

February 18-22, 2016

Costa Rica

“Tzedek, Tzedek, Tirdof!” - “Justice, Justice, Shall You Pursue!” - Deuteronomy 16:20



This February, 16 of our 11th and 12th Graders traveled to the region of Guanacaste in Costa Rica to participate in service projects in the underserved community of Martina Bustos.

Day One



Day Two



Day Three



Day One Community Service



Classroom Furniture

One of our projects was to sand, paint, and assemble chairs and desks for a classroom in Martina Bustos. We even had some help from the kids!

Building a Park

Although the main part of this project took place on the second day, we started preparing for it by cutting wood for stakes that would mark where we would be laying cement for their new park!



Lots of Digging

Our biggest job on day one was to dig the holes in which we would be planting trees and flowers the following day. Breaking ground is hard work!

Martina Bustos, Guanacaste

Martina Bustos is a community that is not recognized by the Costa Rican government. The land was donated to its inhabitants by Martina Bustos herself, and is populated mostly by Nicaraguan refugees. Because the land is privately owned, the government will not recognize Martina Bustos, leaving them without basic amenities like paved roads and running water.



Day Two Community Service



Planting Trees

We finished our project from day one by planting trees and flowers all around what would soon be Martina Bustos' new park!



Building a Park

On day two we mixed and laid the cement for the new community park in Martina Bustos. It was really hard work, especially in 95 degree weather!



Choose To Be Nice

Thanks to a very generous donation from the Creager-Combs family and the organization Choose To Be Nice, we were able to donate a new t-shirt to every child who attends the school in Martina Bustos!



A Finished Product

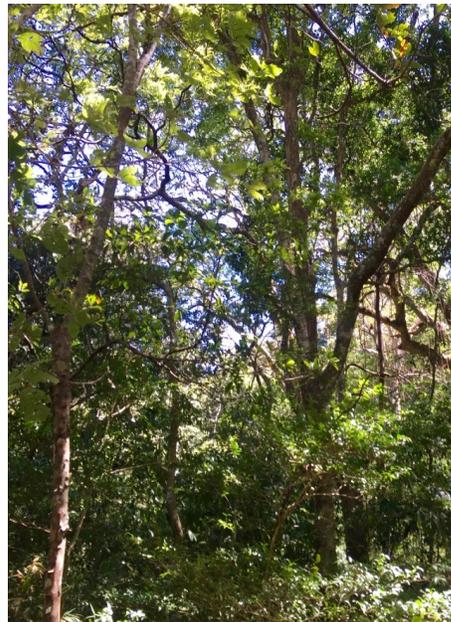
We did it! In less than two days we laid the foundation, mixed the cement, and created a new park! It's even surrounded by the trees we planted! We are so proud of the work we were able to accomplish in such a short time. After finishing up on day two, we celebrated by heading to the natural hot springs in Rincon De La Vieja National Park!

Day Three Exploration



Transitional Forest

Rincon De La Vieja is a "transitional forest," so in addition to our time in the woods, we also got to see a completely different example of the landscape in Costa Rica!



Rincon De La Vieja National Park

On day three we got to explore a nearby national park. Not only was it beautiful, we also got to see animals and other wildlife that we've never seen before!



Volcanic Mud Pits

Did I mention that Rincon De La Vieja National Park is also home to an active volcano? Don't worry, we didn't get too close!



An Afternoon At The Beach

A trip to Costa Rica wouldn't be complete without at least some time at the beach! After our morning hike we enjoyed a beautiful and relaxing afternoon by the Pacific Ocean; it was a perfect ending to a perfect day!