

# BUENA ONDA

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF PROJECTS ABROAD ARGENTINA



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## BIENVENIDOS!

A story of Mother Teresa of Calcutta:

A lady, impressed by seeing Mother Teresa bathing a leper, said: "I would not bathe a leper for a million dollars", Mother Teresa replied: "Me neither, because you can only bathe a leper for love."

Many times we think that we can only show love with great gestures that only saints can accomplish. I believe that we can all show love in every little act within our lives and that makes us better people. We tend to think that something small has no value, but we do not realize that the sum of small acts can make a big difference.

Beaches are made of small grains of sand that cover large areas.

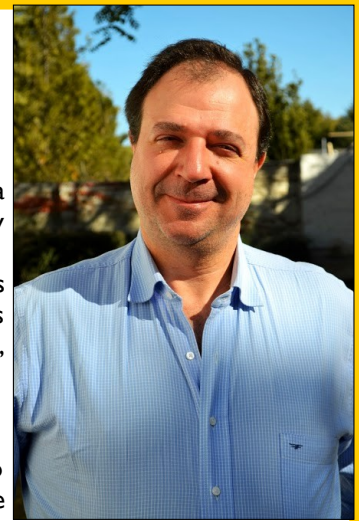
"When I was a young man, I wanted to change the world. I found it was difficult to change the world, so I tried to change my nation. When I found I couldn't change the nation, I began to focus on my town.

"I couldn't change the town and as an older man, I tried to change my family. Now, as an old man, I realize that I can only change myself, and I suddenly realize that if long ago I had changed myself, I could have made an impact on my family. My family and I could have made an impact on our town. Their impact could have changed the nation and I could indeed have changed the world."

Rabbi Israel Salanter  
Nineteenth Century Professor

How are we willing to impact others during our lives?

Un abrazo a todos!  
Guillermo Cogorno  
Country Director



## PRESENTATION SANTIAGO MORON!

Hello everyone! My name is Santiago, I am 26 years old and I am very happy to be the new Volunteer Coordinator at Projects Abroad. It's a great team that has made me feel really welcome! I am also very excited about working, doing something I really enjoy, like being around foreigners while giving a hand to people in need of our help.

I really love traveling, not only because I enjoy new landscapes but also because I like meeting people from other countries and learning about their history and culture. As an authentic Argentine I am very passionate about football, I also really enjoy literature, music and playing the guitar. I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter!





# PROJECT UPDATES

## FUND RAISING FOR LAS VIOLETAS KINDERGARTEN



Hogar Infantil Belen is a daycare center located in a very poor neighborhood of Córdoba. It was opened in 1994 by Sandra Acosta, with the purpose of not only providing children from low income families with good food, but also caring for them and helping them as they grow. The children, who attend the kindergarten, are between the ages of 1 and 4 years old and they are divided into two groups: the morning group which receives breakfast and lunch, and the afternoon one which receives lunch, and later, a snack. The teachers and collaborators, who give affection to the children, work at the center daily to educate and help them have a happier childhood. Nonetheless, the condition of the building is not very good. There are huge cracks in the walls, and the paint is peeling off the ceiling and several walls, so it is common to spot bits of paint scattered around the floor. This is not the only problem that we face at the kindergarten. The back yard is full of debris and a large amount of construction material, which makes it difficult for the kids to play outside. However, the worst issue is the one of damp which is affecting the whole building. As soon as you walk into a room, it is possible to notice damp stains on the walls and ceiling, and much worse, you can smell it in the air. Children cannot continue attending the kindergarten under this condition as they deserve a better place; one that provides them with a safe and healthy environment.



If we do not fix the damp problems, they can become worse due to the rain; that is why, it is necessary to repair them before the rainy season; otherwise the place will be closed leaving the kids without a kindergarten.



Projects Abroad UK has donated half the money needed to make all of the repairs and we have organized a raffle to gather the rest of the funds. The work has already started and we are very glad to see that things are slowly starting to change, so we will continue to work towards our goal. With your contribution, we would be able to give these little children



## TEACHING ENGLISH AT COPA DE LECHE AND EL VAGON



As you may know, we work with several of our projects in the Blas Pascal neighborhood (our Law & Human Rights volunteers, Care volunteers and recently, a Teaching Project).

As part of our ongoing efforts to help the people from the community, we held a Dirty Day to help clean up the area. Also, we measured the length and width of one of the empty fields so we can start preparing the land to be turned into a soccer field.

One of the biggest problems in the community is all of the garbage thrown on the side of the road and the sidewalks, so another activity of the day was to put up signs prohibiting littering the streets and picking up most of the garbage that was preventing people from walking on the sidewalks.

At the end of the day we baked bread with some of the neighbors. It was a successful day but there's still a lot of work to do, so we are hoping to hold another dirty day soon to finish what we started!



## DIRTY DAY AT BLAS PASCAL



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# VOLUNTEER STORIES

## LUDO AERTS HOLLAND TEACHING, 8 WEEKS



The day I finally confirmed to Projects Abroad that I was going to be volunteering in Argentina, my mind was still filled with many unanswered questions. What should I expect? What will the country be like? What will the people be like? Those kinds of questions kept on bugging me up to the day I got on the airplane towards Córdoba. The trip in itself from home in The Netherlands to Córdoba, Argentina, was already a big experience for a simple Dutch guy who had never left Europe before. Luckily everything went well and on April the 12<sup>th</sup> 2014 I set foot on Cordobesian soil.

### The Argentinean experience

After being picked up at the airport I was driven to my host family. I was so excited, finally meeting the people I was going to stay with for the next two months! My host mom Vivi and her two children gave me a warm welcome and they showed me around in their house while explaining the house rules to me. For the next two months their friendly care for me remained a constant factor here in Córdoba. During the weekends I tried to meet up with as many of the other volunteers as possible, to hang out in the city, to go to socials or my favorite, to travel.

### The Teaching Project

After the first weekend, I got my induction in the city and was introduced to my Teaching Project at Saint Marks Institute. Saint Marks is a beautiful little language school for children between the ages of 7 and 17 years old that take extracurricular courses in English there. Around 600 students attend the school, divided into a Monday to Wednesday group and a Tuesday to Thursday group. Since it is an after-school institute, my working days started at 3 o'clock in the afternoon and lasted until 8:30 in the evening. I definitely had to adapt my eating pattern in the beginning from what I was used to at home to be able to function properly.

Although the staff only consists of young women, it wasn't hard for me as a guy to adapt to them and their way of teaching. They were all really friendly and helpful whenever there was an issue. In the second week of my stay I was given a schedule which included at what time I should be with which teacher at which classroom. Since the teachers are already very busy they don't really have time to help you think of activities, although they try their best. Volunteers at Saint Marks need to be pro-active and creative to make the most of their stay and to enjoy the project. The pro-active attitude is mostly needed during the classes themselves and for me consisted of thinking out activities linked to what they were learning about and general aid to the teachers in things like maintaining order, giving examples and correcting homework.

An aspect I liked a lot about Saint Marks was the diversity in age groups of the students. In the morning I would do some work with children between 7 and 10 o'clock and three hours later I'd be working with teenagers who were almost 18 years old. If you are thinking of becoming a teacher yourself, but you aren't sure about what age group you want to teach, Saint Marks is definitely a great school to do volunteering and experience the whole spectrum of age groups.

### **Conclusion**

My stay at St. Marks school, the Bonifasi family, and in general Argentina, has been an amazing experience, which I will remember for the rest of my life, it has definitely been a great time and I would love one day to come back to Argentina!

# VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

