

Michael Lavelle, '12  
*Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic*  
*La Posada del Buen Samaritano*

In the summer of 2011, I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to do my summer of service in the capital of the Dominican Republic, Santo Domingo. My classmate Craig and I spent six weeks at La Posada del Buen Samaritano, the Good Samaritan Inn. The Inn is run by a nun from Long Island, Babs Barry, and during our stay there we saw what it truly means to be a Good Samaritan by following Sr. Babs' example.



*This is a picture of the house where we stayed alongside the patients*

*A picture of myself, Sr. Babs, and Craig (left to right)*

The main function of the Inn is to serve as a place for people to stay while they are receiving medical care. As the Dominican Republic is a relatively small and underdeveloped country, almost all of their useful medical resources are located in the capital where the Inn is located. Sr. Babs takes in sick people from the more rural areas of the country where electricity and running water are non-existent and provides them with food, transportation, and money to receive any medical attention that they require. Some patients would pass through in a day or two while others stayed for a longer period of time; each case was specific to the patient.

*A picture of Craig and myself painting*

One of the first tasks that we undertook at La Posada was that of painting. We spent a good portion of our first few weeks there painting and completing random odd jobs around the house for Sr. Babs. We painted a very large portion of the house giving it a newer look.



*Another picture of Craig and I painting*

After we had become acclimated to the city, Babs entrusted us with the task of transporting patients to and from the hospital and ensuring that everything went smoothly for them. Most of these people were uneducated and relied on us to be able to successfully manage trips to the hospital and doctors. This was the most rewarding part of my service trip for me. It was during this time that we were able to develop relationships with the patients of the house and learn about the Dominican culture.

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### *Craig, Marino Montero, and I*

Marino Montero was one of the patients that stayed at the house while we were there. Marino holds a special place for Craig and I because he was the first patient that Craig and I were solely responsible for. We took him to all of his doctor's appointments and ensured that he had all of the tests that the doctors required. When Marino came to the house, he was knocking on death's door. He suffers from Multiple Myeloma and was very weak and sluggish when he arrived. When we first took him to the hospital, the doctors informed us that Marino needed to get a blood transfusion and he needed it fast. Craig and I were able to get to the blood bank and bring him back the two units of blood that he required. Marino was able to recover after this and we took him to subsequent check ups after his transfusion to ensure that he was healthy enough to head back home. Marino left only a few days before we did and will always have a special place for me because I know that we were able to make things better for at least one person.

*Jhonatan Moreno and myself. Sr. Babs essentially took Jhonatan under her wing from the time he was 5 years old and his house burned down around him. Babs funded all of his care to recover from the burns and pays for him to attend the local parochial school. Jhonatan has a family but spends every other weekend during the school year and his entire summers with Sr. Babs*

My summer of service to the Dominican Republic was one of the greatest experiences of my life. It showed me a different way of living, a far more humble way of life than I had been used to. It also showed me that it is in giving that we receive and I believe that I am the person who benefited most from my summer of service was me.