

# DO MISSIONS *Differently*

## TEAM MEMBER GUIDEBOOK



### *About SI*

SI does long-term, ongoing community development in Guatemala, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and two locations in the Dominican Republic.



### *SI Vision*

Seeing team members and the poor transformed into the likeness of Christ and discover their true calling.



### *SI Mission*

Bringing team members and the poor together cross-culturally to encounter God, share the Good News, disciple and serve others in occupational ministries.

STUDENTS International



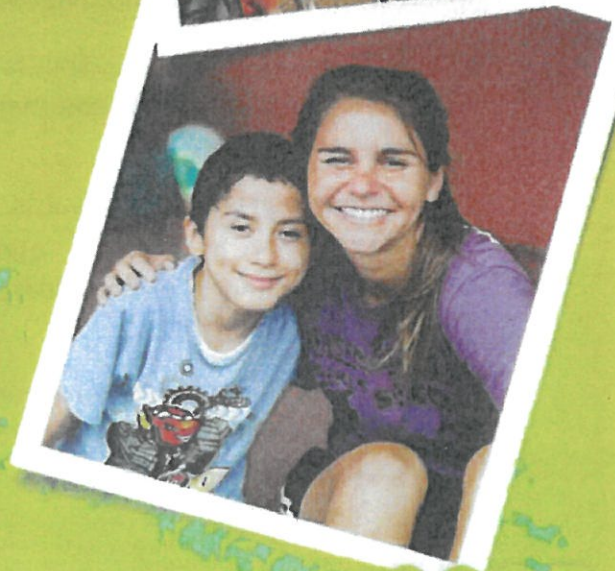
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## About SI

SI does long-term, ongoing community development in Guatemala, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and two locations in the Dominican Republic. Our staff, outreach participants and the poor come together cross-culturally to encounter God, share the Good News, disciple and serve others in a specific area of occupation that relates to their career or academic interests. These occupational settings are called Ministry Sites. SI strives to assign each outreach participant to a ministry site that correlates closely with their skills and interests. Each participant will work at one ministry site for the entire outreach.

## SI Vision

Seeing team members and the poor transformed into the likeness of Christ and discover their true calling.

## SI Mission

Bringing team members and the poor together cross-culturally to encounter God, share the Good News, disciple and serve others in occupational ministries.

## Outreach Objectives

The most common objectives for short-term mission outreaches are to broaden our perspective of the world and our responsibility to it, deepen our relationship with the Lord, and share the Gospel with others in need. While these objectives are important and needed, Students International intentionally strives to accomplish three additional goals:

1. Enabling outreach participants and the poor to discover how God can use them in their occupation.
2. Providing outreach participants and the poor the opportunity to be a part of ongoing ministry and not just a short outreach where follow up is difficult.
3. Helping outreach participants and the poor understand the value of building personal relationships in sharing the Gospel.



## Statement of Faith

Students International believes in the fundamental teachings of the Christian faith as taught by the Holy Scripture.

We believe that there is one God, the almighty Creator of all things, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Deut. 6:4; Isa 45:18; Jer 10:10; Mt 28:19; Isa 40:28; Jn 10:30; 2 Cor 13:14)

We believe the Bible to be the divinely inspired, entirely trustworthy, authoritative Word of God. (Isa 40:8; 2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Pet 1:20-21; Heb 4:12)

We believe in Jesus Christ, both fully human and fully divine, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, who lived a perfect life, and gave himself as the only ransom for sinners. He was bodily raised from the dead and ascended into heaven where he reigns as Savior and Lord. (Jn 1:1, 14; Lk 1:35; 1 Pet 1:3-5, 2:22; 1 Jn 2:1-2, Heb 1:2-4)

We believe that full justification is freely offered to all sinful men and women who repent, and put their faith in Jesus Christ as the only means of salvation. Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and humanity. (1 Tim 2:5-6; Acts 4:12; Rom 3:24-26)

We believe in the Holy Spirit, whose indwelling presence and transforming power gives new life to all believers, enables personal change, empowers Christian community, and inspires obedient service and sacrifice. (Jn 14:26; Rom 8:14-16; 1 Cor 12:7-11; Tit 3:5; Acts 2:38-47)

We believe in the spiritual unity of all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ calls all believers, this holy church, to preach the Gospel, care for the needy and strive for social justice. (Jn 1:12; Gal 3:27-28; Eph 4:25; Mt 28:18-20; 1 Pet 3:15; Isa 58:6-9; Mt 25:34-40)

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Ps 139)

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen 2:18-25.) These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen 1:26-27) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, intimate sexual activity engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman, homosexual behavior, bisexual or transsexual conduct, bestiality, incest and the use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10).

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11)

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Students International.

We believe in the future return of Jesus Christ, who will personally return to judge all people with justice and mercy. The redeemed will be saved unto eternal life and the unrepentant will be lost unto eternal damnation. (1 Thess 4:13-18; Acts 10:41-42; Jn 5:24-25; Jn 3:36; Rom 6:23)

We believe that in order to preserve the mission and integrity of Students International as an international Body of Christ and to provide a biblical role model to all persons who encounter any person representing Students International, including, without limitation, employees and volunteers of Student's International, it is imperative that all persons employed by Students International in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers in any capacity, including, without limitation, those persons serving on long-term missions, agree to and abide by this statement of faith. Those persons serving on short-term missions shall acknowledge this statement faith.

This statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Students International's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our board of directors is Students International's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.



## Team Member Rules of Conduct

There are several rules team members must abide by in order to ensure safety, simplify group logistics and conduct a lifestyle pleasing to the Lord.

- No tobacco use, smoking, or vaping
- No drinking alcohol
- No flirting or any other sexual activity
- No possession or use of illegal drugs or firearms
- No one out later than 9:00pm (except with staff approval)
- Invitations to a national friend's home are subject to staff's approval

### Flirting

One of the most difficult areas for many team members is in the area of *flirting*. Often times it is unintentional, but it is perceived within other cultures as a sexual advance. It destroys the effectiveness of their Christian witness and places them in an awkward position. We want you to address this issue before your team comes so team members are aware of the impact and consequences of flirting. If it is noticed by our staff that a team member is purposely flirting and doesn't stop when asked, that team member may be sent home at their own expense.

Team members can be sent home immediately, at their own expense, if they are involved in any sexual relationships, drinking of alcohol, use or possession of illegal drugs or excessive abuse of the other rules of conduct.



*"Each one of them is  
Jesus in disguise."*

*Mother Teresa*



## Safety

We acknowledge that there are safety risks when traveling internationally and encourage you to be well-informed and to be aware of the risks wherever your team members are, whether at home or abroad. It is important to keep a good perspective when safety is concerned. It is our tendency to have an unfounded fear of the unknown or unfamiliar. Thus, when we hear about tragic events our assumption is to think the places with which we are unfamiliar are unsafe. However, we watch news reports about tragic events in our hometowns and think of them as isolated incidents. Often a situation like this sways our emotions and fuels our fears beyond what is reasonable. We must keep these tragic events in a proper perspective. It is important to remember that thousands of Americans and other foreigners reside in Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic and thousands of others visit these countries each month without incident.

We have procedures in place to reduce the risks associated with international travel in an effort to make our outreaches as safe as possible. Some of the precautions we take are:

- We have a strong network with other mission organizations to help us stay well informed.
- We monitor information released by the US State Department.
- We have chosen locations to work in that are low in crime and are characterized by their quietness, tranquility and hospitality to foreigners.
- We give an extensive orientation to the team members when they arrive that instructs them on important safety issues and policies.
- We have national staff who have grown up in the areas where we minister and who know the local customs to advise and orient team members on safety issues.
- We have excellent relations with the medical community and live near well-equipped local hospitals.

While no one can guarantee complete safety, we believe we have set up a program and follow certain policies that make this time abroad as safe as if we were wisely traveling within the United States. We also believe that the safest place for any team member is in the center of God's will, regardless if they are in Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic or in their home town.

*Have not I commanded you? Be strong, vigorous, and very courageous. Be not afraid, neither be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. Joshua 1:9*





## Applications

Students International requires an online application be filled out by everyone going on an outreach. The purpose of the application is to provide us with your contact information, emergency contact information, medical information and other important details that help us prepare for your trip.

An important part of the application is selecting your ministry site preferences. The information you provide on the application will be the basis we use for deciding the Ministry Site you will serve in during the trip. You may be extremely passionate about a certain ministry site, but it is important that you still give us your top 3 choices. Use the space provided to share the “why” behind your choices. Descriptions of the ministry sites are listed on the application page.

## Ministry Sites

Expect to receive your ministry site placement via email 3 weeks prior to the outreach. Participants will minister at one site for the entire outreach; this helps to maximize the opportunity to develop friendships. It is important to note that once you are on the outreach, you will not be allowed to switch to another ministry site. A lot of preparation goes into setting up a ministry site and often it involves families or leaders who have been told what to expect when you arrive. There are circumstances we will take into consideration and allow a change to take place if necessary, but they are rare. Thank you for your understanding.

Each “ministry site group” will be led by one of our bilingual staff. There will often be slight changes from the written description of the ministry sites to what you will actually do. These changes are due to various reasons — such as the time of the year you go, national holidays and some sites are dependent upon national leaders and fitting within their schedule. There is always the possibility of needing to change things due to unforeseen circumstances such as weather and cultural adjustments. If there are some changes, they will not affect the opportunity for you to minister through the ministry site. A primary characteristic for all missionaries working in another culture is flexibility.



The ministry site section of the application gives participants the opportunity to rate the areas of service according to their interest. We understand that you may be extremely passionate about a certain ministry site, but it is important that you choose 3 top choices. Use the space provided to share the “why” behind your choices. SI will prayerfully use the information given to make your ministry site placement.

It is SI's desire to assign participants to their first or second choice of Ministry Site, but bear in mind that for the sites to function well, and participants to have a full and productive outreach, it is not always possible to do so. SI cannot guarantee that everyone will get the site that they want. We can guarantee though, participants that come with hearts to serve will see God do mighty things!