

LOS HERMANOS



Villanueva Brigadistas Newsletter — Volume 5

Fall 2017

WHAT IS A BRIGADISTA?

INTERVIEW WITH NAHUN SUNIA BY CHARLES CLINTON, FEBRUARY 2017. TRANSLATION BY JOHN CLINTON AND CHARLES CLINTON

What is your name and which community are you from?

My name is Nahun Sunia and I am from the community of Rancho Pando in the municipality of Villanueva in the department of Chinandega.

How long have you been a Brigadista?

I have been volunteering in my community as a Brigadista for approximately 8 years.

And what exactly is a Brigadista?

For me, a Brigadista is a person with a noble heart, ready to work without expecting anything in return. It is a person who is always seeing the vulnerable in the community and those in need. It's a person who is ready to struggle for a prosperous, clean, healthy community, and is always working for the common good on behalf of all the children, pregnant women, the elderly, adults of the community, and looks for nothing in return. So for me, a Brigadista is a person who has dedicated himself to his community.

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Nahun Sunia in interview

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Yes, and what are some of the things that the community expects from the Brigadista, or some of the roles of the Brigadista?

The community is always looking to see a good result, like a healthy community. Also, that we carrying out the strategies throughout the community. One of the strategies in particular is the strategy of PROCOSAN, (The Community Program of Health and Nutrition) which is very effective for families with children under 2 years old. We weigh the babies, and then check how well the mother is stimulating the baby's development, and what they are feeding the baby. We check to make sure the baby has adequate nutrition and is not anemic. These are the Brigadista's most essential functions. We keep monthly records which we send to the Ministry of Education. This allows us to continue to gather this information and do this hands-on work in our community. It is a great privilege for us to do this work and to work to improve our community. Our work is always tied to the knowledge and skills we learn from the Brigadista Program in which we are trained and empowered so that we can in turn empower the members of our community.

Thank you.

[Note: Nahun is in his mid-30s and is one of the young Brigadistas who has recently taken on a leadership role within the Directiva, whose 4 original members have been leading the Brigadista Program for over 30 years and are reaching retirement age.]

To hear the original interview in Spanish, use this link: <https://goo.gl/YF4TFM> or scan this QR code.



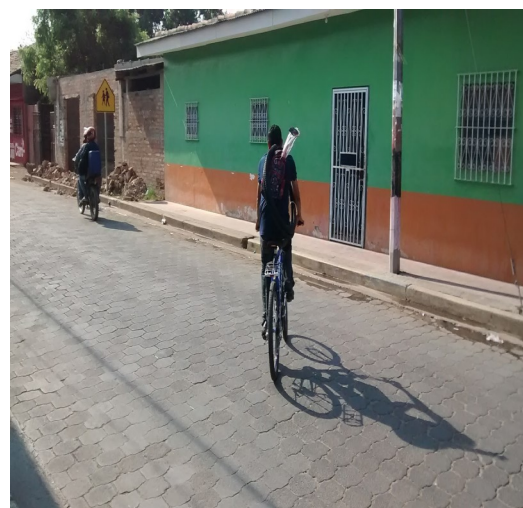
MESSAGES FROM LA DIRECTIVA

Good morning brothers and sisters. We would like to express our deep gratitude for the methods of transportation that you have provided us with. I feel very happy and grateful. Now we can come to the Community Network [at the Brigadista Program Center in Villanueva] for training on our bicycles, Nahun from Rancho Pando, Isabel from La Consulta, and Melvin from Platanal. We can also make our home visits in our communities much easier and faster. We hope that this project which you started can expand to other brigadistas so that they can improve the work that they do in their respective communities. We hope that God blesses you and your family always, and that God always blesses our work in our communities. We send a greeting to all of our brothers and sisters and wish you a good afternoon.

*Voice recording sent via What'sApp from Nahun Sunia, June 14, 2017.
Translated by John and Charles Clinton*



The three bicycles we gave to three of the volunteer Brigadistas so they do not have to walk 3 miles to attend meetings. So little but they were so grateful!!! Amazing spirits!!! Watch out friends and family, I will be looking for donations!!!! Nancy Zarach



Melvin, departing from the Brigadista Center to his community of Platanal, having just received his new bicycle (along with extra tires, bike lock and a pump in his backpack).

Sydney Jackson's Gifts

Moved to respond to the needs of women and children in Villanueva in her own way, All Saints teenager Sydney Jackson took the initiative to create several multi-colored stress balls for our Sister Community.

The February 2017 travelers delivered the stress balls which will be used by the women in the Casa Materna during labor and delivery.

¡Gracias Sydney!



NICARAGUA REFLECTIONS

BY NANCY ZARACH

La Consulta

I was in the group that traveled up to La Consulta. The Brigadista we met, a man in his 60's, was part of one of the first classes of Brigadista's. The village has no electricity. They have a solar panel which makes enough power for the schoolroom and for the room they use for their monthly clinic. But they have no battery to store the power he was making. He was proud to show us his radio, that runs on batteries. With it he is able to listen to his favorite American baseball team, I believe it was Kansas City because someone from Nicaragua was on the team. At one point we asked him why he chose to do the important work of the Brigadista's and his answer was something to the effect of "I was given this gift from God and so I must share it with my family and community." It gave me pause to think about how I share the gifts I have been given.

It's all about the Children

While traveling to the different communities, we saw nothing but poverty. The terrain reminded me of the State Fair, all dry dust that swirls around in any breeze. I cannot imagine living like that. I would never feel clean. And then you see the children! They are happy, inquisitive, dressed in clean clothing (usually a uniform-like outfit for school – even pre-school) and with huge smiles on their faces. It seems to take so little for their souls to be happy – compared to some of us here in the US.

The Ultrasound

One day we journeyed over to the medical center and stopped in the room where the new ultrasound machine was set up. The technician had a patient on the table. She turned to us with this HUGE smile on her face as she pointed out what we were seeing on the screen. It was clear that she was savvy with the machine and thrilled with how it can be used to diagnose numerous ailments for soon-to-be mothers.

When we left, we saw two rows – probably a total of 24 women, - waiting to be seen by the technician.

This one machine which took so much time and energy to get in place at the medical center is making a huge difference in the lives of those women. I felt really good for ALL of us who contributed in any way to this mission – Job Well Done – to all of All Saints and St Lucy's!



Charles Clinton delivering Sydney Jackson's stress balls to Directiva members Candida and Maria Antonia



Note the joyous looks of the children in the school we visited in Villanueva.

INTERESTED IN GOING ON THE NEXT MISSION TRIP IN 2019?

Interested in being part of the next mission trip to Villanueva? Kip and Terri Hargrave will be leading a week-long trip in early 2019. We will have an informational meeting in January 2018 for interested members of the All Saints and St. Lucy's communities to learn more about the trip and discern whether they are called to travel in 2019. Look for information about the meeting in your Parish bulletin.

As all of our former travelers know, our Sister Community appreciates our financial contributions, but the most important thing for them is the fact that we send a group every two years to visit them. We spend time with them, sing and share meals, live in their homes and learn about their work. In other words, the relationship with our Sister Community is forged and sustained by our mission trips. Are you being called to travel in 2019?

Contribute!

If you wish to help support our Sister Community and their efforts, you can make a tax deductible contribution as follows:

Make checks payable to either
St. Lucy's Church, or
All Saints Church

Be sure to put in the memo section: "Sister Community"

Or place your contribution in the envelopes available in the back of each supporting church

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A taxi (aka truck) ride up to a village where there was no electricity. We eventually bought them a battery to store the electricity that their solar panel was making at the clinic; then another place where they had electricity but no clinic.