



# The Quito Times



*1Drenched, inside Colombia's soccer stadium (cheering for Ecuador)!*

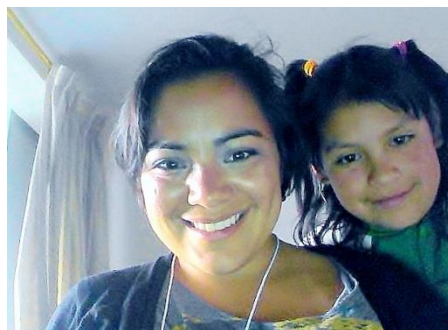
## Focusing on Vida Juvenil

Greetings from Quito!

It has been some time since my last communication. Life is generally always busy here and time is going faster than I could have imagined. I completed six months in September!

My main projects consist of Vida Juvenil, supporting the Jardines del Inca congregation, helping to plan youth group activities, participating in Cesar's PROPAZ theology class (this time we are learning about Anabaptist Hermeneutics), participating in the EMS Cross-Cultural Discipleship class with Linford Stutzman, supporting the peace education (EDUPAZ) workshops monthly, and

supporting Servicios Menonitas, the after school program where neighborhood kids can use the church space/computers for homework.



*2Me and Christy at Servicios Menonitas*

In September, I took a 10-day vacation to Barranquilla (coastal) Colombia to visit fellow MMN worker, Scott Litwiller. It was a great time of renewing my energy, getting to experience a new culture and know a Mennonite congregation that Scott worked with there and share about the Vida Juvenil work; and attend the Ecuador/Colombia World Cup qualifying match! Before I visited Scott, he visited me in Ecuador; along with Dan – a friend of my sister's. It is such a treat to get to share this experience with friends (hint hint, if you're looking for somewhere to travel)!

Sidenote—Soccer has become an unexpected interest of mine now – it is inevitable that you won't see the game going on at some park on a daily basis. I joined a team and am slowly learning the ins and outs of the sport and thankfully my teammates are merciful with me (the opposing players, not so much)! Recently, we paused Cesar's theology class to watch the end of an important match between Ecuador and Chile... THAT'S when you know you're a church worker in Latin America.

Since I last wrote, we have also welcomed two new international workers – Wendy Palencia from Barranquilla who is participating in a one-year program through MCC and will support me with Vida Juvenil when she isn't helping David with the Colombian Refugee Project. Also, fellow Iowan and Central Plains member, Caleb Yoder arrived last week! He will be primarily helping take on the theology classes that Pastors Cesar and Patricia initiated, as well as helping in the Calderon congregation.

With all that said, I would like to specifically direct your prayers towards the project I coordinate, [Vida Juvenil \(Youth Life\)](#).

The project, whose aim is to address the high rate of pregnancies among young

girls in the neighborhood, is slow moving, but with faith I know it is going to be a great service for the people in Jardines del Inca. The project's services thus far have consisted in providing monthly workshops (since August) and opening up room in the neighborhood that aims to serve as a "drop-in" space for youth there. Workshops have opened up conversations around the topic of sexuality – a very broad and taboo theme. Psychologists and nurses have offered their expertise while I and other helpers provide a fun, but educational "Vida Juvenil jeopardy" to educate the youth.

Soon, our "drop-in" space will provide free internet services (like that of Servicios Menonitas), time for games, movies and other sorts of fun!

There are many obstacles that are keeping the project from being as successful as I hope for it to be – the fear and embarrassment of talking about the taboo topic of sexuality here—the fact that in order to do so, building relationships and trust is needed first—and, that takes time; understanding what works for the people of Jardines del Inca – how to meet them where they are, as an outsider; and keeping the Vida Juvenil planning team motivated/encouraged to do the work in order to not feel alone as the coordinator.

Despite these obstacles, I continue to try to move forward – remembering; like Pastor Moya says that faith is demonstrated through action, too and that my idea of success and God's idea aren't the same thing so resting on him in times of doubt or when I feel like a failure is one thing I can do. Your prayers are appreciated!

### Also Pray For...

- ✓ Wendy and Caleb as they adjust.
- ✓ The health of Pastors Cesar and Patricia and their upcoming departure (and for the church as we began the search process for their replacement)
- ✓ For David as he returns to the U.S. for the month of November for his North American Ministry
- ✓ For the Servicios Menonitas children

- ✓ For child laborers  
Alyssa is building relationships with during her days off
- ✓ For the developing Jardines del Inca congregation and the community we find ourselves in
- ✓ With gratitude for Aliese Gingerich and her great volunteer support

## Contact The Quito Times

Alyssa M. Rodriguez

Address: Pasaje Paymino N-300 y Seis de Diciembre  
Quito, Ecuador

[alysamichellerodriguez@gmail.com](mailto:alysamichellerodriguez@gmail.com)

[Rodriguez.MST@msn.com](mailto:Rodriguez.MST@msn.com)

<http://queridoquito.wordpress.com/>

<http://anabautistasenecuador.weebly.com/>



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3 Praise God for Nicole Degreg's nurse practitioner services. Thanks to her, 35 people were given free check-ups in Jardines del Inca!



4 The PROPAZ students welcome Caleb!



5 Me and Aliese in Jardines del Inca