

College essat

Business



Tattered clothing, brick walls, wire screen houses, dirt floors, metal tin bucket showers and outdoor latrines, coal stove tops, splintered-wooden tables and counters too. There I stood in a foreign country, a microcosm of the truth about worldwide poverty. A village with faces I couldn't recognize and places I'd never seen.

I was in someone else's territory, someone else's home. I was in Nicaragua, a home to beautiful people with anxious smiles, and welcoming arms. My eyes captured every moment: mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers, elders, adults, children, and babies; a family and a community as one. People I'd never met, ground my feet had never touched, all in one place that would forever change my life. Cerulean skies down to mountain peaks, banana trees to sugar cane, coffee plants and black beans; Evanescent beauty swallowed me whole. I was captured by one small village that became an entire new world to me, La Chimpanilla.

A place I had come with my fellow buildOn members to change lives, to give a future to those babies and children no matter their gender or age. The future each and every one of them rightfully deserves. A future no amount of money can buy; a future of education, priceless. Each and every one of them looked up to me, and from that moment on I knew I couldn't disappoint them. This community was now my family, no matter the color of their skin, no matter what language they spoke, I adapted.

We were all so different, yet so alike and together we put forth our most astounding effort to build La Chimpanilla a school. A feeling so passionate and powerful, to give like I'd never given before; I gave them my all. Not

materialistically but spiritually and physically. This school held the key that unlocked the poverty that chained them, and I had to set them free.

However, I realized I didn't give them nearly as much as they gave me.

My host family welcomed me, a stranger, into their home giving me food to eat, a place to sleep, and ultimately they gave me their culture something I could never give them in return. The entire community gave me an entirely new outlook of the world, a place outside the boundaries of America and Connecticut. Culturization defined me; I was limitless in a new world with a second family. I had three brothers, and in America I had only one.

Nicaragua gave me a second mother and grandmother who loved me unconditionally as their own. Nicaragua is a piece of me that no one can ever take away; the value of love.

And the knowledge that no matter what language I speak, communication is beyond words. Nicaragua became a place that meant so much more to me than a dot on the map; a second home. Today, an airplane ride separates me from that home but at heart I never left.