

# Expanding the

The newsletter of Wes and Maria Smith

## Prayer Needs and Praises

- Pray for the closing of the school property.
- Pray for our 5 interns as they return to the states. Several are now praying about their future and missions.
- The new ministry of Nueva Esperanza (New Hope)
- The continued development of SEMCA
- Praise: All of the groups who came to help us this summer in the ministry. They have been a tremendous blessing

# DR VISION



July 2017

## Groups Help us to Launch New Ministry

This past summer Maria and I have had three churches from the US bring missions teams here to serve and help in the ministry. In June a group of ladies came with specialized training and devices to give vision checks. They checked the eyesight of over 270 people in multiple locations and gave out over 220 pairs of glasses. A couple weeks later another group came and worked on a variety of construction and painting projects at our satellite church in Ramon Santana and in the sugar cane village of Esperanza (Hope).



In Ramon Santana they dug large footers and poured concrete for the new children's building. Others painted the interior of the community center in Esperanza. A couple weeks ago another group came and ministered in music and puppets with children while continuing the projects that had begun earlier. These groups helped us to officially begin our ministry in Esperanza. We titled this new ministry, "Nueva Esperanza" (New Hope). The people here are very poor, living on basically a dollar a day or less. However, these are some of the most loving people you will ever meet.

It has been our desire to plant a church in this community in the near future, but first we are working to establish a relationship with the people. Plenty of mission groups from the States have come to this village for a day to see the poor people, give the children candy, do a short Bible lesson with the children, and then leave thinking they have done something substantial. All they have done is create an attitude among the community that Americans view them as a novelty for a day or two, but no one is really interested in them. We are looking to change that.

With the help of the mission teams who have been here and the interns who have been working in the ministry, we have been in Esperanza every week. We have held Bible clubs with the children,



and become acquainted with the children and teenagers by playing games with them. We have refurbished their community center, taught English weekly to adults, and visited with men and women in the community. In the fall I will meet with SEMCA students and members of our main church (IBEM) about becoming involved in this new ministry. We will be looking to have an established presence there so that the people will know us and begin to trust us. We are planning to set up weekly Bible studies there as a precursor to planting a church there. The leaders that we are developing in SEMCA could step into this ministry. Please pray for this endeavor.



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## Summer Internship is a Huge Success

We have had five interns come to work in the ministry this summer. For the last six weeks they have taken classes in Spanish, Evangelism/Discipleship, and Missiology. They have had a full schedule of ministry work which included Summer Camp at Las Palmas, the girls home, the women's rescue ministry, the baseball ministry, and the new ministry of Nueva Esperanza. Last Saturday they held a basketball tournament in Ramon Santana to present the gospel. The stands were filled with players and spectators as Pastor Mota spoke to the crowd. It was a truly incredible day.

This week they will finish their time here with a retreat to the mountains. I have set down with each of these interns. Many of them are now praying about missions and asking God how they might be a part of this ministry in the DR.



Please pray for them as they return to the states. Pray also that God would direct some more good interns to join us next summer. I am looking for about six interns. They must have completed at least one year of college in order to serve as an intern. If you know of someone who might be interested, please have them go to our website for information and applications.

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