



All Things Ignatian



Institute for Latin American Concern (ILAC)

ILAC History

ILAC was founded in 1972 by two Jesuit priests, Fr. Ernesto Travieso, S.J. and Fr. Narciso Sanchez, S.J. as a way to conscientize Jesuit seminarians by exposing them to the reality of people living in developing countries. In the mid-1970's, Creighton began to send health science students and professionals to deliver health care on a personal and intimate level to rural farmers. In 1982, ILAC started to work with community-selected health promoters who received six weeks of health care training in Santiago and then were charged with returning to their communities as invaluable resource persons. The health promoters have played and continue to play an integral role in ILAC's programs. Currently, there are currently 189 health promoters in 166 communities in the Dominican Republic.

ILAC Mission

The ILAC Center in the Dominican Republic is an international, Christian, Ignatian-inspired, collaborative health care and educational organization that exists to promote the integral well-being and spiritual growth of all its participants. The ILAC Office at CU partners with the ILAC Center to organize and facilitate experiences for 550 participants in 25 high school, university, and surgical programs annually.

Surgical Programs

ILAC facilitates trips for 8 medical and surgical teams that spend a week screening patients, performing surgeries, training local Dominican doctors and medical students, and performing follow-up with their patients at the state-of-the-art ILAC surgical center on the ILAC grounds. The various teams serve a diverse set of needs, including hernia, eye, and orthopedic patients as well as patients with ear, nose, and throat problems. In 2011, the teams provided 550 surgeries and more than 1,500 evaluations. The Creighton Hernia group performed the 1000th ILAC hernia surgery this year on a young girl pictured below.



CU Programs

CU programs include educational tours, language study, spiritual reflections, home stays with families, and opportunities for students to use their gifts and talents in the service of rural Dominicans. In 2011, the CU groups accomplished the following:

Summer Health Care Program. Seventy students and 30 professionals provided health care for over 3,000 patients in five weeks.

Occupational Therapy Program. Seventeen OT students and professionals treated 150 patients and educated 45 health promoters in three weeks.

Physical Therapy Program. Forty-one PT students and professionals had over 1,000 contacts with patients and provided educational talks in a month-long rotation.

Law Program. The group painted a school in the community of La Guamita de Hatillo and visited the Dominican-Haitian border and the Supreme Court.

Water Quality Program. The group visited 22 communities and inspected 500 water filters finding a dramatic decrease in percentage of non-functioning filters from 20% in 2010 to 7.2% in 2011.

Elective OB/GYN Rotation. Evaluated 15-35 patients per day during eight Women's Health Days in eight *campos* and at the ILAC Center.



High School Programs

Seven high schools from around the United States participate in programs through ILAC. They learn about various human rights and social justice issues throughout their trip. The highlight for the students is a home stay with a Dominican family in a rural community where they also complete a service project. In 2011, they painted and repaired a community center and a church, constructed 53 latrines, and poured three cement floors.



Sponsored by the Creighton University Jesuit Community, in association with the Deglman Center for Ignatian Spirituality.

