



International Youth Diabetes Leaders Come Together Volunteer Success Story

Ibarra, Ecuador 2005 (AYUDA) 27 American youth spent this summer in Ecuador volunteering as a counselors at a camp designed for children with diabetes, C, part of a volunteer program designed by American Youth Understanding Diabetes Abroad, Inc. (AYUDA), a U.S. based non-profit organization that sponsors the annual Campo Amigo Ecuador.

Founded in 1996, AYUDA is a youth led organization that works to help to provide children with diabetes the education and supplies they need to live healthy lives. In 1999, AYUDA's vision was first realized as Campo Amigo Ecuador: a week long overnight camp where teams of American youth unite with Ecuadorian youth to create a safe, fun, and educational environment for children with diabetes. Since their first camp, AYUDA has had over 600 campers participate and has provided over \$1.75 million dollars in medical supplies and services to Ecuador and other parts of Latin America. Yet, it is the commitment of the 100+ volunteers that have traveled with AYUDA that have really made all of this possible.

“This international exchange occurs at a time when issues of health care and global responsibility are increasingly critical. Meeting the challenges faced by youth with diabetes requires increased collaboration within the diabetes community and an expansion of volunteers’ roles in building this community throughout the world” said Jesse Fuchs-Simon, President of AYUDA Inc.

In 2005, for the first time, AYUDA staff began preparations for their trip in the United States. From June 10th to 14th, 2005 27 AYUDA Staff and Volunteers participated in the AYUDA 2005 Volunteer Training Program, held in conjunction with the American Diabetes Association’s (ADA) annual scientific sessions in San Diego, CA. The conference was a tremendous opportunity for diabetes organizations and individuals to engage with AYUDA’s volunteers and help increase their understanding of diabetes from an educational, medical and, social perspective.

The volunteers then traveled to Quito Ecuador to begin training. Volunteers lived for three weeks with host families from the local diabetes foundation. Their experience of living with a child who has diabetes helped the volunteers better understand the challenges that these children face and better prepares them for their work at camp as well as cultivate relationships within the community.

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AYUDA, Inc. is an IRS recognized 501(c)(3) charitable organization incorporated in the State of Maryland.
Qualifying contributions are deductible for tax purposes.

Volunteers then headed to Cuartel Yarguachi, the same site as Campo Amigo Ecuador, to participate in the Staff Leadership Camp organized in conjunction with the Fundacion Diabetes Juvenil Ecuador (FDJE). The Staff Leadership Camp provided AYUDA Volunteers with the opportunity to unite with Ecuadorian youth leaders and medical professionals as the confident cohesive team. As well as ensure that every staff member was prepared for camp with exceptional diabetes education and training.

The overarching goal of the summer was to create a successful, educational and safe experience for Ecuadorian children and adolescents with diabetes, while improving their long-term medical and psychosocial health. Campers also participated in activities designed to be psychologically beneficial, showing them that they can have fun just like their friends without diabetes.

Campo Amigo's outstanding volunteers ensured this Campo Amigo's achievements. This summer marked the most successful of AYUDA program to date. With more local and international collaboration and an empowered team of youth leaders, AYUDA is looking forward to continue support for Campo Amigo Ecuador and other educational programs. AYUDA has provided support to diabetes communities throughout the Americas for more than 12 years. In the coming year AYUDA plans to expand its services into Belize.

For more information about AYUDA Inc and participants in your community please visit www.ayudainc.net or contact Jenny Osterhout, JennyO@ayudainc.net

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