

RIPE *for Harvest*

WORLD OUTREACH

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November 2019 Ministry Update

Dear Friends & Family,

This month has been packed with ministry opportunities, celebrations, interviews, and travel—as well as being witnesses to God's leading, direction, and continued provision in our lives!

The picture in the upper right corner is of Tannia's Mom, Sara, and our Emma (of course). We are so pleased that Sara is able to be with us for a couple of months. As we are going through a time of transition, it is great to have her additional support and help. She will be staying with us through the holidays before returning to her home in Quito, Ecuador in early January. **Thank you Mama!**



The picture on the left is the view from my room in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic during my most recent trip. It is my privilege and joy to work along side Atillo and Ianka Vilanova, who are the founders of the Christian Community School in Santo Domingo. CCS is in its sixth year of ministry and is already serving over 100 students (which is the capacity of their current facility).

Because of your financial support, I am able to serve as an adjunct of the CCS Leadership Team, providing school improvement and instructional practice assessments, mentoring, counsel, strategic planning, and training; all needed

elements for a budding school—but beyond their reach without your support. Thank you.

This month's trip focused on conducting focus group meetings with students, faculty, and parents; gathering input from these school stakeholders to better understand the needs and challenges of the school. We also invested time in conducting some individualized



training for the leadership and parents, as well as a full day of training with teachers on **the essential elements of an effective classroom**. CCS is blessed with a highly committed and dedicated team of educators. It is truly a joy to serve alongside of them.

On behalf of the CCS Team, **THANK YOU for your support** and making it possible for me to serve alongside these energetic and passionate "edu-missionaries" in their ministry of student discipleship through quality and effective Christian Education!



Another training opportunity this month included leading workshops as part of the Association of Christian Schools International's Professional Development Forum in

Phoenix, AZ. Several hundred teachers and school leaders attended the event. My sessions focused on developing trusted relationships between teachers and



students, as well as a hands-on workshop on how to innovate the use of homework as an authentic and meaningful learning tool. Far too often homework is just busy work and provides very little support to learning and increasing student achievement levels. In fact, the research in this area concludes that **there is no correlation between homework and student achievement at the Elementary level** (with the exception of reading) and in the upper grade levels, too much homework can actually have a negative result. So, we focused on how to ensure that homework is individualized and purposeful to support students in their learning.

Emma turned 8 this month! Does that seem as hard for others to believe as it does for us? She continues to be the center of joy and energy in our home. Her current passions include roller skating, dancing, making videos, math, and anything related to unicorns!

We are still working through the long process of finalizing Emma's citizenship in the USA. Technically she is already an American citizen, however, she must first secure a "Certificate of Citizenship", which we have delayed in applying for as the filing fee alone was \$1,170. Thankfully, due to a recent blessing, we have finally completed the paperwork and paid the fee. Next, she will have her biometrics recorded on December 3rd and then at some date yet to be determined there will be her official immigration interview. Once the interview is completed and the certificate is issued, we can move forward with securing her US passport. The passport is the final step, and **then she will be fully recognized as a US citizen!** So, a few more months to go. Your prayers and support are greatly appreciated.



For Tannia, she needs to complete another year of residency prior to applying for citizenship in the USA. Immigrating to the USA is a long, complex, and expensive process. Going through the process first-hand creates a tremendous empathy for all those who are unable to navigate the process. No, we do not support illegal immigration, but we certainly understand why so many choose that path. **Thank you all for your support for Tannia and Emma** as we get closer to the completion of this personal goal.

For the past 8 weeks, the majority of my time has been invested in pursuing the answer to the question, **"Where will God lead us to base our next chapter of ministry?"** It is our desire to serve a local Christian school that also embraces and supports the vital mission and work of developing international Christian schools—especially those who are serving in developing and distressed parts of the world. In pursuit of identifying such a ministry partner, I have been in conversations and formal interviews with schools in California, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Rhode Island, Texas, Kansas, North Carolina, Prague, Thailand, and the Philippines (just to identify a few)!

We are very pleased to announce that starting in December, I will take up the role of **Superintendent for The Village Christian Academy** (VCA) in Fayetteville, North Carolina. The school currently serves over 700 students (PS-12) with a clear mission of partnering with parents, pursuing a diverse community, and providing a wholistic approach to student development. To learn more visit www.vcanc.com. In addition to providing leadership for VCA, I will also be able to commit up to 10 weeks each year to continued international ministry through *Ripe For Harvest World Outreach*. Thus, I will be continuing to assist *Quisqueya Christian School* in Haiti, CCS in the Dominican Republic, and in the coming year I will be returning to Panama as well as participating in a new opportunity in Brazil (more on that in a future newsletter).

Praise God with us for this new leadership opportunity and **the start of a new chapter in our lives and ministry.** We are currently making the preparations for the move. Prayers for a quick sale of our home in Tucson are appreciated as well as for all the transition details. More updates next month, but until then, **HAPPY THANKSGIVING!** We are so thankful for YOU!

Yours for Christ, - Toby (for Tannia and Emma too!)





Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____ designated for the ministry of *Toby & Tannia Travis #20245*.

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*A higher standard.
A higher purpose.*

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