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“Progress is impossible without change.  
And those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.”

– George Bernard Shaw

## Crowdfunding Campaign

Our heart of the foundation is the Mama Elba school: a development and learning center for children and adults with special needs.

It is one of the few institutions in the Dominican Republic where they are given the much-needed attention they would otherwise be denied.

Around 20 children and adults with different special needs, ranging from physical and mental disabilities to developmental disorders or learning difficulties, attend the Mama Elba school every day. The school's work is crucial for their development.

However, many of them have never been to a specialist to get a pro-

fessional diagnosis or therapy because for most of these impoverished families it is unaffordable.

For many of us in developed countries this is the first thing to do to help someone with a disability. Obviously, without a deeper understanding of the conditions these people are living with, the teachers cannot provide the best support possible for their students.

This is the reason for this Crowdfunding campaign: We want to raise money to send all of our pupils to a special diagnostic and therapy center in Sanchez, a town 30 kilometers from Samana. For only 10€ you can pay the transport for a

student and his family and for the lifechanging diagnosis.

But even the little amount of just 6€ helps as it is the price for one session of therapy. If you feel like you can give a little more money, 60€ pay for the diagnosis and ten sessions of therapy. And with the generous donation of 125€ you provide a student with half a year of therapy. Mama Elba needs your help!

<https://www.youcaring.com/specialneedschildrenatmamaelba-school-1021125>



## Our second Fundraising Party

On the 3rd of December, we celebrated a fundraising party at our Mama Elba School. As last time, with the help of the parents of the children we prepared a great buffet with local Dominican food. We, and probably also the kids, never had the feeling that they were special needs and is the first ever there was a variety of activities which was great.

This is a school for children with special needs and is the first ever there was a variety of educational and therapeutic initiatives that were offered. From face painting for children who need special assistance here in Samaná. Unit-ed we planned to raise money for that the children could do, to sports the second party was only about two months after the first one we were desperately needed to assist in the did a great show, there was every-thing to keep not only the kids but USD. This money will be invested into the Mama Elba School so the ment of the children. also their parents and us entered and smiling the whole day!

With the great success in mind of the last party at the beginning of October, the volunteers of Aldeas de Paz were very motivated to host yet another great party on the lawn in front of the Mama Elba school. We are planning more parties in 2018 to help improve the Mama Elba school and make it even better than it already is!







## Our team in Las Terrenas changed

Our project and volunteer coordinator in charge of Las Terrenas was Julia Schaaf. She is 28 years old and from Germany. Julia has been working for Aldeas de Paz since June 2016. In this time she took care of the volunteers and the projects they work in. In the beginning she was in Samaná and coordinated the work and the meetings we all did there together. But a coordinator is not only responsible for that. If somebody is sick our dear coordinators take us to the doctor or the hospital. We can always talk to them if we need their advice or help to cope with problems here in a totally different environment. If we do not feel comfortable with our work they can help us to change something.

“For us, Julia was more a good friend than a coordinator.” – Letícia Oehlgardt, a volunteer from Las Terrenas  
In the beginning of September 2017 she went to Las Terrenas to continue her work there. With her we started our second branch in Las Terrenas. “Las Terrenas is very different from Samana, but has also a lot of potential for ADP projects.” – Julia Schaaf  
Julia did a wonderful job there in her last four month. All of our volunteers are happy with the work she did. They also got on well with her on a personal basis. Linda Beard, a volunteer from las Terrenas told us that she really liked how funny and spontaneous Julia was. Very often they went spontaneously to

together to Zumba classes and to get some icecream together. Sadly, after one and a half year Julia’s time here is nearly over.

We want to thank her for the good work she did and for the wonderful person she is, who enriched our team! We wish you all the best in the future and look forward to welcome you again.

But Julia’s leaving does not mean that the volunteers are left alone. Vito, our new coordinator joined our Team in October. Since then Vito and Julia worked together so Vito can get to know everything and everyone until he will work on his own. We are happy to welcome Vito and are excited what will happen in the future.

“I am leaving Aldeas de Paz after one and a half year. It was a great experience; I learned and I enjoyed the Dominican landscape a lot. So if you have the chance to come, just do it and become part of Aldeas de Paz! I am looking forward to see the development and progress of ADP in the future.”

- Julia Schaaf





## P roject Samaná

From the 5th to the 9th November a group of veterinarians from Massachusetts came to Samaná in the Dominican Republic. They got assisted by Dr. Francisco Lopez, a veterinarian from the Dominican Republic. During their stay they operated around 250 dogs, cats and also horses at the basketball field in Samaná, which was converted to an operation room. The owners of the dogs and cats came to get the medical treatment for their animals. To take care of the horses they

made an exception, the doctors drove around Samaná to the farms and operated them there. A lot of the operations were castrations, but they also did eye-surgeries, caesarians and operated abscesses. Because a lot of different volunteers were interested we had to split the group. Everyday four volunteers had the chance to experience the work of the American Doctors. We want to say "thank you" for the great opportunity our volunteers got. They got a great insight into the work of a veterinarian.





## The Lifeguard Course

Lisa-Sophie Heitkamp, one of the German Red Cross Volunteers, who comes from Oldenburg which is close to the North Sea, started a lifeguard course at the beginning of November here in Samaná. Back in Germany she was a lifeguard and an emergency medical technician herself and trained two or three times a week. Sometimes in the pool and sometimes in the sea or in a river with boats and other materials for rescuing. Having a lot of experience, she wanted to start a lifeguard course here. We asked Sophie what her motivation was: "I had such a good education and wanted to pass my knowledge to the people here in Samaná. It is really necessary to have good

swimmers here, because just a few are able to swim and a lot of them work on boats or close to the sea. In my opinion knowing how to swim is a basic knowledge which is why I want to start a swimming class for everybody soon. I think there are a lot of people keen to do it." Right now the Lifeguard course is only for the members of the Dominican Red Cross. There are six people coming every week either for theoretical or practical lessons. Topics of the theoretical lessons are bathing rules, currents and different forms of dangers and accidents. Working on a good and secure swimming style is part of the practical lesson. Furthermore, the Red Cross people are going to



*It is really necessary to have good swimmers here, because just a few are able to swim and a lot of them work on boats or close to the sea."*

- Lisa Sophie Heitkamp



## Weekend activities: Our trip to Santo Doming



From the 10th of November till the 13th our volunteers made a trip to the capital of the Dominican Republic, Santo Domingo. They got a day off because of the national-holiday "The day of the Constitution". A few volunteers want to talk about their highlights of the weekend:

*I* bought a cookie and a chocolate ice-cream with an extra chocolate topping on top of it in a shopping mall. It tasted great!"

– Fabian Rudolf

*S*eeing so many people, having a good time and enjoying the music at the "Presidente Festival" actually made me cry (just kidding it was because of Justin Timberlake)."

– Hanna Kirsch

*I*t was a very awesome weekend, I got to see a lot of great artists like Maluma, Ozuna and Bad Bunny. I also went to a chocolate museum and to the nationalpark "Tres Ojos", which was very interesting and beautiful."

– Leticia Oehlgardt



Statements from our partners, the children at school and other testimonials have been translated from the Spanish language.

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Aldeas de Paz is a registered nonprofit organisation in the Dominican Republic by Law 122-05.