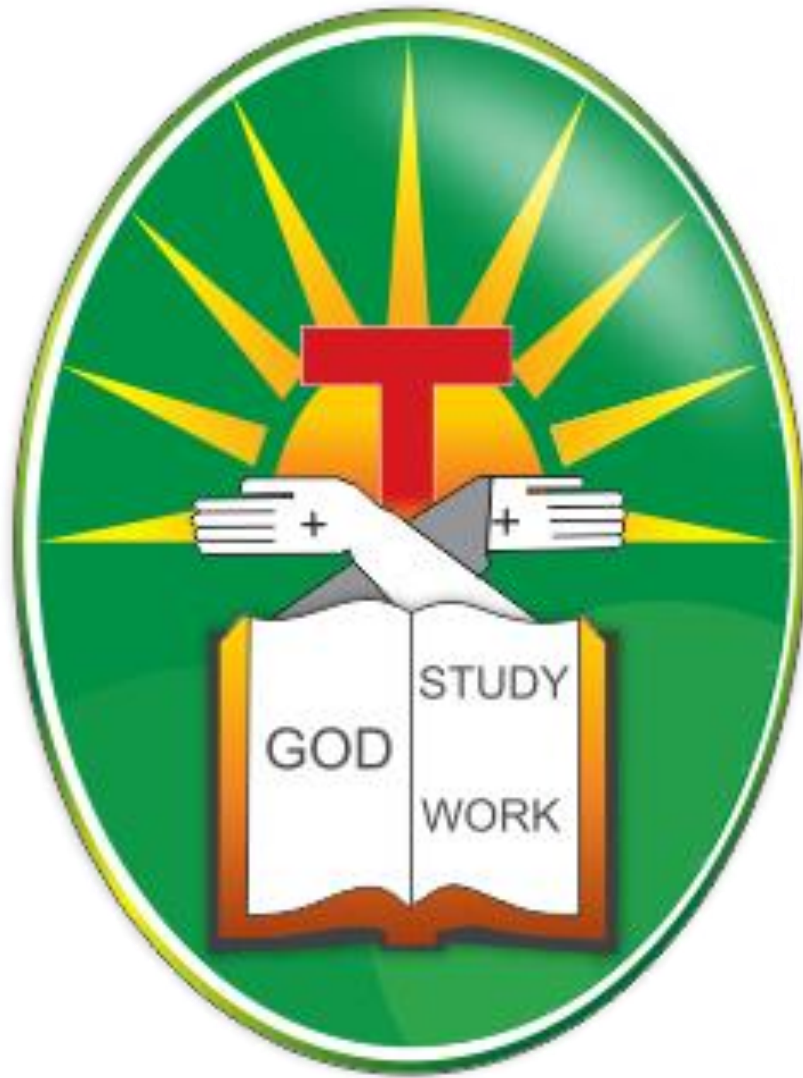


APUFRAM INTERNATIONAL



VISITOR GUIDEBOOK

APUFRAM

INTERNATIONAL

GUIDEBOOK

*APUFRAM INTERNATIONAL REMAINS DEDICATED
TO SUPPORTING THE VISION OF FR. EMIL COOK
AND APUFRAM: HELPING THE POOR HELP
THEMSELVES THROUGH CHRIST-CENTERED EDUCATION
AT SITES IN HONDURAS AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC.*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT
WWW.APUFRAM.ORG**

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Introduction

Dear APUFRAM Volunteer,

Thank you for answering God's call to serve the children and mothers of APUFRAM!

What an exciting time to be planning a visit to Honduras and spend time with some truly amazing people. Regardless of your location, time commitment, or experience with APUFRAM, this will be an amazing journey as a person. God will touch your life in ways you can never imagine, and we hope that you embrace this experience and share it with others who might also be called to serve the poor in Honduras or the Dominican Republic.

This guidebook has been created to address many of the questions that volunteers have when supporting Father and the mission. However, we encourage you to contact any of the board members or volunteers whose contact information is listed in the back of this booklet.

Oftentimes volunteers have unique situations when fundraising or with specific groups or individuals. APUFRAM International understands those situations and will address them as they arise. Certain regulations have been put into place to provide for the safety and wellbeing of the children, abandoned mothers, and volunteers. If you have any questions, please contact any board member.

Thank you for hearing God's call, for your time and talents, and for helping to provide these children with an education, hope, and a future!

APUFRAM International

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HISTORY OF APUFRAM

APUFRAM is a civil non-profit organization with Catholic orientation that currently operates in eight departments within Honduras as well as in the Dominican Republic.

APUFRAM is an acronym for "Asociación Pueblo Franciscano de Muchachos y Muchachas," which translates as "Association of Franciscan Boys Towns and Girls Towns." It was established in 1986 by the first university graduates for whom Father Emil Cook made it possible to receive an education.

APUFRAM's purpose is to provide academic and spiritual education to the poor children of Honduras and the Dominican Republic. Since their formation, they have been committed to their motto, "God, Study, Work," and to offering the poor the same opportunities they were provided.

Today APUFRAM operates a number of elementary and high schools, boys and girls boarding homes, a trade school, university housing, and a shelter for abandoned mothers and children.

They have educated thousands of young people who are now helping their communities in various fields, such as agriculture, business, engineering, law, medicine, and education.

Educational Model

APUFRAM has extended their model for success in providing needy children the opportunity for progression through elementary, junior high, and high school and onto university for those who are capable. The establishment of boarding schools and university housing is the hallmark of the APUFRAM educational model, which is now being implemented in the Dominican Republic as well as in Honduras.

APUFRAM is living Father Emil's message. Students and staff work to generate 60% of the revenue needed for sustenance. They:

- Farm and raise livestock to provide for much of their required food,
- Subsidize education costs via government grants, scholarships from the National University, and donations from local companies,
- Interact with other organizations to assist with essential needs, e.g., water filtration projects.

"By looking at you now, no one would think you went through this organization (APUFRAM), and with God's help you have succeeded. You are an example to follow for our family." – Jose Contreras, APUFRAM graduate

Ongoing projects include:

- Growing and harvesting the following crops either for sale or for use at their boarding facilities: coffee, palm oil, cacao (chocolate), coconuts, bananas, pineapples, yucca, mangoes, cashews, corn, soybeans, citrus crops, chili peppers, lychees, papayas, mahogany and pine trees;
- Raising for consumption at their sites or for sale: cattle (dairy and beef), chickens, ducks, turkeys, pigs and fish;
- Selling student arts and crafts;
- Operating grocery stores open to the general public at two of their sites;
- Recycling cans and plastic bottles.

Fr. Emil Cook

After Father Emil began his work in Honduras, members of Trinity Guadalupe Parish in Milwaukee, where he had been assistant pastor, provided additional support. Since then, many more have responded to his call. From service members stationed nearby at Soto Cano Air Base to a flood of volunteers from the U.S, Canada, Spain, France and Germany, he now has supporters all over the world.

Since the age of 12, William Francis Cook (aka Father Emil) wanted to serve the poor in Latin America. In March 1970 he arrived in Olancho, Honduras, where he soon became the parish priest for the municipalities of Gualaco and San Esteban. At that time living conditions were primitive: no electricity, no phones, and little food for the people. The nearest high school was two days away by horse, and only the rich could afford to attend school. With no access to education, the poor were condemned to poverty, and there was no way to break the cycle.

Fr. Emil's vision was to educate the poor so that the children could become self-sufficient as adults. Throughout his ministry, his goal was never to offer a "hand out" to the poor and "give them a fish." Instead, his aim was to "teach them to fish" and enable the poor to become self-sufficient and accept help via a "hands up" philosophy.

Fr. Emil has been serving Christ's poor by providing a God-centered education to children in Honduras for 50 years. Within 16 years of his arrival in Honduras, university graduates who benefited from his work were inspired to provide the poor the same opportunities they received only years before. In 1986 these individuals organized to form APUFRAM in Honduras, and the association's operation was later extended in 2004 to include two sites in the Dominican Republic. APUFRAM is a nonprofit civil organization in Honduras and the Dominican Republic that operates schools and homes for poor students and abandoned mothers. Young people and mothers of all faiths are accepted. The teaching is God-integrated and Catholic in orientation.

Father Emil and APUFRAM have educated thousands of students over the years. Many are now adults, have started their own families, and are able to provide better opportunity for their own children. Some serve as civic leaders in their communities. All have learned to appreciate the value of hard work and a Christ-centered education.

In rural areas of Honduras, almost 60% of the youth do not complete the sixth grade. Many do not continue their education beyond the third grade. Of those who complete third grade, seventy percent do not continue their education beyond the sixth grade.

Honduras remains one of the poorest countries in the western hemisphere.

Poverty Problems

- On average, only one-third of Honduran children attend school past the primary level, resulting in decreased availability of qualified labor, productivity, and income generation. Only 50% of the students in the Dominican Republic graduate from primary school (K-8th grade).
- Child labor – An estimated 384,000 young people between the ages of five and 18 are employed.
- 51-60% of Hondurans live below the poverty line – the poverty line is \$1.45 per day/person (statistics differ). In the Dominican Republic, one in ten children work; many of them are exploited in areas of agriculture, while others become victims to prostitution or human trafficking.
- There is a huge gap between the rich and the poor which results in a very unequal society.
- Physician to people ratio is similar in both countries = 0.57 per 1,000 people.
- Unemployment rate: 28%, although it is much lower in the Dominican Republic in areas where tourism is high.
- HIV/AIDS – The Honduran city of San Pedro Sula is estimated to have the second highest number of HIV/AIDS cases in the world. Seventy percent of all Central American HIV/AIDS cases are found in Honduras. One out of 100 people living in Honduras is infected with HIV. The Dominican Republic reports that about one percent of the population has been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS, with the highest percentage being found in areas of poverty.

Comparisons to U.S.

	Literacy Rate	% Using Sanitation	Life Expectancy	Under 5 Mortality Rate	GPA per Capita
Honduras	80%	Urban:87% Rural: 54%	Male: 67.8 Female:71	27/ 1,000	\$4,300
United States	90%	Urban: 100% Rural: 100%	Male: 75.2 Female:81.1	8/ 1,000	\$45,800
Dominican Republic	93%	Urban:86% Rural: 84%	Male: 70.6 Female:76.6	28.5/ 1,000	\$7,750



Pope Francis calls each of us as Christians, as Catholics, to reach out to the poor.

PREPARING FOR A VISIT

So, you've decided to take a group to Honduras--good for you! God will certainly bless you and your group ten times over. To ensure the success of your trip, the following list of recommendations is provided to guide you in your fundraising, planning, travels, and reflection of this life altering experience.

1. Trust that God is in control, and He has a plan for you and your group.
2. Remember that prayer is an essential part of any successful mission trip.
3. Select dates for your trip; determine the number of people you are willing to take in your group; establish guidelines to be followed in the group's make up, such as age and gender of members; decide whether any side trips will be taken while in Honduras; finalize expectations of what your group will be doing while at the mission, and determine all costs involved with the trip plus any additional responsibilities of team members. Remember to check with the AI volunteer coordinator to reserve your team's travel dates and rooms. The email address is printed in the back of this handbook and on the website.
4. Advertise your trip with the date and guidelines of the trip. Provide contact information in your advertisement for those with questions.
5. Set an initial meeting date, time and place.
6. After beginning the initial meeting with a prayer, start by providing details of all costs involved with the trip, the dates of the trip, and discuss the already determined trip expectations. It is also helpful to explain the history of APUFRAM and Honduras, and to talk about your personal experience (people may want to participate, but they need reassurance!). Next, gather contact information from the meeting participants and establish the next meeting date. Conclude with a prayer.
7. At the second meeting, team members should be established. A timeline and checklist need to be created to ensure organization and confidence in the team volunteers. At this meeting designate the responsibilities of each volunteer, especially if you have fundraising events. No one should have to do all the work.
8. All meetings should begin and end with prayer. Remember the focus is about doing God's will.
9. It is always helpful to collect a trip deposit to ensure a commitment from all team members.
10. Passports are required when traveling to Honduras. Be sure that all team members have a current passport that will not expire for six months after your trip's scheduled departure. The cost to renew a passport for an adult is \$110 (more if for a first time applicant) and a little less for a minor under age 16. It will take about six weeks to obtain. Passport photos can be purchased at the post office, local office supply stores, Walgreens, and many copy stores.

11. APUFRAM International has a different application process in place for volunteers who plan to visit, depending upon whether they are a member of a group or are an individual volunteer, either short or long-term (defined as a stay over 28 days). All group leaders, as well as individual volunteers, must undergo VIRTUS training or any other approved child protection training before arriving at the mission. Individual long-term volunteers are also subject to a background check.
12. Medical – Any person traveling to Honduras needs to be aware of the conditions in a developing country, and certain precautions are recommended. Check on the CDC or state department website for any recommended vaccinations or medicines before traveling. These might include hepatitis A & B, typhus, and tetanus update shots and malarial preventative medicine. Note: The guest house is located in a rural area of the country, and malaria might be present. Many groups find it helpful to include a first aid kit in their packing. APUFRAM does have a physician available in emergencies.
13. Registering your trip with the United States Embassy is recommended. Once your flight plans are completed, go online to register in the State Department Safe Travel Enrollment Program (STEP): <https://step.state.gov/>
14. Water – The drinking water throughout most of Honduras and the Dominican Republic is **unsafe** to drink. To reduce the chance of sickness, all volunteers need to drink bottled water or the water provided at the guesthouse. If dining in a restaurant in the local area, it is usually best to avoid eating raw unpeeled fruit and leafy vegetables as they may have been rinsed with tap water. It is also prudent to avoid ice in drinks and stick with bottled water or sodas at restaurants.
15. If fundraising is a part of your team experience, read the recommendations under “fundraising” in this booklet.
16. Dress – In respect for the local people and the mission, APUFRAM has a dress code for all volunteers. Women: No short shorts or skirts, halter tops, or shirts with offensive symbols or messages should be worn. Men: No short shorts, running shorts, etc., tank shirts, or shirts with offensive symbols or messages should be worn. Dress for Mass should be long pants or jeans, skirts or dresses for women and long pants or jeans for men. If your team is planning to do manual labor while at the mission, plan to bring work gloves and safety goggles for your team members. A light jacket and/or rain poncho is also a good idea.
17. Spiritual obligation – Volunteers are expected to participate in daily services at the guesthouse, and team retreats are encouraged. Nightly reflections are helpful to process the mission experience as members witness God’s love in Honduras and the DR.
18. Food and Housing – Housing and daily meals are provided for volunteers at the guesthouse for a set fee. You should contact the volunteer coordinator to find out the current daily fee being charged. Meals provided are usually traditional Honduran meals that consist of meat, vegetables, fruits, beans, rice, and tortillas. The food is excellent and enhances the Honduran experience.

19. Donations to the mission – Rather than bringing a lot of donations of clothing, etc. from the U.S. which would entail paying the airline’s extra checked bag fees, it is recommended that groups bring cash so that they can purchase needed items in Honduras. In this way, it can be determined what is most needed at the schools and boarding facilities before doing any shopping. Group leaders should also remember that their group may be asked to transport items sent to them by APUFRAM International to the mission.
20. Each member of your group should bring two twin bed sheets and towels for their own use while at the mission and should plan to leave them there as a donation upon departure.
21. Legal responsibilities – Both individual volunteers and members of groups are required to sign a “release of liability” form before they travel to the mission.
22. Guesthouse rules – see section below
23. Electricity: It’s the same 110 volts/60 amps as in the U.S., so there is no need for adapters. The power grid in Honduras is quite reliable and damage from power spikes is rare. Still a good surge suppressor doesn’t hurt for use with sensitive electronics.
24. Transportation – APUFRAM provides transportation to and from the airport for groups, and, in certain circumstances, transportation required to carry out work projects is also provided. Otherwise, there are local busses that run about every 20 minutes from six a.m. to six p.m. The bus stop is a short walk to the main road where you will wait for the correct bus that will take you to your desired destination. The cost is minimal for a bus ride to mission headquarters at Flores or to the nearby city of Comayagua. It is wise to have smaller bills (lempiras) on hand for this purpose.
25. Communication – There is cell phone coverage throughout most of Honduras.

The guesthouse/Visitor Center has a WiFi Network available, if purchased by the group in advance. Access to the network is determined by the group leader.

Due to the constant changing of cell phone plans and carriers, it is recommended that you contact your personal cell phone carrier to discuss international options. Many carriers offer a thirty-day international plan for a small fee. *But remember, you are on a mission trip and the experience is not complete if you are regularly checking your messages.*

26. Money - It is best to exchange money while still at the airport as they usually have the best exchange rates. Money can also be exchanged at the local bank. It is advisable to exchange 50 to 100 dollars per person depending upon your team’s goals and objectives. The mission has very little money available for exchanging and will only do so under special circumstances. Since credit cards and travelers’ checks are used in very few places, it is not recommended that you bring them. It is best to bring cash to exchange for the local currency. You might also coordinate with your bank prior to

leaving the United States to use an ATM machine, when available. When carrying cash (U.S. dollars or Honduran Lempira or Dominican Peso), divide it up so that all of it is not kept in one pocket or place. Do not pack money in your suitcases. With the increased travel abroad, is it becoming customary to tip in Honduras and the Dominican Republic.

27. Immigration and Customs - You will need to fill out travel documentation including a customs form while on the plane. Be sure to complete all travel documentation before landing—the customs form will be submitted to authorities at the airport. You will need to keep the yellow copy of the immigration form you will receive at the airport as you will have to return it before departing. If anyone asks, tell them you are traveling as a tourist and will be staying with Fr. Emil Cook at *APUFRAM, Flores, Comayagua, Honduras*. For the Dominican Republic the address is *St. Francis Boarding House, APUFRAM Mission, Carretera Sanchez, Kilometro 10, Estabania Azua, DR*.

28. You will need to watch your luggage at all times while inside and exiting the airport. There are porters there who will be determined to help you and will then request a tip. You should follow the lead of your group leaders concerning this.

** To expedite going through customs, be sure all medications are still sealed in their original clearly marked containers and have current expiration dates. Customs usually will not allow outdated medications. You may have to explain why you are carrying large quantities of some things. Remember to watch your bags and the agents. It is recommended that you prominently mark each piece of luggage with the APUFRAM address inside each piece of luggage on your departure day.

29. Alcohol - Alcohol is PROHIBITED at APUFRAM, including the nearby towns and villages. It is important for us to be good examples to the local community, many of whom are alcohol dependent.

If your team includes young adults under the age of 21, here are a few additional suggestions for your trip:

1. If a team member is under the age of 18, you will need a notarized letter from his/her parents stating that you have permission from them to travel with their child, and that you have permission to seek medical care for them, if necessary. If the parents are divorced, both of them must write a letter.
2. Obtain and keep emergency contact information on each team member, a list of any allergies and current medications, a copy of their passport (in case it gets lost), and a certified travel letter (if under 18). These documents should be held by the team leader.
3. As a precaution, some teams bring nonperishable foods in case of sickness – dry soup, peanut butter, apple sauce, power drinks, etc. This eases the transition from upset stomach to Honduran food, if necessary, and can assist in warding off dehydration.

4. High intake of safe drinking water is essential to ensure EVERYONE stays hydrated and healthy on the trip! Many people are not accustomed to the heat in Honduras and can become dehydrated very quickly if doing manual labor. As a team leader, it is ESSENTIAL that you observe your team members drinking plenty of water on a regular basis.
5. Respect the house rules and other visitors by enforcing these rules with your team. Teens can have an awesome experience as a mission team member, but they also require adult supervision and clear expectations.
6. If your group includes teens, it is recommended that all team members and their parents sign the team rules and responsibilities agreement prior to departure from the United States. Explain this to the teens and their parents. ***Remember you are leaving the United States and are a visitor to Honduras, the Dominican Republic and APUFRAM.***
7. Provide parents with an emergency contact number BUT remember to remind parents that Honduras and the Dominican Republic is a third-world country, and that communication is extremely limited. So a good rule to follow is – “No news is good news!”

What Should I Pack?

A packing list is including on page 21 of this document for your convenience. Remember to pack light; clothes can be washed at the guesthouse. Cotton is cooler when traveling to a tropical climate. Appropriate attire is required when visiting other sites and for Mass.

When at a work site, shorts/pants and t-shirts work best. The airlines will allow two checked suitcases at 50 lbs. each and one carry-on at 40 lbs. (Most airlines charge fees for checked luggage). You can also have a purse, camera, or pillow as a carry on. You should bring twin bed sheets and towels for your own use while at the mission and plan to leave them there when you depart. It is always a good idea to pack some personal items in your carry-on, just in case some luggage gets lost or delayed. If you decide to pack a few snacks, remember that chocolate melts and food attracts bugs, so keep food to a minimum. Marking all luggage with bright plastic tape around the handles helps with finding and keeping control of the luggage upon arrival at the airport. You might also be asked to carry donated items such as rosaries and other religious articles with you, as well as correspondence from sponsors and letters addressed to Father Emil.

Long Term Volunteers and Individual Travel

Some volunteers plan to visit alone or for a longer period of time. If you choose to volunteer for longer than four weeks, you will be considered a “long term volunteer.” Below are the guidelines for long term volunteers and individuals who are not part of a group, regardless of the length of their stay at the mission.

If you are interested in becoming a long-term volunteer or traveling to the mission as an individual, it is important to communicate with the volunteer coordinator prior to making any arrangements to travel. APUFRAM International has specific guidelines that must be followed in order to ensure the wellbeing of the children being served at the mission. Once you have decided to become a volunteer, contact the volunteer coordinator at APUFRAM International to begin the process.

Once the volunteer packet has been completed and submitted, VIRTUS training has been verified, and your visit has been approved, you can begin to make travel arrangements. Long-term volunteers are also subject to a background check and will be interviewed by the AI Volunteer Coordinator and/or members of the AI Board of Directors Volunteer Committee before being accepted.

For a short-term and long-term volunteer applications:

<https://www.apufram.org/1/250/volunteer.asp>

"I volunteered in Honduras as a teenager about 10 years ago. It was one of the most life changing experiences. I would go again in a heartbeat and, in fact, plan to return when my children are old enough to come as volunteers themselves! Taking a volunteer trip to APUFRAM is so much more valuable and rewarding than any other summer vacation plans." – Margaret Bilodeau

Guest House Rules

¡Bienvenidos a Casa Santa Teresa de Lisieux!

In order to make your experience of community living more comfortable, we ask you and your team to keep in mind the following rules and considerations:

Praying in Community

All missionaries are expected to attend all liturgical celebrations scheduled throughout the day. Although the Blessed Sacrament is not always present, please be reverent and respectful in your behavior inside the chapel.

Living in Community

- Please do not flush the toilet paper (the pipes cannot handle it).
- Please do not litter. Trash should be placed in the bins located on each corner of the house or taken directly to the burn pit.
- Please turn off water, lights, and ceiling fans when not in use.
- Quiet hours are strictly observed beginning at 10 p.m.
- Casa Santa Teresa de Lisieux is for missionaries only. For safety and security reasons, please do not allow anyone else inside.
- Consumption of alcohol is prohibited during your stay at APUFRAM. This includes both on mission sites and in the surrounding communities.
- Smoking is not allowed in the buildings or anywhere in front of the children. Please be discreet when smoking.
- The front and back gates of the house are locked every night and during the day when all missionaries leave the building. There are armed guards who work at the mission at night. There is no reason for alarm - this is standard practice in Honduras.
- Before departure, please put all donated items and used linens in a bag or pillowcase and place these outside your door.

Food

Three meals are provided every day except Sunday:

- El Desayuno (Breakfast) - following Morning Prayer, usually between 7:00 and 8:00 AM
- El Almuerzo (Lunch) - following Noon Prayers

- La Cena (Supper) - following Evening Prayer, around 6:00 PM

Volunteer groups are asked to be responsible for washing all plates, bowls, cups, utensils, and serving dishes after enjoying their meals.

- Bottled water is provided for all missionaries in the dining room.

For those traveling to the Dominican Republic – Your rooms will be made available within the boarding facilities in Estabania. The rooms are similar to the guesthouse in Honduras, but meals will be provided with the students. All house rules are the same.

Finances

Room and board fees should be mailed prior to a trip to: **APUFRAM International P.O. Box 10085 Russellville, AR 72812**. For current room rate charges contact: volunteer@apufрам.org

In addition to room and board fees, all groups are asked to pay a \$20 per person transportation fee.

Any other monetary donations should be given to Father Emil or the APUFRAM administration. Remember that APUFRAM International cannot give an acknowledgement of contribution receipt for tax purposes for donations that do not go through the AI account.

Please do not give money, toys, or gifts of any kind directly to the children. Instead, give them your time and attention by playing games with them, working on arts and crafts projects or coloring books together, reading to them or simply having a conversation with them. Should you have a sponsored child, please refer to the Sponsorship section of this booklet for answers to your questions concerning gifts. The Hondurans who work with us are paid employees. They do not need nor expect extra money or tips.

Communication and Transportation

The phone and fax machine, located in Flores, are for initial and emergency contact only. In the Dominican, the phone and internet is available onsite.

APUFRAM provides transportation to and from the airport and in certain circumstances transports volunteers to their work project sites or other APUFRAM sites. You are responsible for all other transportation and costs. Many volunteers use public buses as they are a cheap, safe, and easy way to travel.

Though we encourage you to carry your passport with you at all times, it is most important when you are traveling into town or throughout the country.

This is only an abbreviated list of house information. For a more extensive list, please refer to the House Rules and the Long-term or Group Volunteer Information documents you will receive from the Volunteer Coordinator before your departure for the mission. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to ask the Volunteer Coordinator, the Guesthouse Director, Work Project Coordinator, or a long-term volunteer, should one be at the mission.

CULTURE OF HONDURAS and THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The second largest country in Central America, with an area of 43,277 square miles, Honduras is shaped like a triangle. Its dimensions are about 200 miles from North to South, and 400 miles from East to West. It has a 400-mile coast on the Caribbean and a 40-mile coast on the Pacific. The bordering countries are Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala.

Like the rest of Central America, modern Honduras grew out of the Spanish conquest of the indigenous people.

There are two seasons in Honduras -- the dry season and the wet season. The dry season runs from November to April. The rest of the year is wet, especially September and October. The coolest time is December; the warmest is May. Of course, there is considerable variety depending on altitude and location.

The Dominican Republic covers about 48,730 square kilometers which includes land and inland water bodies. The country, in land area comparison, is slightly larger than twice the size of the U.S. state of New Hampshire. About 275 kilometers of the Dominican Republic borders Haiti to the west.

Currently, APUFRAM operates two sites in the Dominican Republic: a student boarding facility located in Estabania in the province of Azua on the southern coast and a university house in Santo Domingo. The facility in Estabania houses 23 students who attend the local public school, while the Santo Domingo facility, located within walking distance of the university, houses 20 students.

When visiting Honduras or the Dominican Republic, many United States citizens enjoy a life altering experience. Both countries have a relaxing environment with many of the comforts of home, just not as readily available. The work is hard, and the pace is slow. A quick trip to the store can be a day long adventure. The people are welcoming and very friendly. The country is beautiful with lush vegetation and scenic vistas throughout the countryside.

Nevertheless, the poverty in Honduras is oppressive and apparent throughout the country. The Dominican Republic also has extreme poverty, most often witnessed in the rural areas of the country. The needs are great, and education and opportunities are limited. In spite of these things, they are proud people who appreciate each day and give thanks for their blessings.

Embracing the culture, spending time with the people and understanding and accepting the cultural differences will enhance your experience. Experience either Honduras or the Dominican Republic and fall in love with the people!

Cultural Differences: USA vs. Honduras and the Dominican Republic

Meetings (Time) -- It's not unusual (nor considered rude) for individuals to be late by as much as 2 hours to a meeting (business or personal).

Conversations -- In general, Hondurans tend to talk a lot to say one thing. This is especially true if the conversation is regarding a touchy subject (e.g. the deadline was not met; a favor is being asked; something that was promised is not available, etc...).

Food at Restaurants -- In general, it takes more time to get the food after being seated (as much as one hour to be served). This is more applicable if you visit authentic Honduran restaurants. In large urban areas it is not difficult to find American restaurants which tend to serve food faster (but do expect it to be slower than American restaurants in the U.S.). Tips are not common at small authentic restaurants. So, in many cases don't be surprised if the waitress returns the tip and doesn't accept it, or if it takes some convincing for the tip to be accepted.

Women in Business -- Women and men have the same rights under the Honduran constitution; however, in business, it is not uncommon for men wanting to do business or discuss contracts/agreements only with other men.

When there are job openings, it is legal for businesses to request applicants be only within a certain gender and age group.

Security -- Most businesses in Honduras are heavily guarded with armed men. This is the case with banks, grocery stores, shopping malls, etc. Most armed men are friendly, and they double as greeters for customers. In the Dominican Republic, because of the high level of tourism, you will not notice the security guards, however the security is present.

U.S. Persons -- Most Hondurans are friendly towards U.S. persons ("gringos"). People from the United States enjoy more "privileges" than Honduran civilians when it comes to dealing with the Military. The Dominican Republic welcomes U.S. persons, and they enjoy practicing their English.

Mass -- It is not unusual to witness Hondurans not receiving the Eucharist at Mass. Most often it is because they have not been to Confession prior to Mass. The opposite is true in the United States. Administration of the Sacrament of Communion is by intinction with the communicant receiving the host and then dipping the bread in wine and receiving both together.

The Dominican Republic is very similar to Honduras.

"I am very thankful to APUFRAM for the education provided to me from 7th grade to 12th and higher education assistance. I am very proud of many people who have gone through the program and come back to work with APUFRAM!" - Kevin Bueso, Apufram graduate

RESOURCES

Additional information about APUFRAM International

For additional information regarding APUFRAM, its history, mission, and opportunities visit AI's website at: **www.apufram.org**

Key Leaders are faithful supporters of APUFRAM and Father Emil who live in different regions of the U.S. They can assist you with answers to your specific questions about APUFRAM and the mission and provide recommendations and guidelines for any trip to Honduras. For additional information, check out the website at www.apufram.org, or for information regarding a key leader in your area, contact Denise Mason at Denise@apufram.org.

Sponsorship Program – Information about sponsoring an APUFRAM student is available online at www.apufram.org or by contacting the sponsorship coordinator at sponsor@apufram.org.

Volunteer information – For additional information about traveling to Honduras or volunteering with APUFRAM, visit the website at www.apufram.org or contact the volunteer coordinator at volunteer@apufram.org.

For additional information regarding team building or taking a team to Honduras, contact us at

questions@apufram.org

or by email:

Denise Mason at denise@apufram.org

Richard Landrigan at dick@apufram.org

Mary Eckart at mary@apufram.org

Current guidelines and travel recommendations are available at:

www.statedepartment.gov.

To register in the State Department Safe Travel Enrollment Program (STEP), go to the following website after you have confirmed travel dates:

<https://step.state.gov/>

For guidelines and recommendations for vaccinations, preventative medicines, etc., consult the CDC website: www.cdc.gov

CDC Recommendations for Traveling to Honduras and the Dominican Republic:

You should be up to date on routine vaccinations while traveling to any destination. Some vaccines may also be required for travel. These vaccines include measles mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria-pertussis tetanus vaccine, varicella (chickenpox) vaccine, and your yearly flu shot. Additional vaccines and medicines because there is a risk of these diseases in Honduras are:

1. Hepatitis A and B

CDC recommends this vaccine because you can get hepatitis A through contaminated food or water in Honduras, regardless of where you are eating or staying.

2. Typhoid

You can get typhoid through contaminated food or water in Honduras. CDC recommends this vaccine for most travelers, especially if you are staying with friends or relatives, visiting smaller cities or rural areas, or if you are an adventurous eater.

3. Malaria

Talk to your doctor about how to prevent malaria while traveling. You may need to take prescription medicine before, during, and after your trip to prevent malaria, especially if you are visiting low-altitude areas. See more detailed information about malaria in Honduras.

****** People who are taking long trips or moving to Honduras***

4. Yellow Fever

There is no risk of yellow fever in Honduras. The government of Honduras requires proof of yellow fever vaccination only if you are arriving from a country with risk of yellow fever. This does not include the US. If you are traveling from a country other than the US, check this list to see if you may be required to get the yellow fever vaccine:
Countries with risk of yellow fever virus (YFV) transmission.

For more information on recommendations and requirements, see yellow fever recommendations and requirements for Honduras. Your doctor can help you decide if this vaccine is right for you based on your travel plans.

"I am very thankful to APUFRAM for the education provided to me from 7th grade to 12th and higher education assistance. I am very proud of many people who have gone through the program and come back to work with APUFRAM!" - Kevin Bueso, Apufram graduate

Packing List

Passport holder /money belt

Camera / phone and charger

Flashlight and batteries

Sunscreen

Soap and Shampoo

Bug repellent

Screw top water bottle

Clothing – cotton is best

Shirts enough for a week

Shorts are appropriate at the guest house
and work – no short shorts

Long pants for work / going to town
(men) Pants, skirt (women)

Church Clothes

Sandals or flip flops / shower shoes

Work shoes (tennis shoes, boots, etc.)

Bathing suit

Mosquito net (twin bed size)

Sunglasses

Hat

Work gloves

Notebook / reading material

Bible or prayer book

Simple snacks

Toilet Paper – for emergencies

Plastic shopping bags (for bathroom
trash)

Personal care items

Hand sanitizer (small)

Personal medication (unopened in
original container)

2 Twin bed sheets for Honduras/
queen size for the DR**

Personal towels and washcloths**

*(**These items are always in need at
APUFRAM, and you are encouraged to
donate them when you leave)*

Additional packing list for group Leaders:

First aid kit, hand sanitizer, zip lock bags

Medical history / allergies, etc. of team members

Snacks – apple sauce, dry soup, peanut butter, crackers, and powder drinks, etc. (in case someone gets sick)

Copies of team member's passport (in case it gets lost)

Certified travel letter (if under 18).

Extra cash for emergencies (usually less than \$50)

Extra flashlights and batteries

Retreat / evening program information – prayers, activities, etc.

SPONSORING A CHILD

The Sponsorship Program plays an integral part in APUFRAM International's fundraising efforts for the work of our partners in Honduras. At the present time, over 200 young people attending APUFRAM schools have personal connections to their "padrinos" in the United States through the program. These students' sponsors make a commitment to donate a set amount of money which will be used to help provide them food, shelter, and the opportunity of an education. APUFRAM beneficiaries being sponsored range in age from pre-school through high school level and include the mothers at Margarita Cook.

How It Works

Individuals who choose to be sponsors are asked to donate \$30 monthly (or \$15 if they are students themselves). This is only a suggested amount—those who have the means are encouraged to give more, and lesser amounts are graciously accepted from those sponsors who are unable to send the suggested amounts. Sponsorship donations can be sent monthly, quarterly, annually or at whatever interval is convenient for the sponsor.

All sponsorship donations go into the general fund that supports all of the students at APUFRAM sites. In this way, each student receives benefits equally with no distinctions made between those children who have more supportive sponsors and those who don't.

"It is amazing how young children coming from rural areas reach APUFRAM and begin to develop their dreams and to explore their talents through painting, woodwork and agriculture. Thank you for all those kind-hearted donations that made it possible to prepare our youth for a future. Thank God for loving us and giving us life." – Roger Ernesto Montez, APUFRAM graduate and current APUFRAM board member

Why Assign Individual Students to Sponsors

If all sponsorship donations go into the general fund, the question is sometimes asked why individual students are assigned to our sponsors. The primary reason this is done is to give sponsors a personal link to the mission and to provide the children a link through their sponsors to another part of the world. Students are grateful that someone has a special interest in their wellbeing and progress in school. Through correspondence the student and sponsor can develop a personal relationship. The child will learn about life outside of their country, and the sponsor will learn about the realities of life lived in poverty and how they affect their student's view of the world. Should sponsors have the opportunity to travel to Honduras to visit the mission, they will be able to meet and visit with their sponsored boy or girl.

How to Become a Sponsor

Anyone interested in sponsoring a child should notify the sponsorship coordinator at sponsor@apufрам.org or via postal mail at the following address:

Sponsorship Coordinator:

APUFRAM International P.O. Box 10085 Russellville, AR 72812

If the interested individual has a preference with regard to age, gender, or educational level of a student, this should be specified in the correspondence. If they already know the name of the child or young person they would like to be assigned (perhaps they already met the child during a visit to the mission), they should inform the coordinator. After an assignment is made and the sponsor has been entered into the database, a confirmation letter will be sent to him/her. New sponsors will receive a letter with some personal information about their child and, in most instances, a photo of the student. Photos of the beneficiaries are usually taken annually after the first quarter of the school year (in May or June).

During Father Emil's annual visits, he customarily carries with him individual sponsor sign-up forms which include photos and information about students in need of sponsorship. These are specially prepared for him by APUFRAM for use on his trip and are not always available to prospective sponsors at other times. If a person signs up to sponsor in this manner, their personal information and the name of their chosen student are forwarded to the sponsorship coordinator by Father Emil.

Coordination of the sponsorship program is now handled in the U.S. A group of volunteers with proficiency in Spanish support the program by translating the student and sponsor letters. When necessary, the coordinator communicates with APUFRAM staff and Father Emil concerning details of the program.

Corresponding with the Student

Sponsors usually receive letters from their students twice a year—once in the Spring after the beginning of the school year in Honduras and once after its end in November. These letters are translated by volunteers in the U.S. before being sent to the sponsors. Photos of the students are usually sent to their sponsors with the Spring letters.

Sponsors may write letters to their students as often as they wish. If capable of doing so, padrinos should write their letters in Spanish. If not, their letters are translated into Spanish by U.S. volunteers before being sent to Honduras, usually with short term volunteers or groups who visit the mission. Because the children love getting them, sponsors are encouraged to send photos of themselves and their families to their sponsored students. Cards celebrating special days in a sponsored student's life (such as birthdays or holidays) may also be sent. All correspondence from a sponsor to his/her special young person should be sent to APUFRAM International at our address in Russellville.

Sending Gifts

Because there are few volunteer groups going to Honduras at this time, sponsors are asked not to send gifts for their sponsored children. It is cost prohibitive for both APUFRAM International (due to shipping costs) and APUFRAM (due to custom fees) to ship gifts by FedEx. However, if sponsors have the opportunity to travel to Honduras to meet their students in person, they are encouraged to bring them a small gift. These gifts should not be extravagant, and it is best that at least part of the gift be something that can be shared with friends and classmates. If a sponsor wishes to buy clothing items for their student, it is advisable to purchase these items in Honduras after they have met the child.

Sometimes sponsors wish to give monetary gifts to their students on special occasions, such as birthdays or Christmas. Little as the amount may be, this type of gift may cause serious problems between those who receive money and those who do not. For this reason, personal monetary donations cannot be accepted for delivery to a particular child and should not be given to the student personally. Sponsors who wish to remember their children on a special occasion with an extra gift may either donate to the general fund or to the individual student's boarding home in their honor.

Unique Program Makeup

APUFRAM International's sponsorship program differs from other programs in a unique way. The children in our program receive sponsorship as a result of their enrollment in the APUFRAM educational program. Therefore, if a student is withdrawn from one of APUFRAM's schools or boarding facilities, he/she is no longer eligible to receive assistance and, as a result, will lose sponsorship. This fact is the major cause of a higher than usual

reassignment rate of students to sponsors each year, primarily after the start of a new school year. Most other sponsorship programs provide assistance to a child independent of where they receive their education and have strict age limitations. Because of this, their lists of sponsored children are much less likely to change dramatically from year to year, with the exception, of course, of the addition of new children to their rosters.

Students do not return to the APUFRAM program for various reasons. Maybe their parents or guardians decide they are needed to stay home to work in order to help support the family financially. Perhaps they are incapable of meeting the high academic standards expected of them in the APUFRAM system, or they could be unwilling to put forth the effort to succeed in the classroom. Living away from home is hard for many children, especially those who are very young; their desire to go forward in life must be very strong. Over the past ten years the reduction in donations from sponsors and donors in the U.S. meant that APUFRAM had to close some sites, reduce the number of children they were able to help at others, and ask for a greater contribution for tuition from the students' guardians. All these factors contribute to the reality that some students are withdrawn from the program before they complete their education.

New sponsors should be made aware that, even though the majority of students return each year, it is always possible that their child may not. They may even quit the program in the middle of the year. Although this is quite discouraging for all of us, sponsors should be reminded that, even if it has only been for a short time, the caring support they have given to their sponsored students will have a positive influence on them throughout their lives.