

CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION

AN NGC STUDENT EXPERIENCE

I didn't expect the heat to be that sizzling hot. What is ironic is that it was actually winter there. This past summer, I went to study abroad in León, Nicaragua with seven of my classmates from San Jose, and thirteen other students from Irvington High School in Fremont, CA. We participated in a program called Global Glimpse, which only accepts juniors in high school nominated by their teacher. Its goal is to expand the global perspective of tomorrow's leaders. This trip was a once in a lifetime exposure.

During the three weeks I was there, I bonded with the new tour guides and other classmates. I didn't think I would get homesick, but after a week without contact with my family, I must admit, I did cry when I got a chance to talk to them over the phone. By the end of this trip, I had learned to be more independent.

There were many challenges I faced in León, Nicaragua. These memories will be forever embedded in my mind. If there's one thing I learned from this trip, it is to never give up. I met a family that lived on less than a dollar a day. They work at the dump trying to find salable garbage. It emotionally and mentally taxed me to see their plight but also truly inspired me because they just keep on going even though they can barely get by. I was also challenged physically, from milking cows to hiking on Cerro Negro's 730-meter-tall active volcano edge. It was a long hike that I didn't think I could endure, but at the end, seeing the beautiful view of the green pastures made the hike worth it. I learned that I underestimate myself and what I am capable of doing.

Adapting to a different environment can be very difficult especially when you don't know how the conditions will turn out. In the course of this journey in León, Nicaragua, I have had the great opportunity to face challenges, find the courage to overcome my fears, and reach my goals—sometimes goals that felt impossible at first. This trip has impacted me in ways I could not have imagined. Within the three weeks, I met many motivated people who took time out of their lives to inspire the younger generation. This has made me want to volunteer and help my community more in the future and perhaps even join the Peace Corps. Traveling was a great experience, and I intend to similarly inspire and teach the next generation.

Visit <http://explorer.globalglimpse.org> to learn more about the opportunity to participate in a unique cross cultural experience in Nicaragua.



Photo courtesy of Global Glimpse