



YSPANIOLA

2013-2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Quality Education in the Dominican Republic





Letter from the *Executive Director*

Dear Friends and Supporters of Yspaniola,

Thank you for your support and generosity this past year! Yspaniola has been growing quickly, and I am proud to report on our programs and our successes this year.

In our Learning Center, we have strengthened structure and solidified curriculum. Currently, more than 100 students ages 4 to 14 study Spanish literacy, focusing on phonics and reading strategies. We assess our students with regular phonics and reading assessments, and in June we carried out our yearly administration of the Early Grade Reading Assessment. A behavior management system built on positive incentives and respect encourages good behavior.

Key to our success is our support within Batey Libertad. We have one teacher from the community, Ronny Charle, and five local high schoolers who work as Learning Center assistants. In our Summer Camp, local youth work alongside international volunteers to run activities for the children in the community, and our Youth Committee helps with outreach in the community throughout the year.

We are also proud to report that in March of 2014, our University Scholarship Program had its first graduate, and we are preparing for a new scholar to enter the program in 2015. With support from Princeton in Latin America, an organization that places highly qualified recent college graduates in yearlong fellowships with organizations working in

Latin America, we are able to provide more extracurricular tutoring to our scholars, and better support them with schoolwork as well.

Additionally, this past summer and fall, we collaborated with two local human rights organizations, CEFASA (a Jesuit organization) and MOSCHTA (a Dominican-Haitian workers organization), to help thirty-four Batey Libertad residents who had been denationalized by last year's Constitutional Tribunal's ruling apply to regain their citizenship through Law 169-14. This work promotes basic human rights and access to education while contributing to a growing coalition of thoughtful citizens and organizations who advocate for ongoing social change in the Dominican Republic.

As the new year begins, Yspaniola will continue to strengthen its educational programs by building teacher and staff capacity while working with Dominican organizations to support Batey Libertad's residents. We also will build programs to include more Dominicans in our work as volunteers and staff members because we believe that batey communities and Dominican and Haitian advocates must work together to effect change.

Thank you again for supporting our work, and please do not hesitate to contact us with comments, questions, or ideas.

Sincerely,

Jonathan DiMaio
Executive Director



Context

Education in the Dominican Republic and Bateys

The Dominican Republic's education system ranks 137 out of 144 countries in overall education quality because the public school system is perpetually underfunded, with only 4.5% of the nation's education budget invested directly into improvements. As such, only 18% of youth finish high school on time.

Bateys, which began as plantation towns for sugarcane workers in the first half of the 20th century, are rural communities with limited access to economic and educational opportunities: while 51% of youth attend secondary school nation-wide, the attendance rate is 21% in bateys.* Bateys are some of the most impoverished communities in the Dominican Republic.

Batey Libertad

Yspaniola works in Batey Libertad, located in the Cibao Valley of the Dominican Republic. Batey Libertad has a population of about 1,000 Haitians and Dominicans of both Haitian and non-Haitian descent. Residents have limited access to clean water, electricity, sanitation, medical care, documentation, and stable sources of income.

Our Vision

Quality Education, Community Action

Yspaniola's short-term goal is to create vertical access to quality education in Batey Libertad, from pre-K classes to university scholarships. Our long-term goal is to replicate these programs in other bateys and marginalized communities across the Dominican Republic. We aim to create a network of communities with access to quality education and social and economic capital, so that individuals can advocate and act on their own behalf to petition their government for change. At the same time, we will continue to work-through service-learning trips for students from the United States and Mexico and volunteer programs for Dominicans—to strengthen the Dominican and international coalition that supports civil and human rights for these communities.



Community assistant María González works with Kali



Daniel Joseph, a community assistant, works with Class 1

The Learning Center *Year in Review*

In the 2013-2014 school year, the Learning Center had:

- Two full-time teaching staff and three part-time teaching staff
- Four part-time Community Assistants from the Batey
- 90 children attending classes
- 5 classes a day, 3 days a week
- Over 400 hours of hands-on classroom time
- Phonics and vocabulary games
- Focus on Spanish literacy, reading comprehension, emotional intelligence, critical thinking, problem solving, and healthy child development

“Yspaniola is helping children in the community – kids who are finishing high school and are going to college, and kids who don’t know how to read.”

Rosalinda Yemo, 17, member of the Youth Committee



Student Profile:

Martín Joseph, 12

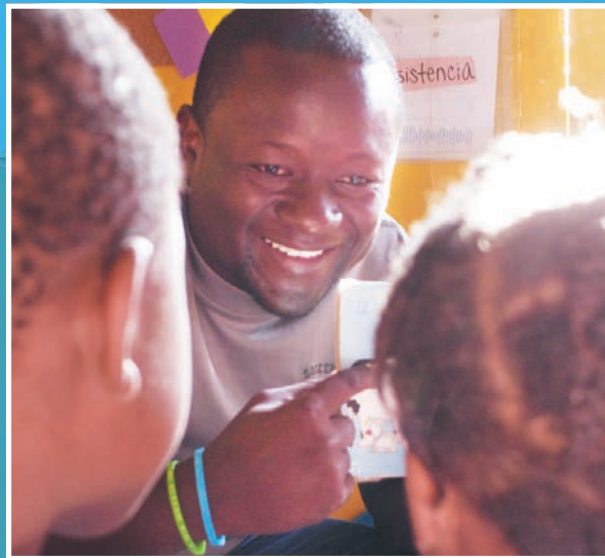
When Martín first came to the Learning Center in the fall of 2013, he was reading at a pre-kindergarten level, even though he was in the fifth grade. Once Martín entered the Learning Center, he became a dedicated and enthusiastic learner: he has regularly attended class and has had two years of reading growth since last September. In other words, Martín spent four years in public school and did not learn how to read, but after spending seven months in our Center, with one hour a day, three days a week, he became literate. This might sound surprising, but it isn't: Martín is a smart and clever child, who, with proper support and good teaching, has exceeded and will continue to exceed expectations.

"I have learned many things, such as making predictions, comparing and differentiating, reading stories, and understanding what is inside stories."

Oriana Hycent, 11, student in Class 6

The Learning Center

Teacher Profile:



Ronny Charle

Ronny Charle was born in Batey Libertad and graduated from the Technical University of Santiago with a law degree in 2013. He was hired as our full-time teacher and Youth Programs Coordinator in the spring of 2014. As a native bilingual Haitian and Spanish speaker, Ronny's presence is fundamental in developing our students' Spanish speaking, reading, and writing skills. Ronny also represents Yspaniola's long-term goal: to support community members to use education as a means to advance Batey Libertad.

"Every day in the Center makes me happy and motivates me because I see the kids' reading capacity and comprehension improve."

.....

Assessments

Yspaniola conducts regular phonics and reading assessments to track student progress and tailor lessons and curricula to meet student needs. Every June, our teachers, interns, and community assistants carry out the internationally recognized Early Grade Reading Assessment, which gives us a better understanding of our students' reading readiness and progress.

Batey  Centro de Aprendizaje
Libertad Sant Aprandisaj e Lekti

Service-Learning *Trips*

This year, Yspaniola hosted 38 students from six universities through our Service-Learning Program. Students participated in over 60 hours of service in Batey Libertad, developing phonics resources, reading with students, and building benches and tables for the Learning Center. The groups also visited human rights organizations, participated in a cultural exchange with the community through homestays, and engaged with Yspaniola's local Youth Committee and staff through facilitated discussions.

"It is amazing how much a person can grow in nine days. The trip put so many of my past experiences in perspective as well as gave me a clearer sense of my place and purpose in the world. It brought education, globalization, health, and more to the forefront."

-Victoria Adewale, Brown University

"Learning about social issues facing individuals of Haitian descent in the Dominican Republic before volunteering within Batey Libertad made us both more perceptive but also more sensitive to what was taking place around us."

- Adam Willems, Yale University



Yale students meet with CEFASA, a Jesuit human rights organization, in Santiago

University of Virginia students tour the rice fields outside Batey Libertad



Julio Louis at his graduation with his mother, sister, and brother-in-law

University Scholarship *Program*

Yspaniola continues to provide full university scholarships, extra-curricular tutoring and professional development training to deserving students from Batey Libertad. In March 2014, the University Scholarship Program celebrated its first graduate, Julio Louis, who received a degree in tourism from the Technological Institute of Santiago (UTESA).

Spotlight on Dariana Liranzo

In January 2015, Dariana Liranzo will join the scholarship program, studying to become a teacher at the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo (UASD) in Mao.

Dariana's full scholarship includes:

- All university costs, including classes, registration, and books, from the first day until graduation
- Transportation costs from Batey Libertad to the university in Mao
- A food stipend for her and her family
- Co-curricular and extracurricular writing tutoring
- Internships with Yspaniola to get hands-on experience teaching in our Learning Center





The Batey Libertad *Summer Camp*

In July, Yspaniola held its second annual two-week long Batey Libertad Youth Summer Camp. The camp had:

- Over 90 children in attendance aged 5-14
- 9 international volunteers from the U.S. and Mexico
- Four activities a day including art, sports, interactive HIV/AIDS education activities, and science
- Over 720 meals provided
- An end of camp celebration
- Training for 32 community members who served as camp counselors, teachers, and assistants

Supporting *Batey Libertad*

The Youth Committee (el Comité)

Yspaniola works with a youth committee of 8 young adults to help plan and run service-learning trips. The committee also helps with outreach in the community related to the Learning Center, parent and community member inclusion, documentation, and more.

Water Project

In 2010, Yspaniola began supporting Batey Libertad's residents as they mobilized and petitioned the local government for clean water. Staffers attended community gatherings, assisted local leaders to set up meetings with government officials, and helped residents and leaders strategize. In August 2014, after years of lobbying, meetings, construction, and stoppages, Batey Libertad finally received running water, conveyed through a pipeline from the nearby town of Esperanza. Batey Libertad's mobilization for water is a successful example of community-based development, supported by Yspaniola, that demands that the local government fulfill its obligations.

Documentation Project Partnerships

In September 2013, the Dominican Constitutional Tribunal's ruling stripped citizenship from all Dominicans whose family members had come to the

DR after 1929, effectively denationalizing hundreds of thousands of Dominicans of Haitian descent, including many residents of Batey Libertad. After intense international outrage and mobilization by activists within the country and the Dominican diaspora, the Dominican government created a process by which denationalized Dominicans could regain citizenship by applying through the government. The application process is convoluted, confusing, expensive, and designed to exclude any denationalized Dominican without the means to legal representation or the ability to pay for the process.

In the summer and fall, Yspaniola collaborated with two local human rights organizations, CEFASA (a Jesuit organization) and MOSCHTA (a Dominican-Haitian workers organization), to help thirty-four Batey Libertad residents who had been denationalized apply to regain their citizenship. Yspaniola assumed some of the costs associated with the process to promote access to education and civil rights for community members. In Valverde-Mao, the province where we work, there are thousands of people who do not have access to resources or organizations to help with documentation, and face the threat of deportation from the country where they were born.

Thank you to our donors and supporters!

The Yspaniola Circle (\$10,000+)

Educating Latin American
Adolescents
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The Sieh Charity and
Family Care Trust

The Learning Center Circle (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

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The Scholarship Circle (\$1,000 - \$4,999)

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The Batey Libertad Circle (\$500 - \$999)

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Thank you to our donors and supporters!

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All names listed are donors and supporters from Yspaniola's 2013 - 2014 fiscal year, from October 1st, 2013 to September 30th, 2014

2013-2014 Fiscal Year

Yspaniola's fiscal year begins on October 1st and ends on September 30th. Our Federal ID Number is 27-0697706.

Total Revenue = \$144,117

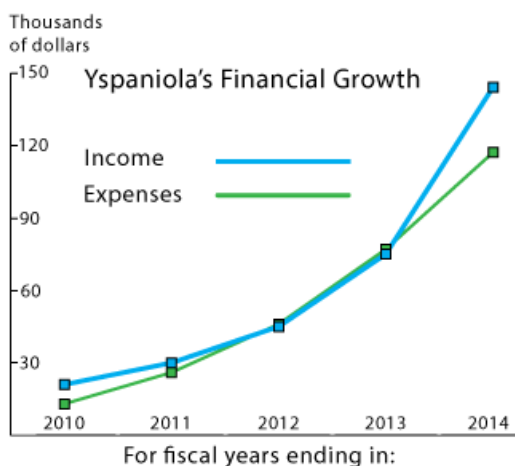
Foundation grants designated for 2014 - 2015 expenses (\$30,000; 21% of total revenue)

Personal and individual contributions (\$55,803; 39%)

Corporate contributions (\$7,585; 5%)

Event and other revenue (\$1,222; 1%)

Revenue generated from Service-Learning Trips and Internship Program (\$49,507; 34%)



Total Expenses = \$117,063

The University Scholarship Program: (\$15,836; 13.5% of total budget); Major costs for the program, which provides full scholarships and support to students from Batey Libertad, are tuition, registration, books, room and board, and living and transportation stipends.

The Batey Libertad Learning Center: (\$37,522; 32%); Primary costs were infrastructure improvements to the Center building, book and resource purchases, rent, teacher and education director salaries, and printing and copying for lesson plans and curriculum development.

Operational Costs: (\$27,351; 23%) These costs are directly related to supporting our programs and include staff transportation, renting and furnishing an office, housing for international staff and teachers, utilities (phone, internet, electricity, water), and program manager salaries.

Media and Fundraising: (\$5,676; 5%); Yspaniola received a \$5,000 corporate donation to directly support a fundraising event. Other costs include printed material and hosting an outreach event in Santiago.

As part of the our Summer Backpack Collections Project, Yspaniola contributed \$3,500 (3%) specifically donated for purchasing resources to the George A. Brugal School in Puerto Plata, our partner in the backpack drive.

Administrative costs (\$3,421; 3%) were insurance coverage and banking fees.

Service-Learning Trips and the Internship Program: (\$23,757; 20 %); These revenue generating programs directly support our educational programs.



Community assistants Maria and Daniel teach in Class 1

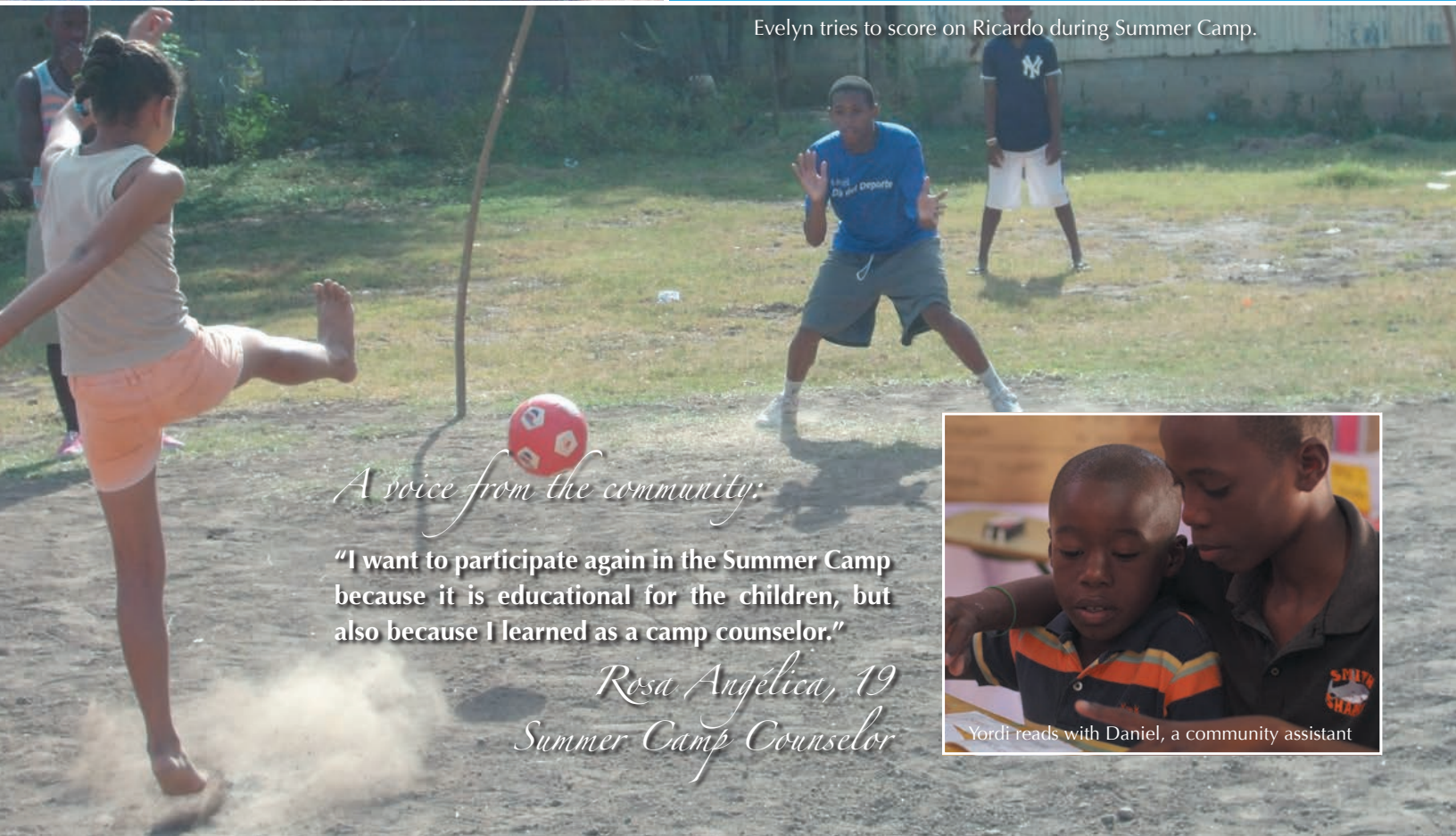
Looking *Forward*

The Learning Center

In the 2014 – 2015 school year, Yspaniola will have more teachers and offer an additional class in the Learning Center. In August, we welcomed our new Director of Community Education Programs, Sabrina Grille, as well as three Princeton in Latin America Fellows who teach and help with program operations and media. We will hire a second teacher from the Batey Libertad area and two more Princeton in Latin America Fellows will join our team in January 2015. With these new teachers and support staff, the Learning Center has introduced a sixth class. Designed for eighth graders and other advanced students, Class 6 is a reading club, which focuses on developing students' reading comprehension and analysis skills. With the addition of Class 6, we hope students will be better prepared for high school and higher education.

Civil Society Involvement

Yspaniola is proud of its collaboration with MOSCHTA and CEFASA to help Batey Libertad residents who were denationalized regain their citizenship, and we will continue supporting this process in the year to come. We also will design volunteer mentorship programs to include more Dominicans from nearby towns and cities in our work.



Evelyn tries to score on Ricardo during Summer Camp.

A voice from the community:

"I want to participate again in the Summer Camp because it is educational for the children, but also because I learned as a camp counselor."

*Rosa Angélica, 19
Summer Camp Counselor*



Yordi reads with Daniel, a community assistant



Contact us:

At Yspaniola, we are always looking for ways to get people involved. If you are interested in learning more or have questions or suggestions please let us know. We look forward to hearing from you!

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The Delfines (Dolphins) group lines up to start a day at Summer Camp.