

March 2003

# WorldTeach Dispatch

WorldTeach: 79 JFK Street Cambridge MA 02138 [www.worldteach.org](http://www.worldteach.org)  
Volunteers currently contributing to educational development in: Costa Rica, Namibia, Ecuador, China, Yucatan, and the Marshall Islands!



## WorldTeach Opens Program in Poland!

WorldTeach is looking forward to opening a new program in Poland! Here is some exciting information about our Poland Program:

We will be sending 5 volunteers to teach in a rural region of Poland in a rural area North of Warsaw from approximately June 22 - August 24.

The price will be only \$1,990, with an additional \$2,000 being covered by the regional Polish government. This includes roundtrip international airfare from New York City to the site in Poland and back, health and emergency insurance while in-country, one week in-country orientation offering an introduction to ESL training, language, health, safety and culture, meals and housing during orientation and term of service, and several weekend excursions to other parts of Poland.

WorldTeach is partnering with Zigniew Chrzanowski, a member of Parliament and Poland's representative to the European Union. This is an exciting opportunity to learn about Poland and teach in an interesting environment.

Since the collapse of Communism in 1990, the demand for English has skyrocketed.

Over 270 WorldTeach volunteers taught English in Polish Schools from 1991-1998 so we are excited about the opportunity to return!

If you are interested in participating, please give us a call at 1-800-483-2240!



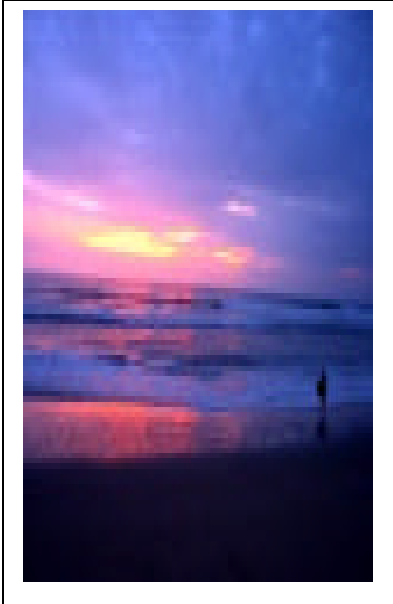
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## Field Director Aileen Lainez Ends Term in China

Time indeed flew so fast and it's difficult for me to imagine that my two-years in Yantai are over and it's time for me to move on. The years in Yantai taught me many things about myself, China and dealing with people of different cultures. I am in my home country, the Philippines, as I write this and when I look back in the past two years in China, I consider these a time of learning and reflection. There were numerous difficult moments, but these are nothing compared to the very memorable and eventful occasions I had. I will never forget the summer camps I organized with the foreign teachers and little kids, the trips the volunteers and I had in different beautiful places in China that brought us

close to each other, the cold, cold winters, the conversations in Chinese I had with the locals, CTC conferences in Shanghai and the Chinese friends I made along the way. Not to mention my favorite noodle shop and Sichuan food restaurant. These are just a few things that will place Yantai in a special spot in my heart.

I would also like to think that my stint with WorldTeach definitely made the program more friendly to volunteers. Living conditions of the volunteers are better as all of them have heating facilities and washing machines. The monthly stipend was increased, school administrations are easier to deal with, requests are not difficult to grant. I also believe that WorldTeach's presence in



## Aileen Lainez Ends Term in China - Continued from p. 1



China Field Director, Aileen Lainez prepares for new adventures in Shanghai.

Yantai all these years has been a vital component to bridging cultural misunderstandings and differences.

Former volunteer, Jon Logan, will work as interim field director until the U.S. main office finds a more permanent replacement for me. Jon taught for WorldTeach for one semester at the No. 2 Middle School in 2002 and when he returns, he will again teach for another one while managing the monthly activities of the office. It will be a great challenge for Jon but I'm sure he will be the perfect man for the job! It was his love for the people, his students and the school that made him decide to return to Yantai.

When I return to China, I will try my

luck in the bigger city of Shanghai. It is a big step for me, but I need to take that plunge to know how good it will be for me later on. Bigger risks, bigger rewards.

**\* WorldTeach is currently in the process of reforming our China Program. Harriet Wong is in China to negotiate new partnerships. Once the process is complete, we will be beginning the search for a new China Field Director. Please direct all inquiries to Harriet Wong 1-800-483-2240 \***

## NGTP Volunteer Reflects on Practicum – by Mike Strife

*“I learned that both the teachers and the students can laugh and learn during English classes.”*

I was walking down the street the other day in Flores, Guatemala, and saw an old student from our practicum English course that finished five months ago. He looked me straight in the eye and said “Hello, teacher! How are you?”, with a big smile on his face. The teaching practicum in the Guatemala NGTP 2002 consisted of teaching 2 hours of English everyday for two weeks. From this incredible experience I will remember two things. One is the immediate respect I acquired for my fellow volunteers and the other is that teaching English can be fun for both the teachers and the students.

We posted signs all over town a week before the classes began. The signs read “Free English class, two hours a night, for two weeks.” For the first class we really did not know how many people were going to show up. Maybe 3 people or maybe 50. As it turned out we had 30 students excited to learn as much English as possible in two weeks.

For these two weeks we tried and tested all the fun techniques that encourage English learning that our teaching coordinator taught us during orientation. We used three different learning styles: haptic, visual, auditory. Along with these three learning styles we

added structures to put form to our teaching. As a result we had students doing some funny things in a language that they were extremely unfamiliar with. The students sang songs, ran around cones, danced, mimicked each other, drew pictures, played games, acted and did various other things to help them learn. It was during these two weeks that I learned that both the teachers and the students can laugh and learn during English classes.

Since the English classes were so large we decided to tackle the classes in teams of two. We rotated often and got the chance to team teach with every volunteer. We spent hours with each other making props and thinking of ways to communicate vocabulary and grammar using all the learning styles. It was during this time that we all began to realize the incredibly talented group of volunteer teachers that we were working with. Each teacher had awesome skills, creativity and energy that helped make English class exciting and fun.

I still run into students all over town and I am constantly reminded of the time when we taught English for two weeks. I know that our students had fun leaning basic English for two weeks but what they don't know is that the teachers did too.



## News from the Marshalls

### Marshals Mid-Year Tune-Up

After five months of teaching on Majuro in the Outer Islands all 23 WorldTeach volunteers were back on Majuro for their mid-year conference last week. The group shared stories, learned a lot, and enjoyed a great New Year's Eve on the Big Island.

The group was able to enjoy the comforts of the Outrigger resort, with a lot of help from its general manager, Grant James, who cut the volunteers a great rate on rooms. Volunteers who are living on the Outer Islands are especially glad to feel the cool breeze of air conditioning, catch up on their cable TV, have a cold beverage and gorge themselves on vegetables.

The conference began on December 30<sup>th</sup> with a luncheon thrown by Ambassador Lin at the Long Island Hotel. The Ambassador thanked the volunteers for their part in a three-year partnership between the RMI, ROC and WorldTeach. Minister Wilfred Kendall, Secretary Biram Stege, and U.S. Embassy Charge D'Affaires, Jennifer Brush, also received words of appreciation from Ambassador Lin for their role in bringing WorldTeach to the Marshall Islands.

The following day, the group met with Secretary of Education Biram Stege to report

on their first months as teachers in the nation's public schools. Many volunteers said they were especially concerned with the lack of supplies for schools, particularly Outer Islands' schools. The Secretary assured them that the Ministry is working very hard to remedy these problems.

The last day of the conference was highlighted by a visit from CMI professor David Rumptz. Rumptz, a six-year veteran of teaching English as a Second Language, taught the WorldTeach volunteers about skills and tools they can use during the second half of the year in their schools.

The group also heard from two local experts on El Nino. Meteorologist Lee Jacklick, of the Majuro Weather Services, and Kliman Capelle, of the Disaster Management Office, talked to the volunteers about the effects of El Nino on the RMI, and the government's response to the weather phenomenon.

As schools swing back into session this week, Majuro volunteers were back in their classrooms. Outer Island volunteers are slowly trickling out of the Big Island as the Air Marshall Islands schedule allows. All are well-rested and ready for another semester of teaching. – *Field Director Alexis Miesen*



### Marshall Islands Celebrate Education Week

Yokwe from the Marshall Islands. It's been a productive month for us out here in the middle of the Pacific. We recently celebrated Education Week, which involved several activities at each of the schools and at the Ministry of Education. This year's theme was, "It takes a community to educate a child." Volunteers were busy building floats for the opening day parade, helping students with their entries for the nationwide essay and poster contests, lining up visiting speakers for their schools, and inviting parents to take part in their children's education. Now that the festivities have ended, it's time to get back to business. The third quarter is drawing near (how quickly time is flying!), and volunteers must now prepare students for their exams. We're sure that the hard work of the teachers and the students alike will be rewarded with good marks.

Meanwhile, I've been doing a bit of island-hopping. I recently visited the island of Toka, part of the Ebon atoll. Truly a tropical paradise! Clare McCarthy, our volunteer at Toka Elementary School, is doing a fantastic job with her kids. She has reported remarkable progress in her students' English and is quite pleased with their efforts. Clare has been doing some language learning of her own, and is now virtually fluent in Marshallese! Over Christmas break she received some vegetable plant seeds from home, and now has her 5th grade students busy growing corn. They measure the stalks growth each day and keep a "corn journal" to document the progress. Next I'm off to Wotje, to visit Natalie Nimmer and Matt VanEtten, who teach at Northern Islands High School. I look forward to seeing them and learning about all of the great work they are doing out there. – *Field Director Alexis Miesen*



## Costa Rica Volunteers Complete Orientation

It is hard to believe that January orientation is over and that the volunteers have now settled into their sites around the country. The little town of Orosi proved to be an excellent site for orientation, and all of us were sad to see the month come to an end. The volunteers received Spanish classes in the mornings and TEFL training in the afternoons, and during the last two weeks they provided free English classes to the local children. In the evenings, they played soccer, spent time with their host families, completed Spanish homework and met for social hour at a local restaurant that overlooks the plaza in the center of town. Though the schedule was often rigorous, I think most volunteers would agree that it was an idyllic month full of adventures, companionship and lots of learning.

Orientation aimed to prepare the volunteers for the highs and lows of professional and cultural adjustment, and now they are actually riding that roller coaster. Volunteers are finding themselves in situations that we performed skits about just weeks ago. As we emphasized throughout orientation, adapting can take a few months! In the meantime, the volunteers are already making plans for their regional meetings at the end of March. The simple goal of seeing colleagues and sharing "war stories", as volunteer Michael Bathan calls them, can be a lifesaver during those first months. Knowing that 24 other people are living similar situations makes the WorldTeach experience more manageable, and supporting and receiving help from those companions throughout the year makes it much richer. – *Field Director, Kate Miller*



*2003 Costa Rica Volunteer Group*

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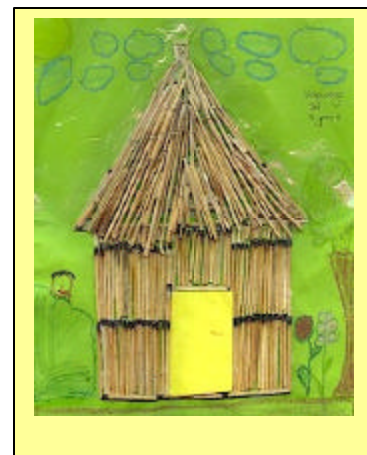
## Ecuador Prepares to Open New Sites

Here in Ecuador, we sometimes feel like time does not pass because the weather never changes...except from morning to night when we experience something similar to four seasons in a day.

This is the time when one April group says goodbye and another one is anxious to hear where they will be placed. This is the time when the September group feels like the second half of their year will just fly by. Many volunteers have taken advantage of semester breaks to travel within Ecuador: to Galapagos, to the rainforest, up snow-capped volcanoes and down to the beaches.

We have two exciting sites beginning in April. One is a former placement in a small community in the rainforest, called the "Oriente". One volunteer from last September will be moving out to Limoncocha, about 12 hours north east of Quito by bus. The community consists of about 500 people, many of them from the Shuar indigenous group. Most of them are already bilingual in either Shuar or Quichua and Spanish. The language

teachers would like to be able to study or work in Quito or bring more tourism out to their community, both options being more viable with knowledge of English. The other site is on Galapagos. It is a bilingual high school on Santa Cruz called Tomas de Berlanga, named after the European sailor who accidentally ran across the Galapagos Islands. The school is interested in eventually having WorldTeach volunteers who teach different subjects like Math, Science or Art in English. We have not had a volunteer out there since last summer. It is difficult to find funding for programs even though the majority of the population (about 15,000 total) would benefit from being proficient in English. Tourism makes Galapagos run. With English, high school graduates from Galapagos can continue their education on the mainland and become naturalists or tour guides back on Galapagos, some of the best jobs available. We have a special volunteer coming in April to teach there. – *Field Director, Karen Green*



## More Than Meets the Eye on Quito's Buses

Every day in Ecuador seems like a new adventure when it comes to travel. Whether on foot, in a cab, or on the bus, getting around Quito is no simple task. The bus, my enemy from the beginning. The bus, a complicated system of schedules and routes that not even a true Quiteño could possibly hope to master. The bus is more than just a way to travel in Quito, it is seemingly a metaphor for life in Ecuador; a polluted, confusing pattern that at no point ever seems to make sense. But underneath the confusion and beyond the reach of a J.O.P (Just Off the Plane) gringo/a is a soft and very familial side to the busses.

It took me a long time to see, and sometimes it gets obscured in the cloud of pollution that spews forth from each bus, but the buses have so much more to offer than just transportation. I have witnessed more acts of kindness and uniquely Ecuadorian courtesy on the bus than I would have ever imagined. As the bus lurches forward after every "stop" (or slow down, depending on the person) people go stumbling through the aisles and children go falling flat on their faces. Ah, but this does not happen. Why? Because just before this would occur arms appear from every angle to help those who are stumbling and to secure children who are on a collision course with the floor. When the elderly *subir* or *bajar* from the bus there always appears a helping hand making it

easier or to help them carry their heavy load on and off the bus.

The cash collector ends up being so much more than a man doing a machines job. For a time I wondered why they needed a man to collect change, and then I realized why. He functions as so much more as a change collector, he is the buses helping hand; he is what makes the bus safe for children getting on and off and possible for the elderly men and women carrying five times their weight. I have heard cynics, myself included, that the cash collector exists purely as an Ecuadorian system of job creation. Once I thought this was the truth, now I know better.

The bus may at times seem like the end of the world as people push and shove on, but then you see those helping hands and for a time, none of that seems to matter. It just seems at times like Ecuador is one big family and that there is always a helping hand when you really need it.

The bus, I guess, is just one of the many places where you will see the Ecuadorian family come out and take the hand of a child who is about to fall, or an elderly woman who needs the extra help. So while the adventure of traveling on the bus may seem at times overwhelming and awful, I just try to remember that on the bus we are all family, and if someone needs a hand I will be there to give it, just as one day I may receive it. – *Tim*

*Herrmann*



## Thank you from the Admissions Department

I am happy to report that we currently have 113 volunteers in the pipeline for our upcoming programs. In reading applications and doing interviews I realize again and again, how important our program is. When I think about the contributions these 113 people will make to so many communities, it gives me hope that little by little we will help educational development. There are so many people who are looking forward to making a commitment to volunteer for a summer or a year. Their efforts are rewarded in the field and their

experience will be with them forever.

I am also very impressed with the hundreds of alumni who continue to support our program by offering their time to be a reference, an interviewer or a recruiter.

Thank you to all of you who have recently been in touch to update your contact information, volunteer your time (again) and offer your stories with us. As long as you help spread the word about your experience, WorldTeach will continue towards our goal! – *Ellen Whitman, Admissions Coordinator*

## WorldTeach Saddened by Loss of Volunteer Jesus Bautista

WorldTeach was greatly saddened by the news of the death of Ecuador volunteer Jesus Bautista who was killed in a car accident in Quito, Ecuador, in the early hours of Sunday, February 23th. He taught English at an organization called Small World Partners based in Quito. A memorial service was held in Quito at the Catholic Church close to the university where he was based. All of Jesus' students attended as well as 15 other WorldTeach volunteers who came from throughout the country. Tributes were made by some of the volunteers, by WorldTeach Field Director, Karen Green, and by Jesus' host mother. The WorldTeach volunteers met recently to remember Jesus, to celebrate his life, and to compile their memories of the time they enjoyed with him in Ecuador. What follows is a tribute by Julie Choe. A funeral mass was said for Jesus in Mountain View, California, and a memorial service held to celebrate his life in Boston.

WorldTeach is particularly grateful to Karen Green for her tireless caring and professionalism in attending to needs in-country, and to Harriet Wong, Program Manager in our US office, for extensive coordination and support for family and friends. We all extend our deepest sympathy to Jesus' sister and brother-in-law Marian and Julian Siouxson of Mountain View, California.

WorldTeach has established a special scholarship fund in Jesus' name. This fund will enable others to volunteer their time and energy to help students in Ecuador, as Jesus did. All of us at WorldTeach extend our deepest sympathy to family and friends who were fortunate to have known Jesus.

*- Helen Claire Sievers, Executive Director, WorldTeach*

### How the Bautista Boy Changed Me, by Julie Choe

When I first met Jesus Bautista, I wasn't sure how to translate his quirkiness. Was he really serious about maintaining two grade books, just in case one got stolen? He used a tiny luggage lock to guard his stash of tissues and pens in his weathered backpack, so maybe he was serious and slightly neurotic. When he asked if I wanted him to be my bargainer at a bustling market for a cut of the money he would save me, I thought perhaps he was insane. He wore a tee shirt that said, 'Do I look like a people person to you?' Hadn't he been an HR representative? He didn't seem to fit the mold of the overly preachy cheerleader that I'd known from my corporate days, so perhaps he was being ironic.

It turns out, our beloved Jesus was clever and fabulously humorous in an incredibly contagious way, and was more of a people person than anyone I've ever known. He looked at life with an optimist's glasses, but acknowledged struggles and frustrations with sympathy, steering you toward a more constructive outlook instead of letting you wallow in self pity or anger. It was impossible to stay negative for long when I spent time with him. I was always in stitches over his tales of adventure and his observations of how he would do things differently if he were the omnipotent and admired his ability to find a way to make his life fulfilling and happy. He was not only able to find the silver lining, but he had an uncanny ability to mine that silver lining to fill his life with the things and people he enjoyed.

Jesus was part of my life not only in Ecuador, but in my life in the US as well, such was the power of his friendship. We spent hours planning and scheming about what we would do together once we returned to Boston, each declaring we were now part of each other's communities, and I looked forward to when we would return, predicting how fun and great it was going to be. He demanded that I put his name on the 'pro' side of a pros/cons list I was making about moving back to Boston in lieu of another place.

In the short time I was fortunate to call Jesus my friend, he stretched me by showing me how to live, truly and fully, to respect people's differences with humor, and to take chances. I feel that of anyone I know, he lived *carpe diem* instead of just philosophizing about it. It is with the knowledge that he was content every day he lived that I can let him go. Like all things he did, he is showing me by example how to approach life, and inevitable death, with joy and a genuineness that is hard to capture in words that don't sound like a cliché. I love him dearly for his quirkiness and charisma, his grounded outlook on life, and most of all for letting me be me and loving me for it. And so I raise a cappuccino in his honor, and pledge to live on with him in my heart, and his words of wisdom in my head. May we all be so lucky to have someone like him in our lives.

## Fishing in the Outer Islands (a true story!)



Yesterday was a national holiday and I was taken on my first outer-outer-outer island trip. The holiday was Manit Day which is a celebration of Marshallese customs/traditions, fitting given that I was to learn about the manly ways of Marshallese life. The day started out around 6:00 am with a breakfast of fish, peanut butter and some trail mix. Terry (a fellow teacher on the island-local) and I started off on what may go down as the hardest walk in my life. We waited for high tide to peak and start to wane and then started making our way towards Pokimejman, which all I knew was 4 islands away from Tobal. We walked out to the ocean side and started to walk out on the reef between the islands. Okay, picture the surface of the moon pink, green and blue razor sharp coral under three feet of rushing water with waves literally coming in 4 directions (because of the nature of the lagoon and the ocean and the clashing tides) and 3, 4, and 5 foot sharks everywhere, sea snakes, moray eels and devil rays shooting around. I wish I had NOT bought polarized sunglasses so I could live in ignorant bliss. So anyway, we start walking in

the three feet of water, every 3 steps falling into a hole in the reef or stubbing my toe on a rock. After maybe 15 minutes of walking, Terry asks me if I can swim. He then proceeds to tell me about the time 10 years ago when 4 ladies on the island traveled to the 1<sup>st</sup> island away from Tobal (remember I'm headed towards the 4<sup>th</sup>). Well apparently they were hurrying back for a festival that night and crossed the reef on incoming tide. Long story short 2 women were swept out to sea and died and one of the two who did survive no longer speaks. He looked at me and asked if I still wanted to go. I told him, race you there. Two hours later I can't feel my legs and the blood from my feet is starting to attract unwanted guests. At least I can see the island at this point maybe a mile off through 3 feet of reef and waves. Omitting the details of several ungraceful slips and falls we finally hit sand about two and a half hours after we started. We were greeted by the screech of hundreds of exotic island birds and the scurry of countless crabs. We start a fire with some old coconuts, climb some trees to get coconuts to drink and to use to cook the rice and then weave plates and sleeping mats of coconut leaves. Then we head off to fish in the lagoon. I try to spearfish on this unreal reef and come close to sneaking up on a 50 lb. Napoleon wrasse. Shot. Miss. We find some hermit crabs for bait and start to fish off the reef catch enough for lunch even one small barracuda. After grilling the fish on coconut husk skewers, we set off to find the fabled coconut crabs (the fish were enno tata). From lagoon setting, walk 15 feet and you're in some of the deepest jungle this side of the Amazon. Coconut crabs live in old hallowed out logs. So, in order to catch

one, you stick your hand into the home of a 10 lb. crab that can crack open coconuts with its claws and hope you don't lose a finger. I came close. Terry sees a huge hole and without seeing a crab, decides to machete a hole in the tree 20 minutes later we spy the crab Terry says wow a big big one. So once again he throws his hand into the hole to try and drag this guy out. The first part of the crab I see is its blue claw (only slightly smaller than Terry's hand) snapping at us. He IS huge. Another 20 minutes of trying to pull this thing out of the hole and we get it out. It's not happy. So in order to save our body parts, we cut its claws and 2 legs off. Back to the lagoon to cook it wish I had some butter and get ready to go take a nap and wait for the moon and tide to be right so we can lobster on the way home. Fall asleep on the woven mats and woke up in the middle of a huge storm. No moon, can't see and all I have is my small headlamp great to walk around the campfire, etc, but not to navigate the way through open ocean, over reef, around sharks, through waves 3 miles home in the pouring rain and howling rain now carrying an extra 30 lbs of crabs and fish. Despite the extra heft, we make it back quicker than it took to get there I was so tired I barely remember any of the trek back. Finally get home around 2:00 am drop the bag of crabs (most with only one leg left since we ate the other on the island) and collapse. Wake up this morning and somehow the crabs (though mono-peds) have walked the bag across the yard and escaped. Nothing to do but laugh. So today I go fishing



## Namibia Volunteers Serve as HIV/AIDS Resource Teachers

again for lunch. – *Matt Schweickert*

WorldTeach Namibia is moving forward. In addition to the Subject Teacher role our yearlong volunteers have fulfilled in schools for some time, this year our volunteers are also serving as HIV/AIDS Resource Teachers. In the school-needs assessment performed in September last year, every principal responded that they would like a WorldTeach volunteer to help with HIV/AIDS education. Clearly the demand for our assistance in this area is strong.

During the orientation of the 10 volunteers in the 2003 cadre, we spent much of our time focused on how volunteer teachers can contribute to the fight against HIV/AIDS. It was an experience that was at times hopeful and frequently very sad. People are just overwhelmed by the pandemic. The highlight of the orientation was the week spent in Odibo, where the volunteers honed their teaching skills and practiced

culminated with an AIDS Awareness Fair featured learners performing dramas and displaying their artwork, as well as a speaker from the local Living Positively group that spoke to us and the community about living with HIV in Odibo and the contributions volunteers can make.

In addition to the 10 new volunteers, we have six returnees! We're working in many of the schools with which we've had long-time relationships — Mokaleng, Okatana, Waldfrieden, Martin Luther, St. Mike's, Gunichas—as well as some new ones, including Okangwati JSS right in the heart of Himbaland. All of the placements, new and old, are great ones, and there are many more schools that need our help. Namibia's ever-present teacher shortage is getting much worse, largely due to the impact of AIDS. So please spread the word: WorldTeach Namibia is always looking for more smart and motivated volunteers to expand our assistance to this beautiful and promising country. – *Vince*

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### Parting Shot...



*WorldTeach Ecuador Volunteers Hit the Beach*