

From the Hands of Hope DR Board of Directors President:

Greetings Everyone! My name is Douglas Ready, and I am the current Hands of Hope DR Board President. Some of you know and have gone on short-term mission trips with me in the past. For those who do not, I will give you a little bio about myself. I'm married to my wife of 10 years, Valerie. We have 3 kids between us, but none together. Claire, Anna, and Genevieve are all in high school and know everything there is to know...just ask them. I work as a purchasing manager for a post frame construction company called Wick Buildings out of Mazomanie, WI. Over the pandemic I finished my MBA from Upper Iowa University and became a certified EMT. I use my EMT certification to volunteer in the town I live in, Cross Plains, WI.

Hands of Hope (HOH) was introduced to me during a breakfast at High Point Church, Madison, WI shortly after I was baptized. I knew this couldn't have been a coincidence as I felt a different pull to participate. That first trip changed my heart and views on many things, mostly how easy I have it here in the US. I have been on a total of 4 short-term mission trips and helped lead 2. Over the last few years, I have not done much with HOH as I grew my career, and my kids grew through some of the more formidable stages of adolescences. After only my 2nd time back in-person at High Point, I bumped into Alison Weber, our HOH child sponsorship coordinator. She talked to me about how the HOH board needed help. Again, God puts you in places at the times ee needs you, not the other way around. I decided to help and now I greet you as the board President. Hopefully I will get to meet all of you some day!!!

I also want to take a moment to apologize. Hands of Hope has not been consistent getting you updates about your sponsored children or getting out a newsletter about what is happening in the DR. This will change. The rest of the HOH board and I are committed to getting sponsored child updates out quarterly. You should have received something in December or early January. If not contact me and I will investigate your situation. You will receive the next update in March (end of 1st quarter). Similarly, we will be sending out a newsletter quarterly. This is the first one and the next will be in April. Trust me they will improve as we get better and restructured.

One item that will be changing is the cost of sponsoring a child. This will increase \$5 + transaction cost beginning April 1st. Cost continues to rise for school supplies, teachers' wages, and many other items in the Dominican Republic. This was not a change the board took lightly, but to keep the organization healthy we needed to do this adjustment. Please see more about this adjustment later in the newsletter. Thank you for understanding.

Lastly, we want to thank you all for the support and love you give to these sponsored children. Your sponsorship dollars are more than just money, it is opportunity. Opportunity to enrich a life. Opportunity to see someone care. Opportunity to know someone loves them. Opportunity to see God at work.

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heavens

Ecclesiastes 3:1

Closing one door, opening another

As you know one goal of Hands of Hope is to empower communities to better help themselves long term. El Almirante is at a point where we need to take a step back and watch how they grow on their own. This doesn't mean we will stop providing for the sponsored children or the educational programs we set up in the community. What it means is we will not be doing things like building new homes and expanding the sewer system in the community. Of course, we will still have contact with the community as my heart and many others fell in love with the Dominican Republic because of El Almirante.

The new community we will be moving our focus to is Arroyo Indio. Arroyo Indio is located on the far west side of Santo Domingo and is a more rural community than El Almirante, which creates special challenges for the people of the community. We hope we will have as many people learn to love this community as we have in El Almirante. If you have the means and the will to sponsor another child, we have children that are ready for loving sponsor in Arroyo Indio. Click here: [Arroyo Indio Child Sponsorship](#)



Future Short Term Mission Trip

For many years there was at least one short-term mission trip to the Dominican Republic. Unfortunately, Covid put an end to that streak. We want to get start that tradition again in 2024. Yes, 2024 because these trips take a lot of time and preparation to maximize the benefit for the communities and the members of the missions group. If you have any interest in going, please email me at handsofhopedr@gmail.com so we can keep you up to date with new information on this topic.

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves

Philippians 2:3

Increase to Sponsorship cost

As previously stated, we will be increasing the per month cost for sponsoring a child to \$40 + transaction cost. The transaction cost is approximately 4%. This will begin April 1st of 2023 for all sponsors. Also, HOH will be going down to one payment processor for child sponsorship funding. Currently we have two and going down to only one, Flipcause, will make the process much more efficient. Kevin Huang, our board treasurer, will be contacting you if you are not currently paying through Flipcause to make the change. If you would like to help him out, feel free to call him at 214-669-1851 or email him at handsofhopedrtreasurer@gmail.com to set up a time to call.

BACK TO SCHOOL

You may not know there is an extended break at the beginning of the year for the Dominican Republic. The kids of the communities are all back to school now and, with that, back in the programs your sponsorship helps to provide. Do you know what these are? I will go through a few of what you help to provide for your sponsored child.



The Literacy program is designed to help children of any age learn to read in their native language, Spanish, better. There are 2 classes per day so children with different schedules can come to the class. This program plays a key role for kids that may fall on the autism spectrum or have a learning disability that limits their ability to learn in a normal classroom setting. The schools around the communities do not have the means to give extra help to the children who really need it. That is what you and I are doing.

Along with learning how to read and write in their native language, your sponsorship fund also provides an English class that meets during the week. As we know English is taught as a second language throughout the world and is needed in almost every vocation. By providing this class to our sponsored children we give them and their community a better opportunity to rise out of poverty. In El Almirante one of the projects that was worked on was the creation of a library. This library has allowed the children of the community to go beyond the literacy and English program to create a reading club and advance their knowledge on their own.



Bible class is a staple in the community and is one place we can help show that God is part of this mission. This is no different than the weekly Bible class your kids go to with stories and ways to relate the teaching to the world we live in. Along with the weekly teaching from the Bible, we also provide a snack for the kids. Many of the kids in the community are limited on how much food they get in a day, some with only one meal a day. This small snack can help a hungry tummy.



Music class is one of the newer programs and is currently only in El Almirante due to cost and logistics. Children come to this class and get a general overview of music and different kinds of instruments.

The students then progress to learning an instrument. Currently guitar or piano are their two options. In this class, students are also taught how music is related to God and the Bible. As Americans, our church services usually start and end with songs lifting our spirits and praising God's glory. Music is another gift God has given us. The kids also have had special visitors from the Dominican Republic National Orchestra.

A big thank you to High Point Church for helping with the added cost of the backpacks. The children and Hands of Hope really appreciate it!

An intelligent heart acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge. **Proverbs 18:15**

HANDS OF HOPE BOARD OF DIRECTORS VISIT

NEXT MONTH THE HOH BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL BE VISITING THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. THIS VISIT IS TO FURTHER THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE COMMUNITIES WE CURRENTLY HAVE SPONSORED KIDS IN AND TO CONTINUE COMMUNICATION WITH THE NEW COMMUNITY OF ARROYO INDIO. WE WILL HAVE NEW PICTURES AND INFORMATION FOR THE WEBSITE AND THE NEXT NEWSLETTER IN APRIL.

Looking for place other places to see update and information on what is happening with HOH in the DR?

Follow us with the links below and watch the handsofhopedr.org website for updates.



Want to contact us? Please email handsofhopedr@gmail.com or [Click here](#).