

The first day of summer project, showing off our mustache mugs from our welcome gift bags.

DESTINO

EMPOWERING LATINOS TO BRING TRANSFORMATION IN CHRIST WHEREVER THEY GO

AUGUST 2013

"Hey guys, I was finally able to tell the gospel to one of my best friends! I'm so proud of myself and wanted you guys to pray for him. I did it the other night and I literally started crying when I left his house because I was so happy and amazed that God used me to talk to him! He was really interested and was asking me questions."

This was shared in a text message with our entire summer project group about 4 days after project ended. Gaby is a student involved in a fairly new Destino movement at Northern Illinois University. During our 5 weeks in LA, she expressed how much fear she had about coming and that she almost decided not to join us. Fortunately, her friend and campus leader, Gus, kept encouraging her to come with him. Though summer project still had plenty of challenging moments, Gaby was so thankful for how God used this experience in her life.

Seeing the text message above was a perfect reminder for why we have these summer projects. It's not just about having a great experience and doing ministry for a few weeks. Its meant to be just the beginning of a journey to allowing God to use us in greater ways wherever we go. I love that we still have a group text message chain to continue to hear how God is working and to pray for one another! I am so thankful that God used the ministry and training we did in LA to reach out to a young man in Chicago. Please pray with us for Gaby and her friend, Juan. Pray they continue to have gospel conversations and that he would come to know Jesus.

God has a plan for everyone on our project to have an impact this year. Some are starting new jobs after having graduated. Some are deciding whether or not to transition to a new city and school. Most are going to be leading in Destino movements on their campus. Some are deciding if they want to go into full-time ministry. All of them have friends or family that need to know Jesus. All of them have seeds planted this summer that need to continue to be watered. I'm just waiting for more exciting text messages!



The group at UCLA with Professor Romero, who shared a little about his heart for Jesus and social justice.



Paul and I with Gaby and Misa, two students in our group serving at Central City. They are hilarious and joked that they were our adopted daughters and claimed this as the family Christmas card picture.

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Destino A Cru Ministry

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Our first week of project was about getting to know each other, the project schedule and expectations, and the city of Los Angeles. One way we did that was with an all day urban hike around downtown. It's amazing how many very different areas of the city you can cover just by walking...from Little Tokyo to Skid Row. The picture above is our entire group in Pershing Square.

We spent some of our time on project doing ministry on Skid Row, an area of Los Angeles with one of the largest homeless populations in the US. We partnered with Central City and participated in Homeless Karaoke, an event they host every Wednesday night to give the community a place to come inside for good coffee and good fun. It wasn't just a place for us to bless the community, but to be blessed by them. In addition to hearing from Pastor Tony, one of our students was ministered to and prayed for by one of the men (picture above, left). My group was also able to spend a week with an amazing group of kids at Central City. They were so much fun and I was impressed by how much joy and character they had, knowing they are in the midst of very difficult and unstable situations in their young lives.

See more pictures from our Destino Los Angeles summer project at statigr.am/tag/lasp13.

While we did some ministry with the homeless and went to a few local college campuses to share our faith, the majority of our ministry time was spent doing Vacation Bible School with some local churches that needed some help. It was a fun change to get to work with kids this summer. One week, we were all together along with some Intervarsity volunteers at Fountain of Life Family Center in Long Beach (pictured below, right). The other 2 weeks, we split up into 3 ministry groups to go to different places. The experiences varied quite a bit from place to place...from large and very organized, to creating a program on the fly for a few kids in the park! Our students did an amazing job leading and being creative in sharing Jesus with these precious children around the city!







Thank you for praying and giving this summer to help make all of this happen!

Paul & Trina