundraising ideas, methods and materials that will help you exceed your goals.

How do I fundraise?

Social Media! Many volunteers create a Facebook page to help fundraise. Some volunteers Facebook message their friends and family, send emails and letters to their local parishes and high school teachers from home. Calling works too!

How are the sleeping accommodations?

Participants will work with children and young adults at Hogar Belen-Diriamba Orphanage while staying in a dorm-style mission cottage on the campus in bunk beds. Mustard Seed provides all participants with a pillow and bed sheet. All males and females will be in separate living quarters.

What will the weather be like in January?

The weather in Nicaragua during January can range from high 50s at night and up to 90s during the day. Shorts, jeans, lightweight shirts, and a jacket or sweatshirt for layering are best. You will need clothes and shoes which can get dirty at service projects. **Anything you pack, you can donate on the last day!!*

What are my options on getting to the airport?

Participants have the option of taking a Salve shuttle from campus to and from the Logan Airport in Boston. Or participants also have the option of being dropped off at the Logan Airport on the morning of departure and being picked up on the day the group returns.

How will we communicate to our families when we are in Nicaragua?

Participants may use their personal international cell phone plan while on the trip in Nicaragua. However, we highly suggest participants to “live in the moment” and enjoy the trip without looking at their phones 24/7. A group cell phone with limited minutes will only be used for emergency situations.

How many students are selected for the trip?

There is a 20 student capacity for the Nicaragua Service Trip due to the dorm style setting where the group sleeps.

How does the waitlist work?

The waitlist will be activated on July 1st after any original participants have not paid their \$700 airfare down payment or if people have decided to drop out. Waitlist participants are always emailed regarding their change in status if anything happens.

Anticipated Course Credit Option

*It is anticipated that in conjunction with the Nicaragua Service Trip, students will have the opportunity to register for one or two offered courses. These two courses will expose students to social, cultural, religious, economic and political elements of Nicaragua today during a week-long service experience working with Mustard Seed Communities at orphanages in Managua and Diriamba. Students will provide manual labor each day on service projects as assigned by MSC and interact daily with the children.

While the week-long service-learning experience, some orientation information and in-country meeting may be similar, there will be differences in the content and methodology used in each course as outlined below.

More information about the service learning course option will be available in July 2017

(FORMSTACK ONLINE APPLICATION)

Office of Community Service - Salve Regina University

Nicaragua Service Trip: January 2018

Participant Application

January 6th – 13th, 2018

Exact dates for departure and arrival subject to change

.....
Instructions: Please read and fully understand this Nicaragua Handbook. If you believe you match all of the criteria to participate in the program, please fill out the following forms. Application and uploaded documents are due **Wednesday, March 22nd at noon.**

Contact Information: *Please notify the Office of Community Service of any address or phone number changes so we can easily contact you.*

Full Name (As it appears on your Passport): _____

Local Address During School (Residence Hall or Off Campus) _____

Permanent Address (Home): _____

Salve Email Address: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Graduation Year: _____

Major/Minor: _____

Salve ID #:

Date of Birth: _____

Gender: Male or Female

How did you hear about the Service Trip? _____

Would you be interested in a three-credit course option if available? Yes No

Academic Information: Upload a copy of your Academic Evaluation form to the Office of Community Service.

Please Note: you must have a minimum 2.7 GPA or permission of Director of Community Service to be approved for the Nicaragua Service Trip Program.

Emergency Contact Information

Primary Contact Name*

Relationship*

Primary Phone*

Alternative Phone*

Email*

Address*

Do you have any allergies?*

Do you have any dietary preferences?*(Vegan, vegetarian, lactose intolerant, gluten free)

Upload Nicaragua Service Trip free response questions below*

1. *Why do you want to spend the week volunteering? What do you hope to gain from this experience?*
2. *If you had to describe yourself in 3 words, what would they be and why?*
3. *What experience do you have in regards to the Spanish Language?*
4. *Have you had any disciplinary problems with Salve Regina University? If so, please explain.*
5. *Have you participated in a service trip before? If so, what type of service trip and give a brief description of what you did?*

Upload your resume*

Upload your strategic plan of how you will fundraise \$950 for Mustard Seed Communities organization*

Two References*

6. Reference Name
Relationship
Email
Phone
7. Reference Name
Relationship
Email
Phone

Financial Assistance: Students can upload letter of request and are required to meet one-on-one to request financial assistance with the Director of Community Service. Financial assistance will only be given to cover partial cost of the flight cost. No financial assistance will be given to the Mustard Seed \$950 fundraising portion of the trip. Financial Assistance will be given on a case by case basis.

Signature:

By submitting this application, I certify that the information on this application is correct. I acknowledge that acceptance into the program is subject to certain eligibility requirements and is at the discretion of Salve Regina University. I understand that students on international service trips must comply with the Student Code of Conduct

and any other applicable rules, as well as with the laws of the host country. I acknowledge and agree that Salve Regina may revoke my acceptance or withdraw me from the trip at any time if:

- I am no longer a matriculating student at Salve Regina,
- I no longer meet eligibility requirements of the Program,
- I fail to pay the required non-refundable deposit and all Program fees,
- I fail to comply with all requirements of the Program including requirements pertaining to passport participation agreements and releases, and vaccinations.
- I have been found to have violated the Student Code of Conduct or any other law, rule, or regulation and/or I have engaged in unprofessional and/or inappropriate behavior that would affect my ability to preserve the high standards of the University as a student studying abroad.
- I have read the Service Trip Code of Conduct, Short Term Release, and Refund Policy understand that I will need to submit a signed printed copy to the Office of Community Service.

I also authorize Salve Regina to publish for public relations purpose my photograph or photographs in which I appear.

Applicant Signature*

Sample Schedule

Daily Schedule 2017 HBD

5:00 am Rise morning preparations
7:00 am Breakfast/ clean kitchen, dining area
8:00 am Class, daily chores and activities
11:30 pm Lunch/ clean kitchen, dining area
1:00 pm Class for the older children
2:00 pm Recreation activities for small children
3:30 pm Reflection
4:00 pm Dinner/ clean kitchen, dining area
4:30 pm Recreation Activities
7:00 pm Bed time

Saturday January 7, 2017

American Airlines flight # 993 arrives at 8:24 pm to MGA
10:30 pm Basic Orientation
11:30 am Bed time

Sunday January 8, 2017

6:30 am Rise morning preparations
7:30 am Breakfast/ clean kitchen, dining area
8:20 am Go to Mass at San Jose Church
12:00 pm Lunch /clean kitchen, dining area
2:00 pm Spend time with the children
5:30 pm Clean up
6:00 pm Dinner
7:00 pm Cleanup of kitchen/dining area
8:00 pm Community Time –Reflection

Monday January 9, 2017

6:30 am Rise, morning preparations
7:30 am Breakfast/clean kitchen, dining area
08:30 am Depart to HBM
09:30 am Start work project
12:00 pm Lunch /clean kitchen, dining area
01:00 pm Resume Projects
2:45 pm Spend time with the children
4:30 pm Depart to HBD
5:30 pm Clean up
6:00 pm Dinner
7:00 pm Clean-up of kitchen/dining area
8:00 pm Community Time –Reflection

Tuesday January 10, 2017

6:30 am Rise, morning preparations
7:30 am Breakfast/clean kitchen, dining are
08:30 am Depart to HBM
09:30 am Start work project

2:45 pm Spend time with the children
4:30 pm Depart to HBD
5:30 pm Clean up
6:00 pm Dinner
7:00 pm Clean-up of kitchen/dining area
8:00 pm Community Time –Reflection

Wednesday January 11, 2017

6:30 am Rise, morning preparations
7:30 am Breakfast/clean kitchen, dining are
9:00 am Reflection with staff and children
09:30 am Help staff and children with chores
12:00 pm Lunch /clean kitchen, dining area
2:00 pm Spend time with the children
5:30 pm Clean up
6:00 pm Dinner
7:00 pm Clean-up of kitchen/dining area
8:00 pm Community Time –Reflection

Thursday January 12, 2017

6:30 am Rise, morning preparations
7:30 am Breakfast
9:00 am Depart for DAY OUT
(Have lunch and Dinner out)
9:00 pm Return to Diriamba).

Friday January 13, 2017

6:30 am Rise, morning preparations
7:30 am Breakfast
9:30 am Depart to CIGM, Managua
1:30 pm Lunch at HBD
3:30 pm Mass
4:30 pm Spend time with the children
6:30 pm Dinner
7:30 pm Clean-up of kitchen/dining area
8:30 pm Community Time –Reflection

Saturday January 14, 2017

3:00 am Rise morning preparations
3:45 am Good byes and depart to airport
American Airlines Flight-# 994 leave at 8:00 am

Please bring: snacks, mosquito nets, bug spray, sun block, peanut butter, sunglasses, face mask and closed toe shoes.

HBM: HOGAR BELEN MANAGUA

HBD: HOGAR BELEN DIRIAMBA

Created by:

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