



## Annual Report 2022 - 2023



Keisha - Yspaniola Preschool Program, in Batey Libertad  
José Enrique - Literacy Program, in Los Mina Sur

## Dear Friend of Yspaniola

One of the best decisions I have made this year is to return to Yspaniola, after my time as Academic Director in 2017-2019. Being again in Batey Libertad, I have been filled with the positive energy and strength of its residents, who have an incredible drive to move the community forward. After nine months, there are three words that summarize this year for me.

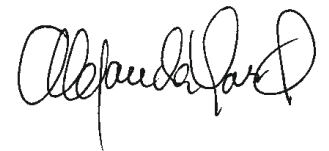
**Resilience**, seen in the work of Yspaniola to continue advancing and strengthening our programs, despite the challenges of the pandemic; resilience, living in our university scholars Samuel, Oriana and Idelove.

**Expansion**, as this year Yspaniola has expanded our team and the population we serve - in Batey Libertad, with the reopening of our literacy program in the public school, in addition to the learning center, and the new preschool Montessori program that will officially launch in 2024. Expansion, with Yspaniola's new literacy program in the Juan Bautista Zafra school in Los Mina Sur, and a new menstrual health program in Batey Libertad and nearby communities.

Finally and not least important, **Synergy**, through local and international visitors we have hosted, weaving an ever growing network of supporters and allies, of whom you are included, and from which we all learn from one another.

The support that both our teams, in Batey Libertad and in Los Mina Sur, have received this year has been critical to the successes that we share in this report.

Thank you for believing in us. Thank you for being part of the Yspaniola family.



**YSPANIOLA'S TEAM - BATEY LIBERTAD**

Wilson, Wily, Alex, Tututa, Mayra, Mirian, Jhonny, Elizabeth, Wisleine, María Esther, Ruth, Mariela y Laura.



**YSPANIOLA'S TEAM - LOS MINA**

Ana María and Yngris

## Our University Scholars

### Samuel: Persevering through challenges

Samuel had always dreamed of studying at university. In 2018, he applied for Yspaniola's scholarship program, encouraged by former scholar and staff member, Julio Louis. With many qualified applicants, he was not awarded a scholarship that year. Determined to pursue his dream, he persevered with help from family and friends, finding just enough funds to enroll at the Technological University of Santiago in Tourism Business Administration.

Sadly, a few months into his program, Samuel's mother became ill. Samuel needed to accompany her daily to the hospital for radiation therapy. His family needed to dedicate all their funds and time to support his mother's medical treatment. Samuel was forced to drop out of his studies to care for his mother.

Fortunately, in 2019 another opportunity to apply for an Yspaniola scholarship arose. Undeterred from his dream, he applied once again. On the day of his mother's final radiation therapy session, Samuel learned that he had been awarded a scholarship. Samuel and his mother both cried with joy, knowing that he would continue his dream.

Samuel hopes to graduate in March 2025. He says, "The community is in my heart. I want to offer nutritious cooking workshops to the community, and in this way support children, young adults and Yspaniola. Receiving this scholarship has been fundamental, the basis of everything. It has allowed me to fulfill my dream and become a professional."

We are all very proud of Samuel's success and the person he has become.

### Congratulations Fedrina!!

Another success story is our scholar Fedrina who graduated with a degree in nursing in November 2022. Fedrina is an inspiring young woman, who similarly reached this achievement through great perseverance and commitment.



Samuel



Fedrina



Idelove



Oriana

## New Scholars: Idelove and Oriana

After a rigorous selection process with external evaluators, Oriana and Idelove were chosen as our newest university scholars. Oriana is studying nursing at the Technological University of Santiago, and Idelove is studying Foreign Languages at the Mao campus of the same university.

Both Oriana and Idelove have demonstrated great dedication to the Batey Libertad community through volunteering, while also developing their skills in areas such as sports and physical health, reproductive health and leadership. In Oriana's words, "I like to feel that I can help people by doing something to protect them."

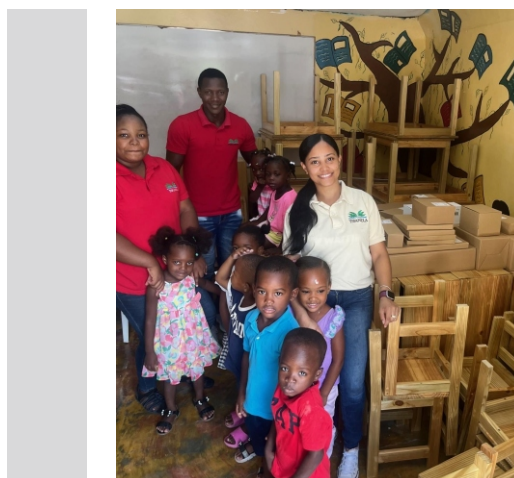
We are proud to welcome Idelove and Oriana to our University Scholarship Program and can't wait to see them thrive in their studies.

## Our Programs and Team Grow

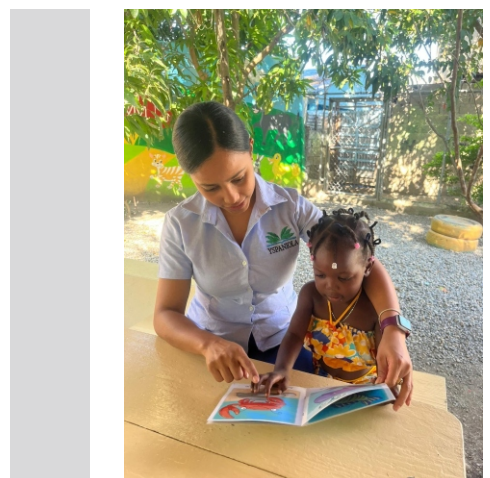
This school year has been very special for several reasons. **First**, student enrollment has grown significantly, both in our preschool, in the learning center, and in the programs we carry out at the public school. Last year we served 66 students and now we serve 102 students!



Mariela and Bianca



Teachers and children receive Montessori furniture



María Esther and Nairobi reading "Under the waves"

**Second**, in April of 2023, Yspaniola received the first place Montessori prize from the DREAM Project, an NGO based in Cabarete, Dominican Republic. Our team was thrilled to have this opportunity to transform our preschool into a Montessori classroom. In August 2023, Yspaniola's teachers traveled to Cabarete to complete their training in the Montessori method with DREAM, and furniture and facility improvements were made to prepare the preschool.

And the **third** reason? Our Yspaniola team has grown! New staff include María Esther Hernandez (preschool teacher), Mariela Corsino (preschool assistant) and Willy Multidor (learning center assistant). They have each shown great dedication to Yspaniola, giving their best each day to ensure that the children of Batey Libertad learn to read and write in a safe, nurturing environment.

Last but not least, Mayra Rodriguez, former Yspaniola scholar and long-time teacher in the learning center, now has a new role as Academic Coordinator for Yspaniola. She is now supporting and coordinating the work of Yspaniola's teachers with great skill and dedication.



Ruth, Mariela, Mayra, Jhonny, María Esther y Wily

## Children Lead Yspaniola's Reading Hour

Reading hour is a favorite of the children at Yspaniola's preschool and learning center. Children are given the opportunity to present their favorite book to their class. Here, Adlen is sharing the book "La cabra hambrienta" (The Hungry Goat) to his class. The reading hour has been a great success, with very active participation from the students.



Pamela, Bertrice, Dachena, Clenide, Tchenlove and David. Adlen presents and reads "The Hungry Goat"

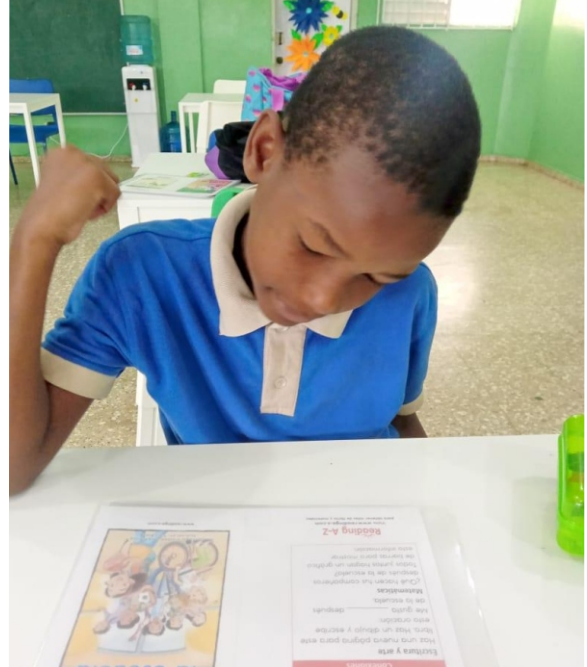
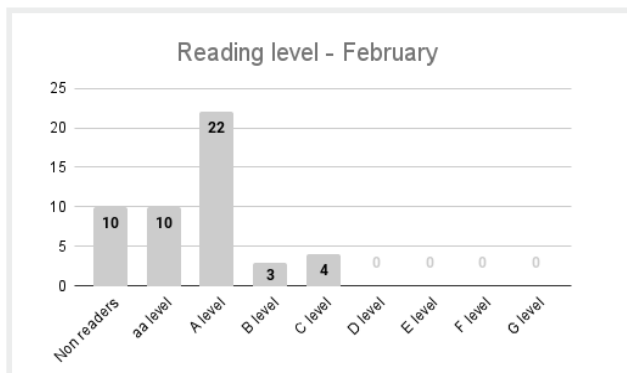


Samua, Miklina, Dajeylin and Manaika

## Food Program

Yspaniola's food program continues to benefit all our students, ensuring that they have the energy and sustenance they need to focus and learn optimally in class.

The results were very encouraging, with significant improvement in reading level after an introductory period of forty 45 minute class sessions. On average, the 45 students in the program were on track to have 1.5 years of reading growth in the academic year.

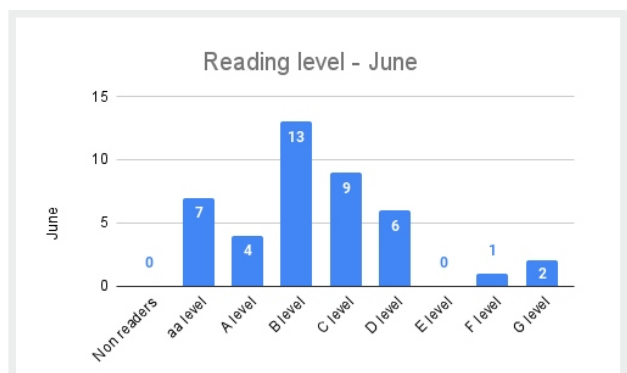


Keilin reading "Después de la escuela", book from the Reading AZ system.

## Yspaniola Arrives to Los Mina Sur

In December 2022, Yspaniola began a pilot project at the Juan Bautista Zafra school located in Los Mina Sur in Santo Domingo, in which two initiatives were developed: the first was a literacy program, aimed at elementary age students who had difficulties in reading and writing. The second initiative consisted of a leadership program for middle school students.

Partnering with the school's director and teachers, we evaluated 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students who were most struggling in reading and writing. As in Batey Libertad, we used the Reading A-Z assessment system, identifying a student's reading level.



## All Girls at School, Every Day of the Month

This powerful motto defines the mission of the Spanish NGO CromosomosX, an organization that we partnered with this year to start an educational program to dismantle taboos and shame around menstruation.

Phase one of the project aimed to improve the menstrual health and well-being of girls and women residing in Batey Libertad. Two local facilitators, Chiclina and Idelove, delivered a comprehensive course of interactive workshops with 57 adolescents aged 11 to 15. They also held community sessions with local parents and guardians, as well as with educators at the Batey Libertad public school.

In the second phase, completed this fall, the program was brought to Jaibón, Laguna Salada, a community near Batey Libertad, where 140

students participated from the Eugenio María de Hostos high school, with 10 facilitators trained by the program.

In April of 2024 we will administer surveys to assess the effectiveness of the program. We aim to decrease menstruation-related school absences and increase the use of sustainable menstrual products. We hope that adolescent girls participating in our program will experience their menstruation and sexuality without stigma, in a dignified and safe manner.

Yspaniola sincerely thanks Mariña, Sara, Bárbara and the entire CromosomosX team for their dedication and hard work to ensure the success of this important project!



**Idelove and Chiclina** give a talk in Batey Libertad



**CromosomosX team**, offers training to young people from Batey Libertad - phase 2

## First Aid and Self-care for Everyone

It has been exciting to welcome visitors to Batey Libertad again after the pandemic! In February 2023, we hosted our first post-pandemic trip, with a group of ten health professionals from Brookside Community Health Center in Boston.

The group spent one week in the country, traveling and learning about the country's health care services and spending valuable time in Batey Libertad, learning from local residents, staying in home stays, and sharing their skills and professional knowledge.

They gave several workshops, including how to administer first aid and CPR and how to practice self-care and wellness techniques within healing circles. The workshops were well received, with many attendees. Participants of all ages learned side by side, with simulated scenarios in the former and music and aromatherapy in the latter.



**Brookside volunteers offer first aid workshop**  
in Batey Libertad



**Group of Dominican students from Yale University**  
on their visit to Santiago

## Dominican Students From Yale Visit Batey Libertad

In March 2023, we received with great joy our second learning exchange trip of the year. A group of eleven students from the Yale Dominican Student Association visited, learning about Dominican and Haitian culture, tradition, history, migration and education.

The group visited neighborhoods in Santiago filled with colorful murals, learning about the behind-the-scenes action that goes into making Carnival in Santiago a reality. The group also traveled to Dajabón, where they were able to see the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic and explore the binational market.

They stayed with families in Batey Libertad, building friendships and learning from local staff Sofía, Chiclina, Oriana, and Yohanna, who presented and facilitated discussions on immigration, politics, education, and more.



## Learning About Documentation and Migration Between Haiti and the Dominican Republic

*"It has been a beautiful and enriching experience for all of us. Thank you for sharing your reality and your entire story of improvement with us. We are excited by the work they do".*

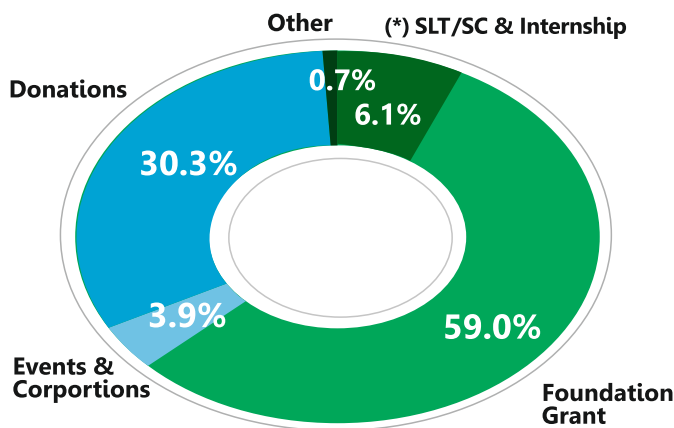
*Maria Moreno, counselor*

In June 2023, we hosted two groups for day visits to Batey Libertad, to learn about the challenges of documentation and migration between Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

The groups visited from Therapy Abroad and the Liceo Científico Dr. Miguel Canela Lázaro. During these visits, participants visited homes in Batey Libertad, learned about the difficulties of residents trying to obtain personal identity documents, shared lunch and stories with local families, and learned about the programs and advocacy carried out by Yspaniola.

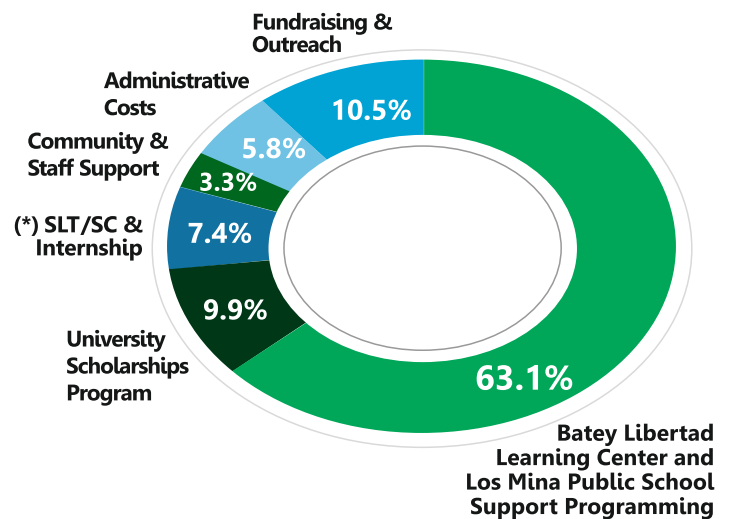
## Financials

**Income 262.812**



(\*)Service Learning Trip

**Expenses 287.249**



**2022 - 2023**

Fiscal Year: October 1, 2022 September 30, 2023

# Thank you for making our work possible!

## The Yspaniola Circle (\$10,000+)

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Kuehn Davis Family Fund of the Ayco  
Charitable Foundation  
The Batey Foundation  
The Dream Project

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Tamzen Flanders & Karl Kirchwey  
The Ithaca Alumnae Chapter  
of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.  
Troy Elder  
Vivian Lord  
W. Gerald McElroy Jr. and Family  
Wendy Reynoso  
Yale Dominican Student  
Association



# Thank you for making our work possible!

## The Esperanza Circle (\$10 to \$199)

Abigail Keene-Babcock, Amanda Bailey, Aminah Al-Amin Dyer, Amazon Smile, Amy Belfer, Amy Porter, Andrew and Kathy Sparks, Andrew Riding, Ani Yanachkova, Ankita Ritwik, Anne Sparks, Asri Mumpuni, Belen Aranda-Alvarado, Benjamin Conniff, Bernard Chung, Bethany Miller, Brian Schillinger, Bright Funds, Brittany Alfonzo, Carolina Villalta, Catarina Santos, Cathy Galeota, Chris Houser and Emily Bower, Daniel and Miriam DiMaio, Daniel Johnson, Daniel McGoldrick, Dara Security, Darcy Rodriguez Ovalles, David Whiteside, Diane Parkes, Diego Cuesy Edgar, Dr. Sona Shilpakar, Elaine n/a, Emily Shrubsall, Emma Pittendreigh, Ena Frias, Eric Lalone, Fidelity - Donor Advised Fund - Helen Loeser and David Teitel, Gemma Gibbs, Global Giving Anonymous, Hannah Ridgley, Hannah Wilson, Hope Derrick, Howard Lipoff, Isabela Colmenares, Jeanene Barrett, Jennifer and Eric Petersen, Jeremy Paul and Laurel Leff, John Porter, Jonathan Goddard, Jonathan Wallen, Karleigh Gore, Kathryn Blair, Kathy Sparks, Kinjal Batchelor, Kisha Middleton, Kristen Hudgins, Larissa Vasquez, Lenita Gipson, Lindsay Owen, Lori Hand, Lovelytha Metellus, Lucas Alvarez, Luis Lourenco, Lynnell Doby, Maeve Mangine, Marie-Ange Magloire, Marissa Doiron, Martha Terry, Mary E Prosser, Matthew Krzyston, Michael Franklin, Michael Kocan, Molly Goodman, Nana Opare-Ayittey, Nicholas Parry Okedon, Nicola Carney, Onjalique Clark, Paul Robinson, Paula Bejarano, Pledgeling Foundation, Rachel Cooper, Rachel Feldman, Rebecca Toseland, Rebekah Emanuel, Renata Spangler, Ronel Namde, Rosie Adey, Rosie Porter, Sarah Kabay, Sarah Kantrowitz, Sarah Lakeman, Sheila Gordon, Shelly Freund, Steph Gallagher, Teresa Concha, Thomas Santoro, Tracey Hill, Yen Wei Ong, Yolanda Leon, Yvonne De La Cruz, Zachary Denton, Zila Acosta-Grimes.

## VOLUNTEER AND IN-KIND SUPPORTERS

Alex Aliaga, Emily Bower and Chris Houser, Impresos R&R., Laura Díaz, Roger Berry Boden.

## Special thanks to our dedicated Board of Directors:

Cynthia So-Armah (Chairwoman), Charlotte Castillo, Cory Anne Fox, Diego Cuesy, Elisa Istueta, Gerald McElroy, Jonathan DiMaio, Lucas Alvarez, Maria Lopez-Bresnahan, Sarah Kabay, Silvio Torres-Saillant (Honorary Chairman), Stephen Wirth, Tanya Martinez-Gallinucci.



Darisbel, Edenay Love, Yerlina, Gleysi, Kasandra y Roxanna play the letter memory game with Wily.



Elvis and Asly practice new words in their phonics class

# Mèsi Anpil



Meses del año  
Febrero, Marzo, Abril, Mayo, Junio, Julio, Agosto, Septiembre, Octubre, Noviembre, Diciembre

Martes  
Miércoles  
Jueves  
Viernes  
Sábado  
Domingo