



**NPH USA**  
Raising Children. Transforming Lives.

2011 - 2012



2012 - 2013



2013 - 2014



**THE SEATTLE INSTITUTE**  
*Preparing for Lives of Service Leadership*  
— Celebrating Five Years —

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# The Seattle Institute

*Preparing for Lives of Service Leadership*

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Dear Friends,

On July 3, 2016, we celebrate the fifth graduating class of The Seattle Institute. The 26 young adults who have journeyed through this program over past five years are courageous, powerful, insightful and energetic leaders who are already making a positive impact on their NPH homes, their communities, and their families.

We are proud to celebrate all of them. We hope you enjoy reading their reflections and hearing what they have been doing since leaving Seattle.

Special thanks to Jean Francois and Florine for their support in gathering these stories.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kara King', with a stylized, flowing script.

Kara King  
Founding Program Director



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## **The Seattle Institute**

### *About the Program*

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Founded in 1954 by Father William B. Wasson, Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos (NPH, Spanish for "Our Little Brothers and Sisters") provides a permanent family and home for orphaned, abandoned and other at-risk children who live in conditions of extreme poverty. More than 3,400 children live at our homes in nine countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Fr. Wasson's vision was that NPH children would grow up to care for subsequent generations of children in need, at NPH and beyond. To accomplish this goal, our children are taught to share with others and give back to their communities. In addition, NPH invests in leadership development by offering local youth leadership groups, and sponsoring international workshops to bring together young leaders from all of our homes.

In 2011, the NPH Seattle Institute was founded to give our most promising young leaders a deeper and more advanced leadership formation opportunity. Each year six students are selected to spend ten months in the Seattle area, living with host families, enrolling in a full-time English program, and participating in a comprehensive leadership development program. When they return home, they will be better prepared to share their gifts and talents with NPH and the local community.

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# **The Seattle Institute**

## *Program Components*

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### **Leadership Development**

Leadership is taught and discussed through weekly meetings, intensive retreats (offered in partnership with iLEAP), reading and writing projects, guest speakers, host family and mentor conversations, and representing NPH at various schools, churches, and community events. Throughout the year, participants have ample opportunities to learn about servant leadership and their own style, and to put their skills into practice.

### **English and Cultural Immersion**

The students study English full-time at Seattle Central College. They truly become a part of their host family, attending church, family gatherings, and other events together. They also develop friendships with students from Seattle and around the world through the International Student Program at Seattle Central College. The diversity of the Northwest lends itself well to learning about many perspectives of life in the U.S. and creates opportunities for new understanding.

### **Mentoring – Friends for the Journey**

Each student is first paired with a mentor close to his/her age, who can speak Spanish or Creole, and ideally has visited NPH. These mentors offer personal support as the students transition to life in Seattle. Later, we match students with intergenerational mentors who help the students explore their unique gifts and challenges as they discern and practice their leadership. Finally, we incorporate job-shadowing opportunities for students to learn more about their fields of interest and meet local leaders.

### **Service Opportunities**

The students engage in volunteer projects with local organizations such as food banks and women's shelters, learning more about (and addressing) the needs they see in Seattle. NPH also supports students who want to implement a service project when they return home.



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## Emir Ricaño

### Charter Class (2012), NPH Mexico

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Emir currently lives in Monterrey, Mexico, where he is finishing his fourth year of medical school. He keeps busy completing rounds, being on-call, and attending classes. He also tries to help his peers with their English and with minor medical issues whenever he can. He hopes that in the future he will be able to do more for his NPH family.



Emir remembers, "Seattle was a great experience for me in which I learned to become the person that I am today. One of the moments that I remember the most is the time with the Fittons, especially with Joshua and Elias. These two little boys have brought me so much joy, and they helped me with my English as well. I am really grateful as well for all the people that I met there."

One important lesson Emir attributes to his time in Seattle is learning to accept and value people's differences. Relationships are highly meaningful to him, and embracing others' diversity has increased his ability to love them as they are. He also values NPHI's

commitment to this program, saying, "I think it is important because it helps make great leaders to continue Father Wasson's legacy, which is to take care of the littlest ones in need and to love them unconditionally. **This program is something that all of us who participate in it will carry with us for the rest of our lives. I know I do.**"

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# Digyana Hernandez de Morales

## Charter Class (2012), NPH Honduras

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Digyana graduated with a degree in Educational Administration and currently works as the Coordinator of Montessori Programs at NPH Honduras. She is responsible for leading a team of ten teachers, using her positive energy and enthusiasm to help them serve the children every day with love.



Digyana and her husband, Denis Morales, live in Tegucigalpa where they were recently able to buy their first home together. This year, Digyana plans to begin her Master's degree in Human Resources.

Reflecting on her time in Seattle, Digyana says, "After Seattle, my heart is in two places. What I remember most is my northwest family and all those who were with us during this great year of preparation to be good leaders. I especially loved my family dinners with the Schulers. They were always there to listen to me and shared many things with me. I want to continue this tradition with my own family." She goes on to conclude that **"This program is important for continuing Father Wasson's legacy and work – he believed we can change the pain of our past to create a better future, be good people, and strive for our dreams."**



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## Julissa Alvarenga

Charter Class (2012), NPH Guatemala

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Julissa lives in Guatemala City and works for TELUS Int'l - Guatemala. She attributes her success in this business directly to her time in Seattle, noting, **"I would not have had this job right now to provide for my family if it was not for my experience in Seattle."** Her family now includes one-year-old Leah, who is the light of her life. Julissa devotes much of her time and energy to caring for her daughter.

She also finds time to stay involved with her NPH family. She says, "The Seattle Institute helped me become more aware of the opportunities NPH has given me. I used to think life was linear, but the program showed me that I will never actually leave NPH even though I live outside. I am more connected now; I am part of the older brothers/sisters (Hermanos Mayores) group, and I love to visit the home, spend time with the kids, and participate in activities."

Reflecting on her time in Seattle, Julissa recalls that one of her biggest challenges was working through her personal story and learning to tell it in ways that were honoring to her. She used to be afraid of people's judgments of her past, but her experiences in Seattle offered her new freedom from that fear and the chance to grow into her own identity and own her story. She is now able to tell her story to others in a way that brings goodness and blessing to her and to them.

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## Seïde Jean François

### Charter Class (2012), NPFS Haiti

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Jean Francois graduated in 2016 from The University of Portland with a major in Business Administration. He received the Molly Hightower Scholarship at UP, a scholarship set up in honor of Molly - a volunteer at NPH Haiti who died in the 2010 earthquake. JF says, "It is very amazing to see what can come from such a tragedy. I did not know Molly, but during

the many service activities I did and continue to do, I always think of her." This fall he will move to England to begin a year-long Master in Public Policy Program at Oxford University. **His long-term goal is to return to Haiti and work to improve educational policy in his home country.**



JF reflects, "Taking classes in a language that is not your mother tongue is very challenging, but the Seattle Institute helped me create a good foundation for that. I was able to participate in my classes, use my professors' office hours to discuss class materials, and meet and hang out with friends. More importantly, the program provided me with leadership skills that allowed me to be successful in my professional career. I use the leadership knowledge I gained while in Seattle to lead groups and class activities. During my time at UP, I participated in many service learning immersions, including serving the homeless in downtown Portland, immigrants in Yakima, WA, communities in Nicaragua, and so forth. These service activities helped me stay humble. I learned that humility is one of the best tools of leadership. I always use that tool because it reminds me that we are all humans. **Before attending the leadership program, I thought that titles mattered more than the actual duty of being a leader, but I learned that one has to be humble in the way he/she serves."**



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## Wendy Velasquez Castro

Charter Class (2012), NPH Honduras

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Wendy currently lives in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, where she is finishing her university degree in linguistics. During holidays and summer vacations, she assists the Coordinator of the Girls' Home at NPH Honduras. She reflects, "**My life has completely changed.**

Before Seattle, I would never be able to do such a thing. I love my work with the girls; it is such a rewarding experience. In Seattle, I grew to be passionate and supportive. On the Ranch [NPH Honduras], I have a reputation as someone that people can trust and ask for support."



Wendy remembers her time in Seattle as one of personal growth, community involvement, and pushing herself out of her comfort zone. She fondly remembers

everyone who supported her while she was in Seattle: Mary and Matt, Vicky, and the Bubar Family, who were there for her as she struggled and learned. She notes, "The community in Seattle made me feel like I was still at home, and I always had their complete support. I am so grateful to have had this experience, because it is the foundation for who I am today."

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# Celson Enrique Rivera

## Class of 2013, NPH Nicaragua

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Celson currently lives in Managua, Nicaragua, and is a bilingual staff member at the Intercontinental Hotel. He shares, "The leadership program has helped me to grow personally



and to be able to take risks. I also had the chance to improve my English, and I now benefit from both my leadership skills and my English by having a good job. I am very happy and grateful for that. I am now able to help my mother and try to rebuild her house, which was in very bad condition. **I am very proud of the person that I have become. This one year spent in Seattle has helped me become more responsible."**

Celson also supports his NPH Nicaragua family as much as he can, often offering his time and assistance to the house director, Mauricio. He can be found playing with the younger children, telling jokes, and delighting in his time at the home. Celson remembers his very first day in Seattle with gratitude and recalls how, upon arriving at SeaTac Airport, he was amazed to see how many people had come to greet the new NPH students. That moment showed him how much people in Seattle care about NPH, the children, and the leadership students. It is a sentiment that lasted throughout the year, and Celson says, "I feel blessed to have had this opportunity, and I am excited for the ways the program is helping others to continue the future of NPH and Father Wasson's work."

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# Santos Rodolfo Zuniga Giron

## Class of 2013, NPH Honduras

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Rodolfo currently lives in Tegucigalpa where he serves NPH Honduras by supporting high school and university students. His role includes listening to students and helping them with the daily struggles of adapting to life in the city. He enjoys being there for them, always trying to serve from a humble heart dedicated to NPH. Rodolfo is also pursuing an economics degree in the university and attends classes each afternoon. Many of the skills he improved during his time in Seattle are put into practice in his life today: responsibility, humility, honesty, hard work, and an ability to delegate and work well with others. Rodolfo reflects, **"The Seattle Institute will always hold a special place in my heart. Thanks to my time there, I am the person I am today – someone with deeper values who is more mature and open-minded. I know I will continue to grow and serve others."**

Rodolfo hopes many other pequeños/as will have the opportunity to participate in this program in the future, stating, "The Seattle Institute inspires us to work hard and be good examples for the next generation of children, just as Father Wasson wanted. We are continuing his legacy through this program."



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## Doris Serrano Lemus

Class of 2013, NPH El Salvador

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Doris lives in Santa Ana, El Salvador, where she recently completed her studies in Clinical Psychology. She is working hard to finish her Master's Thesis while also providing psychological care to women, children, and the elderly. Doris has a special heart for working with vulnerable populations, especially the elderly.

Last summer, Doris participated in the "First Aid Arts" Trauma and Healing training in Seattle with other NPH International staff members, where she learned ways to use the arts in trauma recovery. She enjoys working with others to help them recover, acquire more skills and live healthier lives.



Doris reflects, "Being a part of The Seattle Institute taught me to be much more sure of myself, to use my voice, to be open-minded, and to be assertive in going after my dreams and advocating for others. **I am grateful to the program and everyone who works hard to make it possible because it made me feel more secure in myself, which in turn allows me to better serve others.**"

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# Jacinto de Jesús Arial Canel

Class of 2013, NPH Guatemala

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Jacinto currently lives in Parramos, a town that neighbors NPH Guatemala. He works as the Coordinator of the Boys' Home for NPH during the week. On weekends, he attends university where he is pursuing a degree in Business Administration. He continues to grow and become more independent, taking on increasing responsibility within NPH. He is trusted by peers and coworkers alike, and he continues to strive to be a servant leader who cares about others.

Jacinto tells us, "The Seattle Institute has added value to my career. It is a good feeling to have control over your life and to be able to help and do more. **It is amazing to see how one year can completely change someone's life.**" He continues, "I can see now why this program is important for the future of NPH, and I am thankful for it. It gave me more than I could ask for. I am now more confident in myself, I can tell my story and speak to large audiences, I am a better listener, and I have grown in my capacity to work in groups. Before Seattle, I had difficulty working in groups, and the program helped me to do that." Jacinto believes in the change this program creates in people's lives and the inspiration the participants take home with them.





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# Daphney Letaille

## Class of 2014, NPFS Haiti

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Daphney currently lives in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, with her younger brother where she is working towards a university degree in Business Administration. Recently engaged, she and Patrick plan to marry after her graduation in two years. Daphney

gives back to NPH through her leadership in Haiti's G20 group, which was formed to provide additional support to high school students in the city. She coordinates a group of 15-20 teenagers and is responsible for making sure they have everything they need to succeed in school.

Reminiscing about her time in Seattle, Daphney describes how it helped her to grow as both a leader and as a person. She says, "I remember my beautiful year in Seattle, especially with my host family whom I love. I also remember



my teacher who always helped me with my work since English was hard for me." Daphney believes The Seattle Institute is important for the future of NPH because **"We learn so much from each other and about service leadership, culture, English, and NPH... This program helps us become better people and stronger leaders."**

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# Dinora Saribel Garcia de Leon

## Class of 2014, NPH Guatemala

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Saribel is a student at University Mariano Galvez where she is studying business administration. She is gaining experience in her area of studies through her work in the NPH Guatemala accounting offices during the week. She lives in nearby Parramos with a group of other NPH university students.

Saribel explains that her time in Seattle was marked by service, family, learning, and love. She remembers a group visit to St. Francis House [an outreach center where the leadership students volunteer each year] and reflects, "It really affected me to see so many people here struggling with poverty, but still fighting to obtain a small gift or some clothing for their children for Christmas. Helping these people choose a toy or some clothes for their children was wonderful and a blessing."

Saribel tells us that "before Seattle I really thought I was quite mature and could face anything, but **in Seattle I faced new challenges and projects that I never thought I would face, and much less overcome. The program and the people who support it helped me to grow and become a better person.**" She continues, "For me, Seattle is an extension of NPH's unconditional love, and it will forever remain a fundamental piece of my life."

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# Ricardo Angel Velasco Klayen

## Class of 2014, NPH Mexico

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Ricardo currently lives in Cuernavaca, Mexico, where he works in health education for NPH Mexico. In addition, he is responsible for coordinating the leadership programs in Miacatlán and Cuernavaca, as well as working with Hermanos Mayores.

Ricardo believes in being a good example for his little brothers and sisters by sharing all he learned in Seattle. He emphasizes the values of sharing and the love of giving, noting, "This is how I will always remember the people I met in Seattle, at the Gala, or other events. Those people have really helped me learn to be happy by helping others in need."

While in Seattle, Ricardo met his future wife, Mila from NPH Nicaragua. Reflecting on that, he says, "The most important thing for me that year was, of course, that I met my wife! I am so grateful that I met someone who shares the same love that I have for NPH, and the gratitude that we both express towards our family. **We want to contribute to Father Wasson's legacy and help the little ones as others in NPH have done for us.** The Seattle Institute has made me a more patient and loving husband. I could not be more grateful."



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# Migdalia (Mila) Meza Gutiérrez

## Class of 2014, NPH Nicaragua

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Mila is currently living in Managua, Nicaragua, while she awaits the final paperwork for her degree in pediatric nursing, which she finished this year. She is happily married to Ricardo from NPH Mexico and looks forward to living and working in Mexico once her degree is finalized.



Reflecting on her time in Seattle, Mila remembers the beautiful road the group traveled on together, along with their host families and mentors. She says, "In Seattle we learned so much about service, leadership, culture, English, and each other. **Learning from the students from other NPH homes really increased our knowledge and ability to lead well.**" Mila also remembers how the NPH Seattle community supported her after the death of her friend, Brenda. She reflects "Many didn't know her, but they stayed with me in my pain."

Mila believes that Seattle changed her life and she considers it her second home and family.



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## Cesario Lobos Fajardo

Class of 2014, NPH Guatemala

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Cesario lives in Parramos, near NPH Guatemala. He is pursuing a university degree in medical psychology, while at the same time continuing to work for NPH. He is the coordinator of the high school boys' house, where he works very hard to help the boys and NPH reach their goals. He is also instrumental in shaping NPH Guatemala's youth leadership program.

Cesario remembers his time in Seattle as one of personal growth, where he learned to receive feedback even when it was hard to hear: **"This was the first time someone told me something I needed to change, and I learned to take it as something good and not defend myself, but rather to think about it and consider it a chance to improve myself."** He goes on to say, "The Seattle Institute impacted my life in many ways. Now I have an open mind and I am also more mature and make better decisions in my work and life. When we have an issue inside NPH, I am now a person who can look for solutions instead of making the problem worse."



Cesario includes a final goodbye with his (host) brother, Joshua, as one of his strongest memories of Seattle: "We didn't want to say goodbye, both of us began crying and hugging each other. I told him I would come back and visit

him, and I really understood how important we had been to each other." Cesario did return to Seattle in 2016, when he was selected to participate in the Global Leadership Training Program through iLEAP, which helped him continue to develop his leadership skills.



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# Maria Lucrecia Guadamuz Cuendiz

## Class of 2015, NPH Nicaragua

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Lucre is currently working for NPH Nicaragua in the Child Sponsorship office. She enjoys this work because it allows her to have direct interaction with the children and see their reactions when they get letters from their godparents. At the same time, it gives her the opportunity to put her English skills to good use, translating cards to



and from the children and their godparents. She says, "I love seeing the children's excitement when they receive a card. Feeling loved by someone who may not even know them fills them with joy."

Reflecting on her experience in Seattle, Lucre writes, **"Seattle was a mirror for me, held up in love by others so that I could see who I am and what I am – a leader with a capacity to listen and feel the pain of others... In Seattle, I discovered myself and the potential I have to help my brothers and sisters."**

In Lucre's words, The Seattle Institute is important because "it is preparing a future generation of leaders for NPH. Someday we will be the ones to lead and care for our grand family."

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# Samuel Antonio Chavez Martinez

## Class of 2015, NPH Mexico

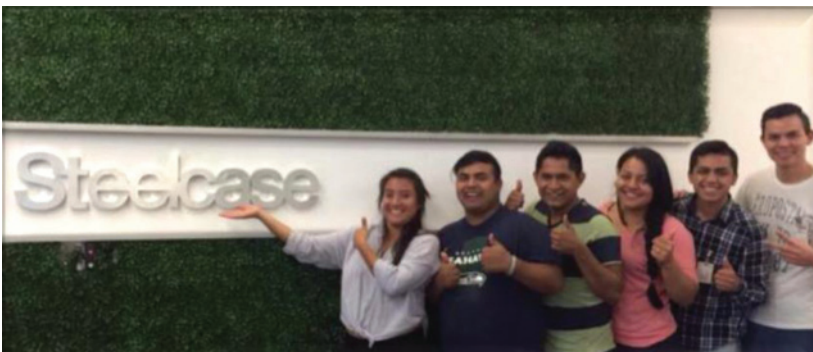
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Samuel currently lives in Monterrey, Mexico. He is a student at the Monterrey Metropolitan University where he is pursuing a degree in Communications.

Samuel supports his NPH family through his work in Public Relations at the home in Monterrey - he helps with making cards and communication with Godparents, fundraising offices, and local donors. He works to coordinate his fellow university students in these efforts.

In 2016, Samuel was given the opportunity to travel to Grand Rapids, Michigan, to further his leadership development at the Global Leadership Forum with Steelcase, an opportunity arranged by Hermana Mayor, Aurora Zacarias.

Reflecting on his 10 months in Seattle, Samuel explains **"I understand now that I can integrate what I learned about survival before coming to NPH, what I learned about service in my NPH family, and what I learned about myself in Seattle in order to be a better person, break the cycle of poverty, and help others."**



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# Sarai Magdalena Altamirano Flores

## Class of 2015, NPH Honduras

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Magda is currently living in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, with her younger brother, Lenin, while applying to college and working for NPH. She serves as a teacher in the Montessori Program at Rancho Santa Fe where she delights in working with the home's youngest children. Magda's heart for children shines through in her work and genuine care for the individuality of each child.

Reflecting on her time in Seattle, Magda says, "I have many beautiful memories of Seattle, but I think my number one memory is living with my family, Cheryl and Paul. Through my time with them, I learned what family means. Living with them, I was able to reclaim a childhood that I never had since I came to NPH as a teenager. This has had a deep impact on my life."

Magda has many funny stories of her time learning English since she arrived in Seattle without speaking even a word! She notes that communication was hard at first, and they had to use the translators on their cell phones to communicate. Learning English is one of the reasons she believes the program is important, and she goes on to say, **"I also learned to understand other people who are different from me and to offer my help when I can, and I learned much more about leadership... I have grown as a person and as a leader thanks to my time in The Seattle Institute."** As with many of our graduates, Magda calls Seattle her second home and attributes much of her current success to the learning that came from the program.

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# Luisa Fernanda Riquiac

## Class of 2015, NPH Guatemala

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Luisa lives in Guatemala City where she is completing her university studies in sports/physical education. She works part-time as



a soccer referee in order to contribute to her educational costs. Luisa also serves as the NPH soccer coach, where she works with our teenagers to build their skills, health, and selfesteem. Luisa loves soccer and is passionate about giving other pequeños/as the chance to play. In February of 2016, she was able to return to Seattle for an intensive training with 'Lil Kickers at Arena Sports, gaining more soccer and leadership skills to use with her teams at NPH.



Reflecting on her time in Seattle, Luisa first comments on her host family and how much she loves and misses them. She also says, "In Seattle I learned to be more patient, and I learned to be courageous. **My life changed as I realized I didn't have to be stuck in my past. The people in Seattle helped me to be**

**brave. I am so grateful for this blessing in my life, and my life is very different now.** I feel like a more productive woman, and I have a more concrete vision of my life and believe I have achieved it... Seattle is my second family where I found new hope of seeing life differently and believing I can grow and change."

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## Florine St Eloi

### Class of 2015, NPFS Haiti

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Florine is currently a student at The University of Portland. She was awarded the 2nd Molly Hightower Memorial Scholarship and began her studies in Communications at UP in the fall of 2015. Florine explains that her time in Seattle helped prepare her for success at UP by helping her learn to be patient, accept differences in her peers, and react wisely when things seem difficult to overcome.

During her 10 months in Seattle, Florine notes that she struggled to be a part of the group since she was the only Haitian student. She no longer feels that way. "I now count the other students as some of my best friends. Their friendship is really important to me and something I never thought could actually happen, but it turned out that they have a special place in my heart no matter how far away we are. I am grateful for the other students, for my mentors, and especially for my host family."

Giving back to NPH is important to Florine, and this summer she is back in Haiti working with the youngest children at the home in Kenscoff. She says, **"Seattle is now a place for me where I learned to face my fears, be more confident, and take risks. I learned about my weaknesses and how I can transform them into something positive... It is a great feeling to see that people believe in you."**





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# Nelson Leonardo Alvarez Hernandez

## Class of 2015, NPH Honduras

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Nelson lives in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, where he rents an apartment with a few friends from NPH. He is a full-time student at the National University where he was pursuing a degree in linguistics. Though he enjoyed that area of study, his time in Seattle offered space to discover a side of himself he wouldn't have discovered otherwise, and it gave him time to think about his future, which has in turn led him to apply for a degree change. Beginning next year, Nelson will be studying social work, because he says, "I want to equip myself to better help my brothers and sisters in NPH. Also, I want to do something that makes me happy."



In what little free time he has, Nelson volunteers at NPH Honduras with the Transportation and Maintenance teams. Looking back on his time in Seattle, Nelson reminisces, "The leadership program has been one of the most exciting moments in my life. I am fortunate and grateful for the relationships I fostered while in Seattle...I also learned to see and understand the relevance of NPH in my life in new ways and to appreciate family and community even more." He goes on to say, **"The Seattle Institute is nothing but a clear continuation of Father Wasson's legacy. I am more than honored to have had the chance to be a part of it, and I am impressed to see the work of the alumni thanks to the leadership skills they acquired through the program."**

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# Jonathan Palma Morales

## Class of 2016, NPH Guatemala

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Jonathan will return to home in July of 2016 to complete his university studies in engineering, while continuing to support NPH Guatemala however he can. Reflecting on his time in Seattle, Jonathan uses words such as: gratitude, support, learning, community, culture, and “calidad” [quality]. He says, “I learned many valuable leadership skills in Seattle. **We learned about empowerment instead of giving out orders. I learned to be a servant leader by being with others when they need me. It is by accompanying others in what they are doing that we are able to empower them.**

“Before the Seattle Institute, I always thought that a leader should give orders, but now I believe a leader is humble, compassionate, caring, and always on his/her feet to help. A leader is a guide and an example.” He continues, “My goal before I came to Seattle was to learn to better serve NPH. Now, I am proud to say that I have learned that and much more. I have learned to take care of myself while taking care of others and to be thoughtful with the personal decisions I make that affect others. I am now ready to go back and share what I have learned with my brothers and sisters and to help them in their personal growth... Seattle holds a dear and wonderful place in my heart, and I am so thankful to everyone who made this possible.”

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# Irene Cruz Hernandez

## Class of 2016, NPH Mexico

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Irene will return to Mexico in July of 2016 to begin her university studies in Monterrey. She intends to study International Business. She is clear that she wants to do many things for her NPH family in the future, and if it is possible to work for NPH she will be thrilled to do so. Reflecting on her time in Seattle, Irene says, **"I really did not understand before how many people**

**were supporting us, but through the fundraising events we have participated in, I have seen our donors' time and love, and my perspective has changed. I have learned that many people want to help us achieve our dreams, and we need to give our best and never forget all those who have stood behind us."**

Understanding her life and story, as well as the stories of others, was important for Irene in Seattle. She learned that before she can help anyone else or make any changes in NPH, she needs to begin with herself. She tells us, "This program is very important for NPH's future... you learn a lot about leadership, setting goals, and continuing what Father Wasson started so many years ago."



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# Jean Louis Frechette Alberto

Class of 2016, NPFS Haiti

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Alberto has a heart for his NPH family that makes him want to serve NPH in the future. He has a desire to be an example for the other young people in Haiti. He wants to be a person they can talk to when they need help. In Seattle, he met many people who have had a deep impact on his life. First, he mentions the Fittons, his host family: "I have never lived with a small family because I came to NPH as a baby.



They supported me whenever and however possible. Learning a new language can feel like being a kid again, and they helped me with that. I appreciate and cherish every second I had with them. Now I have an international family." He also mentions gratitude towards his mentors, classmates, and everyone who contributes to this program. Alberto says, **"Now I see why this program is important for us. It brings hope to our NPH family. It shows a continuity of Father Wasson's work and keeps his dream alive by providing valuable skills to us, the leaders of tomorrow."**

In Seattle, Alberto grew personally and intellectually: "Through the many leadership activities we did, I learned to be a servant leader, I learned to speak in public effectively, and I learned that a leader does not have to be explicitly in charge. What I know now is that anyone can be a leader, no matter their age, gender, or background. Being a leader depends on your willingness and ability to treat others with love and respect and to stand up for what is right." Though sad to leave his community here, Alberto says he can't wait to return to Haiti and share his experiences with his brothers and sisters.

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# Marlen Suyapa Cordova Rosales

## Class of 2016, NPH Honduras

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Suyapa will return to Honduras in July where she plans to pursue a degree in nursing while working at the Rancho Santa Fe Clinic to gain more experience and give back to NPH.

In Seattle, she has learned more about herself, working in a team and trusting others: **"I remember one of our first retreats was on teambuilding. It was very hard for me to open up and learn how to trust the other members of the group. I knew then that this year would challenge me in new ways, and it has! I have learned to open my mind and heart more, and now I know that working together leads to better results."**

Suyapa values the time she has had with her family and the other students while in Seattle and knows she will miss them when she leaves. The experiences she has had with them have helped her to learn and grow as a person and a leader. Reflecting on the impact of her time here, Suyapa says, "The Seattle Institute has helped us learn to be

adaptable leaders, develop our skills, and has given us the opportunity to make our NPH family better for our brothers and sisters."





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## Julio Cesar Avalos Murcia

Class of 2016, NPH El Salvador

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According to Julio, The Seattle Institute is the next step in serving his NPH family. He knows that he has learned a lot in Seattle and says, **"This is an essential program that provides us with the necessary skills to serve not only NPH, but our home country. Leadership skills are desperately needed in the world today."**



Through his time in Seattle, Julio has built strong relationships with many people, including his host family, the Saldanas, the other NPH students, his mentors, and his classmates. He has also learned to tell his story. He reflects, "I have strengthened my personal and leadership skills, and the program taught me how to share my story. I love the idea of telling my story now. It helped me to write it, practice it, and share it, giving me strength and empowering me to be proud of who I am. Now, I want to tell my story very loudly so that people can hear how amazing NPH has been to me."

When Julio returns to El Salvador in July, he knows he will continue to learn. "We have learned to continue to improve ourselves and to use and share what we have been taught here in Seattle. This is a learning process, and it is not finished. While serving NPH, we are taught how to continue growing and helping others to do the same for the future of our family."

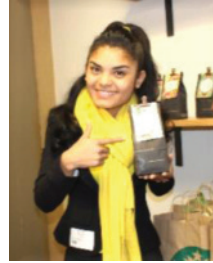
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# Mirna Azucena Sotelo Oporta

## Class of 2016, NPH Nicaragua

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Mirna says that coming to Seattle was the best decision of her life. Here, she has improved her leadership skills and English and has learned more about the fundraising side of NPH. She says, **"The exposure to new cultures and a new environment has certainly shaped the way I now see the world."** Having a family and community by your side during your personal growth is the best you could ask for. The Tapias and the Buchholz family did that for me. The Seattle Institute has motivated me to help everyone back home feel safe and encouraged to pursue their dreams and goals in life."



Mirna will return to Nicaragua with a new idea of what it means to be a leader: "Before coming to Seattle, I did not know the true definition of a leader or

what it means to be a good listener. I have learned that first, a leader must listen and have a desire for service." Having the opportunities in Seattle to help with fundraising, volunteer at local nonprofits, and share her lunch with a woman living on the streets of Seattle has helped Mirna realize just how much she has to offer others. Now, she says, "I have come to realize that everything is possible. I want to share this experience with others and give them space where they can experience the hope I feel."

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# The Seattle Institute

## *How to Help*

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For the first four years of the program, primary funding was provided by a seed grant from a generous NPH supporter in Chicago. Starting in 2015-16, the Northwest Region of NPH USA is funding the Institute through special events and generous contributions from our donors. Here is how you can help:

**\$10,000** will provide all tuition for one of our students at Seattle Central College. You will be able to meet the student and we will provide ongoing updates on his/her progress.

**\$5,000** will cover all local transportation for the students throughout their year in Seattle. Our students take the bus everywhere – to school every day, to events and meetings, and we provide bus passes so that they may affordably and independently get around Seattle.

**\$2,500** will provide health insurance and all medical costs for one of our students this year. While they are in Seattle, we purchase health insurance for our students so that they may stay healthy and take care of pressing health concerns.

**Become a godparent to one of our students.** Older students at NPH, including our leadership students, do not have many sponsors. With a recommended donation of \$50/month or more, you can give one of our students the support s/he needs.

**Gifts of any size are welcome and will help support our important leadership development work!**

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**To make a gift, please call (425) 646-3935 or visit [nphusa.org/institute](http://nphusa.org/institute)**

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2014 - 2015



2015 - 2016

Founded in 1954, Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos (NPH, Spanish for "Our Little Brothers and Sisters") operates homes, healthcare and educational programs in Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Peru.

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