

Summer 2013 Bicycle Project Update

For three years now, we have experienced success after starting an official **"Bicycle Project"** facilitated by Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners, the W/NP Learning Center network, many volunteers and many bicycle donors.

W/NP has been receiving and shipping bicycles from Wisconsin to Nicaragua for many years, but an official W/NP Bicycle Project took shape in 2009 when the Stanley Street Bicycle Project closed down. Since the Stanley Street project could no longer be run at their present location in Stevens Point, and the W/NP Managua office was expanding and remodeling the warehouse area to provide more area for technical training, it was an ideal moment for Jim and Larry to make the decision to relocate the bicycle project to Nicaragua. The communities had similar needs, a network of volunteers were ready for work, and a program was already in place that could easily incorporate the transition.



Similar to Wisconsin, bicycles are an important and economical mode of transportation in Nicaragua:



From Wisconsin to Nicaragua:



The donations of bicycles, tools, benches, and shelves from the Stanley Project were some of the important items needed to put the project in motion. We are also most grateful to the Stevens Point Police Department as they have made a significant impact in Nicaragua by donating bicycles and bicycle parts to the W/NP Bicycle Project. Having these bicycle donations sent down to Nicaragua from Wisconsin has been a great support in making this program



continue and be successful. Many lives have been affected by this program in Nicaragua, with some receiving a bicycle, some receiving training to repair bicycles and others learning the value of volunteer community service through the W/NP projects.

How are bicycles shipped from Wisconsin to Nicaragua?

Bicycle donations are dropped off at the W/NP warehouse in Stevens Point, volunteers disassemble the bicycles which are then packed into boxes donated by Campus Cycle and prepared for shipment. Containers are shipped periodically from Wisconsin to Nicaragua via Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners and the U.S. Funded Transportation Program.



Upon arrival in Nicaragua, bicycles are unloaded, then reassembled and distributed to those most in need.



Who are the recipients of the donated bicycles sent from Wisconsin?

Learning Center volunteers who need to travel long distances to attend the Learning Center activities or community events are grateful with this project as before they needed to walk. When given the opportunity to receive a bicycle, the distance walked is greatly reduced and saves much time.



With the Lending Library program, children have the opportunity when they visit the library to ride a bike. The bikes are included as one of the Lending Library recreation activities offered to the children. We try to provide what benefits we can to the children who come to the library and give them opportunities during the hours the library is open. We hope in the future W/NP will be able to supply their families with a bike to take home.



As a very diverse project, W/NP is able to also support different government institutions such as the national volunteer fire station, CCBVN firefighters are using bikes as transportation from their home to the fire station.

W/NP is not just providing bikes to people in need, but also providing bicycle repair training to volunteers that want to develop this skill through our Learning Center program as well.

After officially getting the bicycle project established at the Managua Office, 10 different volunteers have had the opportunity to develop their bicycle repair skills and put in practice these skills, even solving some wheelchair repair issues too.



A volunteer from Wisconsin, Jim Traenkenschuh, came to one of the Learning Centers (CEDECAP) and introduced a basic bicycle maintenance and repair workshop. At CEDECAP, which is a center for special needs, the idea is to have participants do the work on their bikes; this saves money and allows them to look for opportunities to offer this service to others as one of their income generating projects. So far, CEDECAP has

received 5 bicycles and during the workshops they also received tools donated by Jim.



The project is providing bicycle maintenance and repair service to those volunteers and individuals that need this service. To help people that are lacking resources and need to fix their bike transportation, we are offering labor and parts at low cost as part of the bike project. Bicycles in Nicaragua are still in demand in the larger cities such as Managua. For example, people need to save money by riding their bike to work.



Diddman Jarquin traveled to Wisconsin in December 2011 to learn more about bicycle repair. With the experience earned in that travel, he volunteers hours to W/NP and is able to take out every single part of a bicycle, paint the frame parts and put together the bicycle again.



Now Diddman is sharing his knowledge with W/NP staff as Chester Espinoza and other volunteers such as Israel Delgado are keeping the bicycle project activity going strong.



We extend much gratitude to Planet Bike, Park Tools, Campus Cycle, Hostel Shoppe, individual donors and the Stevens Point Police Department for their support as we continue sending bicycles and parts to Nicaragua for this program. W/NP is proud to have this support as yet another extension of the good humanitarian spirit from Stevens Point and surrounding communities.



Thank you – the Bicycle Project is making a difference!



Partners of the Americas began in 1964 as the people-to-people component of President John F. Kennedy's Alliance for Progress, and has since evolved into a private nonprofit organization. Areas of work include education, cultural exchanges, emergency medical services, community development, agriculture, health and humanitarian assistance.

For more information, please contact Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners of the Americas, Room 129 Nelson Hall, UWSP Stevens Point, WI 54481 715-346-4702 wnp@uwsp.edu www.wisnic.org



*“Working Together,
We can make a
difference”*