

Report No. 4 from Alto Cayma - 31 Mar 19

National University of San Agustin (UNSA) Entrance Exam

Two weeks ago, I wrote about Dina Ccoyori, our first student to get into the UNSA this year. This week we got the test results of the rest of our students who had attempted to gain admission. We had 3 who succeeded. They are:

- Flor de Cadith Astacie (Sponsor: Bev Williams) - Flor will study Sociology. She earned 36th place among the 45 students who gained



admission to study this career.

- Gabriela Laccacta (Sponsor: Kelly Daniels) - Gabriela will study to be an English teacher. She earned 76th place among the 133 students who



gained admission to study Education.

- Inocencio Soto (Sponsor: None) - Inocencio will study Tourism & Hotel Management. He earned 28th place among the 49 students who gained



admission to study this career.

All 3 of these students graduated from high school in December of 2017, so they've had a whole year to prepare for this exam, studying in one of the academies which exist to serve this need. It's very unusual for anyone to gain admission with less preparation than one year, and many take even longer to achieve success. The academic gulf between the deficient high schools and the demanding university here in Peru is very wide.

Flor de Cadith and Gabriela came into the Salir Adelante student sponsorship program from the Acercándonos program, and brought their sponsors with them. Inocencio was not in the Acercándonos program. He came to us from Father Frank's Aldea (orphanage), and has no sponsor, but needs one. The sponsorship he needs is for \$100 a month, or just \$1,200 a year - not a high price for the life-changing value of a college education. Would anyone out there like to sponsor Inocencio? He will be the first in his family to ever graduate from the university.

Bridge to Opportunity

Our Bridge to Opportunity program is specifically designed to provide the support our students need for studying in the academy to prepare for the university entrance exam. All our 2018 high school graduates are in this program, plus a select few other students from earlier classes. Ever since the recent exam results came out, we have been meeting with these students to update their plans for their next attempt, or to choose another path.

Letters

The "ahijados" (sponsorees) are starting to write to their "padrinos" (sponsors) now. If you are a sponsor, and you haven't yet written to your "ahijado", right now would be an excellent time to do it, so you can get your questions answered by return mail. Just e-mail your letter to me.

Mujeres con Esperanza

Exterior painting on the Jessica Hodgkins Dovi Community Center, our new building in Mujeres con Esperanza, resumed this week, after a delay



to let the walls dry out from the "last" rains of the rainy season. Of course, as soon as we resumed painting, it rained again, but not enough to cause problems. We are scrambling to get the building looking as nice as possible



for the formal dedication, scheduled for Saturday, April 13.

Rotary

On Wednesday evening, I spoke to the Ciudad Blanca Rotary Club about the idea of sponsoring a Rotary Community Corps in Mujeres con Esperanza. This would be a standing committee of residents that would assess their own community's needs and then approach Rotary for help, either in the form of grant-funded projects or in other, more direct, aid. We do a lot in Alto Cayma with Rotary support, and we have big plans for the Mujeres con Esperanza community, so I thought it would make sense to establish a permanent, ongoing interface between the two. The members of the Ciudad Blanca club agreed.

English Classes

Carmen continues doing an excellent job teaching the English classes in John's absence. She makes use of every minute, including filling the time while waiting for the slower students to finish an exercise by reviewing the



character traits we're trying to inculcate in all the children we work with.

Blankets

An anonymous donor has put up a challenge grant to buy blankets for those who need them before the cold weather of June (southern hemisphere



winter) arrives. From now until the end of May, which is 2 full months, every dollar that you donate for blankets will be matched, so instead of buying a blanket for \$10, you can now buy one for \$5, or two for \$10. Just make your check out to Advent Peru Mission Support, with Blankets on the memo line, and mail it to Susan Hartsell, 2900 South Devon St, Charlotte, NC 28213.

Kaizen Training

This week Kaizen trained the management team on creative thinking.



They said that the conscious brain absorbs inputs during the day, and then, when we sleep, the subconscious brain processes that data and comes up with creative solutions to problems. That augers well for me. With all the naps I take, I should be the Champion Creative Thinker of the entire ASAC! :-)

An Unusual Funeral

On Friday, one our most beloved elderly "ahijadas", Sra. Inés, passed away just 3 months short of her 90th birthday. She had been very active into her mid-80s, but was then confined to her home after suffering a broken hip in a fall. One reason this sponsorship was special was because 2 of her grandsons, Juan and Joseph, were in our Salir Adelante student sponsorship program and in our Rotaract club, but the main reason was because Sra. Inés had very special sponsors - the Fifield family of Des Moines, Iowa. All of the members of this family except one had actually come to Alto Cayma to visit Sra. Inés at least once, and most had made multiple visits. Especially anticipated by Sra. Inés were the visits of the Fifields' daughter, Emily, who



could always make Sra. Inés laugh by exchanging a few words with her in Quechua, the only language in which Sra. Inés was fluent.

Sra. Inés' funeral took place Saturday afternoon, and 6 of us from the ASAC decided to attend. We followed the short procession caravan to the western edge of the city of Arequipa, well past the airport, and then turned left off the main road. We passed briefly through a poor neighborhood and



then continued out into the desert that surrounds Arequipa. We drove on and on, a good couple of miles over a dirt road, until we finally spied the gateway



to a cemetery on a lonely hilltop in the middle of nowhere, and there Sra.



Inés found her final resting place.

The funeral was conducted by Sra. Inés' family members and neighbors. Both of her grandsons spoke with great feeling about how Sra.



Inés had raised them from small children during the 20 or so years that she



lived with the family. Then the family lowered the casket into the grave, and



everyone took a turn helping to cover it.

Before we left the cemetery, I noticed Juan and Joseph had walked off to another area by themselves. Victor and I followed, and asked them what they were looking for. That's when I found out that just 3 months ago, they



had been in this same cemetery to bury Joseph's father, who had been estranged from the family almost Joseph's entire life. Those are heavy blows for a young man who is still in his early 20's.

Capriccio

By the time we left Sra. Inés' funeral, it was almost 4:00 and we still hadn't had lunch, so we went to a place called Capriccio. Not, not the famous



coffee shop downtown that all our visitors love so much. This "Capriccio" was a small "picantería" (a typical Arequipan country restaurant) near the airport. The food was quite good, although Victor did complain a bit about the



skimpy portion size. I think he expected more for his \$6.50. :-)

Rotaract

The week finished with the Sunday evening meeting of our Rotaract club. This was an especially upbeat meeting, because it included the induction of 5 new members, bringing the total membership up to 24. Of course, this being Alto Cayma, we had to have a power outage just as the



ceremony was about to begin, so we swore in the new members by the light of



their cellphones. That lent it a unique charm. (Think positive, I always say - it's the only way!)

"Love God, Serve Neighbor/Serving Alto Cayma",

Jim

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