LATIN AMERICAN MISSIONS **SUMMER 2023**

BSA GRADUATES Serving In LATIN AMERICA

Reporting on BSA Alumni

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Opening Doors to Partnerships in LAM Cary Gillis Shares the Need to Build Partnerships with Alumni

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The Lord Working Through Us An Elder Shows by Example How to Be a Blessing in Latin America

BSA Alumni Report on the Church Key Persons in Countries Share Progress Made Over the Years

Teaching the Sisters at BSA A Minister's Wife Reflects on Her Training at the School



LatinAmericanMissions.org

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Alumnı *Report on the Church in Latin America*

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WHY WE SERVE:

"For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Corinthians 4:5-6

HOW WE SERVE:

Evangelistic Campaigns, Mobile Medical Missions, Benevolence, Native Preacher Training and Support, Construction, Disaster Relief

WHERE WE SERVE:

Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Perú, Panamá **WEBSITE:** LatinAmericanMissions.org

LATIN AMERICAN MISSIONS

Opening Doors to Partnerships in LAM



Cary Gillis, Director of Latin American Missions Valdosta, Georgia

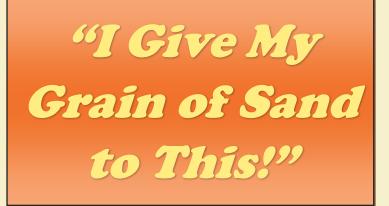
atin American Missions is about relationships. We nurture our relationships and leverage them to form partnerships purposed to seize gospel opportunities. In my short nine months with LAM, I have become acquainted with so many people that it's like drinking from a firehose. As over-whelming and taxing as it has been on my brain to keep all these brethren straight, I have realized that this "burden" is one of the greatest blessings of my life. While the hub of this vast ministry is the Bible School of the Americas, the work is only sustained by the collaborative effort of fellow workers throughout the United States and Latin America. Students come from many countries to be trained and equipped at the BSA and then return to their home countries to begin their new ministries. During their time at the school and after they leave, we invest in relationships with them so that we can aid in their ministries and connect them with supporting partners.

Rafael Paguaga works with me as the Director of Alumni Relations. He helps me stay connected with the lives and ministries of our BSA alumni. Rafael recently sent out a thorough survey with the goal of updating our alumni records and assessing the state of the Church in several countries. Their feedback is informing us how we can help their ministries and how we can mold the curriculum at the **Bible School of the Americas** and equip ministers to grapple with the evolving landscape of challenges that face the Church.

 \mathbf{T} n this issue of our newsletter, we are L focusing on the various countries in which we have BSA alumni. We have invited a key man from each country to give a snapshot of the state of the Church, their various works and ministries, and the unique obstacles the brethren face there. My hope is that you will be introduced to faithful brothers who will bless your life just as they have blessed mine. Perhaps, this introduction will open the door to relationships that grow into ministry partnerships.

We invite your partnership, as we seize these **G**OSPEL **O**PPORTUNITIES together.

"DECLARE HIS GLORY AMONG THE NATIONS, HIS MARVELOUS WORKS AMONG ALL THE PEOPLES!" PSALM 96:3



Rafael Paguaga, BSA Alumni Relations



There is no greater work than what Jesus did for all of us. A sinless man dying for us will help us understand how little we often do for others. I love saying that because, we often use the expression in Central and South America, *"I give my grain*

of sand to this!" in reference to when we work in one way or another with a great cause.

My role in Latin American Missions involves cultivating relationships with alumni of the Bible School of the Americas. That begins with meeting them as they travel from their home countries and arrive at our preaching school facilities. During the first week of the school's program, I administer tests of personality traits and intelligence to our new students which allows our staff to learn about each one of them in their capacities, interests, talents, strengths, and



weaknesses. It also helps us get to know the new group as a whole, allowing us to understand what we should aim for as we teach them the Bible in order to help them grow to the likeness of Jesus. I also cultivate these relationships as I teach them a Bible course. Our time together in the classroom contributes infinitely to this new relationship.

As they graduate and leave the school, my role is to keep in touch with them. I meet with them through the computer and figure a good time to get them enrolled in my courses. I give them time to prepare themselves and be able to teach something from a real-world experience to our current students every year based upon the book or subject we are discussing in class. I talk to them through social media. Sometimes they're going through a hard time, not having financial support to carry out the work they planned. Sometimes they lose a loved

one. Occasionally, I meet with them and work together in a campaign.

The alumni share with me their input about what would be good for the school to teach and share with the new generations. I share this with our brother, Kirk Brothers, Director of Curriculum at BSA. When



Rafael with wife, Gabriela

information is needed for the newsletter, I program a time to meet with them and listen to their plans, their needs, and their concerns. Sometimes, they ask for some advice on how to develop certain topics in their congregations.

Our alumni will nominate a candidate to come to the school and help them complete the application. I've been blessed to facilitate a one-day program of training they can give to someone that's coming to the school. They teach them to use a computer, write an essay, and create a PowerPoint. Sometimes I just listen to their heartbreaking needs and cry on the phone. I'm blessed beyond measure to help and serve these great men in all Central and South America.



Don Garner, Elder @ Forrest Park, Valdosta, Georgia

n December 2016 my wife and I attended graduation at the *Bible School of the Americas.* Little did we know how God would place Jimmy Harvin, the 2016 Honor Graduate, in our lives. After graduation Jimmy and his family



traveled back home to Jinotepe, Nicaragua. For over two years he assisted preachers in nearby towns, but his desire to establish a doctrinally sound congregation in his hometown led Jimmy and his family to begin meeting for worship in their home in January 2020.

Our Omniscient God had a plan. My wife, Theresa, had become friends with Jimmy on social media. In September 2020 Jimmy sent Theresa a text with warm greetings and a sincere plea for assistance. The church had increased in members and visitors, and the side room in their house was not big enough to accommodate everyone. They needed a larger building with kitchen facilities and rooms for children's Bible classes. He wrote, "The majority of brothers in the church are very poor and need our help. They can't give their preacher a salary, and many times I have to do carpentry work to pay for my expenses." We had no idea their needs were so great, and we agreed to help!

Before attending BSA, Jimmy worked in Finances. So, within a few days he created a spreadsheet of items needed in order to furnish a rental place for the twenty members to gather. The funds were donated and sent, and on January 3, 2021 they worshiped God

there for the first time. Since that inaugural service, the church has continued to grow under Jimmy's ministry. As other needs arise, we continue to donate funds for growth. The items needed have



included a laptop for work, study and communication and a motorcyle for transportation. Previously, Jimmy and his family walked everywhere. In November 2022, Jimmy wrote: "Everyday life is becoming more difficult...increasing prices on food products, fuel, health, educational fees, and we have to deprive ourselves of buying many necessary things due to lack of money." This same message comes from other preachers, too.

"May God bless his faithful Saints; it will be a great joy to meet in eternity." - Jimmy, July 2021

The Church in Jinotepe first met in Jimmy's home in January 2021. They soon filled the space and needed more.



2016 BSA Graduate Jimmy Harvin Guerrero Wife: Maritza Denis, Joel, Jimmary Jinotepe, Nicaragua





Church of Christ in Jinotepe, Nicaragua - 2023



We are thankful to God for choosing us to assist Jimmy in his work of preaching the Gospel in Nicaragua. His family is a wonderful example of what is possible in Latin America when all spiritual hearts are focused on God and His purpose for our lives.

Contact Cary Gillis today if you or your congregation desire to form a partnership with a preacher in Central or South America. BECOME A BLESSING!



Frank Williams, LAM Fundraiser

t is said, by those who study such things, that a human dead body today is worth \$550,000, assuming that all the body parts are in usable shape. You may get more if the deceased is a young person. A black market industry has arisen

to harvest body parts unsuspecting from victims. The world we live in is fixated on the physical, the here and now. You seldom hear anyone talking about the soul and its value. The word "soul" is used several different ways in scripture. Here, I am referring to it as the spiritual essence of the human being. Both a soul and the physical body have its origin in the creative work of God. unlike However, the human body, the soul will live forever.

Consider the story, "The Rich Man and Lazarus," in Luke 16. Two

men, two lifestyles, two deaths, and two eternal destinations. Like Paul in 1 Timothy, we can rejoice in the fact that Christ Jesus is our hope. I am reminded of the song, *"Without Him,"* by Mylon LeFevre. Yes, without Jesus we are lost in our sins. But, there is someone, someone very

special in all of our lives, that made sure we heard about Jesus and encouraged us to obey his commands.

Millions do not have that "someone" in their lives. Latin America, excluding Brazil, has a

Without Him

 Without Him I could do nothing, Without Him I'd surely fail;
Without Him I would be drifting Like a ship without a sail.

 Without Him I would be dying, Without Him I'd be enslaved;
Without Him life would be hopeless But with Jesus, thank God, I'm saved.
Jesus, O Jesus! Do you know Him today?
Do not turn Him away.
O Jesus, O Jesus,
Without Him how lost I would be.

population of over 400 million people (souls) with very few Christians and fewer "someones." The Bible School of the Americas in Panama is focused on providing a "someone" who will share Jesus with all who will listen. Training these students and families for two years involves a significant financial investment. Covering all the expenses necessary to provide a premier education requires \$1500 per month per student. There are 21 students enrolled in school this year requiring \$31,500 per month. Donations for the first quarter of 2023

were below our monthly needs. The school needs your immediate attention.

Consider a one-time gift or a regular monthly donation. Please share this need with your congregation and ask them to help the Bible School of the Americas.

"Without Him, souls will be lost. Without preachers, they may never know. Without YOU, we shall surely fail!" The Bible School of the Americas was founded thanks to the concern of brethren from the United States who came to work at the riverbanks of the Panama Canal when the Canal was managed by the U.S. Their concern was shown in those letters sent to congregations in the U.S. requesting financial support for this great project.

The central message of those letters was: "The Gospel must be preached by locals, and only through a Bible School will results be obtained in a short time." Today, almost sixty years later, we could ask, "How much has the Bible School and her graduates prevailed in the labor of the Church in Panama and Latin America?"



PANAMA

Agenor Rudas

Girector, Bible School of the Americas





Many brethren have received training in the classrooms of the Bible School. Every year more brethren leave, convinced of the labor our Lord has given us (Matt. 18:19-20) and of the responsibility to continue forward with the work. Every graduate goes back to their country of origin with the enthusiasm to preach, helping the congregation where they came from, and others are longing to start new labors, which has happened. Ever since 1965 until now, some 300 congregations have been established. Some have disappeared for various reasons, but many remain active today.

From the classrooms, each student is taught from the Bible that they are to open their eyes and see that the fields are white for harvest. That was the message from Jesus to His disciples, indicating to them it was time to work, to harvest souls that would otherwise be lost day to day.

BSA Alumni Report on the

MIEXICO The Church in Palenque Domingo Perez has baptized more than 100 men and women since it began in 2011. The Word of God is preached for our con gregation and at a Rehab Center in La Esperanza on two radio stations, and on Facebook. We have evangelistic campaigns in July and a Bible Conference once a year in January. We collaborate with other congregations in Salto de Agua in Chiapas and San Vicente in Ocosingo with preaching, evangelism, and a radio program. We conduct an evangelism program through out the year with congregations in Chiapas and Tabasco. We also support candidates going to BSA. Several have graduated while others are there now. Challenges include appointing elders and deacons and becoming able to financially support our ministers

oBelmopan BELIZE

MEXICO

GUATEMALA

Guatemala

HONDURAS

Tegucigalpa

San Salvador

Victor Bonilla

EL SALVADOR

NIC

Managua

Our work with

LAM started in 2001 after our country suffered a devastating earthquake. The first Salvadoreans who graduated from BSA in Panama were Noel Umaña and Victor Bonilla and their families (2001-2002). For twenty years now, more Salvadoreans have been sent to Panama for training. We have seen many people be converted to the gospel and have fellowship in gatherings to edify ourselves, listening to the Word of God, and thanking Him in courage, faithfulness and love. LAM EL SALVADOR taught us to work together! Our current activities are working with other congregations and creating new projects together! The "Ministry Leaving Prints Project" is creating material for children based on the Holy Scripture with training

seminars for new workers.

The Churches of Christ in Costa Rica have many brethren who trained at BSA and serve

as full-time preachers or contributing as faithful men in the labor of Christ. Rodrigo Gamboa serves in Siguirres, Limon as a preacher, teacher, and Elder. Roldan Chinchilla with his family labors locally in Sarchi and nationally. Vidal Ortega and Daniel Chaves work together in Buenos Aires in Puntarenas, having constructed a new building and collaborating various activities in the country. Ricardo Alvarado, Alan Monge, José A. García, Aycen Domínguez, Juan Jiménez, Ediberto Córdoba, serve full-time in their local congregations. bringing forth good fruits for the labor of our Lord Jesus Christ.

COSTA RICA Gilbert Astorga

been taught by **Christian liv** brethr

Church in Central America

We are excited as we read how the seed of the gospel has been sown in many hearts of the Caribbean. Knowing that the work in the Lord is not in vain, Julio Mella is meeting with the church at Ensanche Espaillat in Santo Domingo. Joely Valdez is one of the ministers in Pueblo Nuevo Santiago. He works in evangelism, preaching, and Bible studies in other congregations.



The church in Honduras enjoys a close relationship with churches in the United States. In a recent survey carried out by LAM, Honduras is the second country with the highest number of preachers who receive financial support from congregations in the United States through LAM. That has increased many opportunities for the gospel in such a beautiful country. We are proud to work hand in hand with the team of preachers in Honduras and their families.



NICARAGUA

Guillermo Hernández



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ARAGUA

anJose

OSTA

RICA

The presence of BSA graduates in the labor in Panama is 59%. The other 41% exists by the work of brethren who have BSA graduates and preach with what they've learned in their es. Among this 41% some congregations have been abandoned by en who found themselves without the tools needed in a preacher. Faced with mpossible circumstances, preachers leave the congregations adrift. In Darien, Chiriqui, Veraguas, and Cocle there are several congregations without a preacher. A church building in El Copé was abandoned by her preacher five years ago. Now, the BSA is sending students with support received from brethren in Panama itself to reestablish the congregation.

The Church of Christ in Nicaragua is grateful to the elders in the U.S. for supporting BSA which has strengthened churches throughout with qualified preachers who edify the members with sound doctrine. We can report that 85% of our BSA graduates lead and serve in local labors. Nicaragua is blessed with a team of preachers who serve together in the different regions of the country. The great dynamics of our fellow soldiers of the cross has been exhibited even more with the many evangelistic campaigns carried on in different locations. Oh, how fantastic unity can be for the Kingdom of God!

PANAMA

BSA Alumni Report on the Church in South America





Agenor Rudas, Director of Bible School of the Americas

Our students leave the Bible School of the Americas with the momentum to go and share the Words of God. Convinced of their responsibility and full of youthful vibrancy, they often find a reality that becomes a difficult barrier to overcome. The economy rises as a ferocious lion, threatening not only the graduate but also his family. Many graduates will seek secular jobs to support their families, and this weakens the labor in the Church.

When Jesus started His labor with the apostles, He also considered material needs. They had the need of a common moneybag to buy basic supplies. (John 13:29) On the other hand, when the labor began to expand, Jesus sent His disciples to labor without a moneybag or knapsack. When He asked them if they had lacked anything, they said, "No." The reason was, that for the Jews, it was a commandment to feed the wayfarer and the foreigner. However, they would soon be sent again with the command to take moneybag, knapsack, and a sword. Conditions were becoming critical.

Pacing the needs of the disciples in order to continue their labor, men and women who supported Jesus' teaching willingly sold their possessions to help those who worked to carry the Gospel to other regions. Several grateful women helped furnish basic needs for Jesus and His disciples by cooking and cleaning. (Luke 8:3).

P aul also addressed the financial support for preachers when he told the Corinthians, "... those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel." Moreover, Paul also received financial support in some regions to continue preaching the Gospel. This is God's plan. The labor continues to grow today throughout Latin America. The challenges BSA graduates face are many, and we continue to depend on our All-Knowing God who uses men and women with tender hearts who love the labor of His servants. They generously provide support to those who graduate from the Bible School of the Americas ... Our Alumni.



2020 BSA Graduate Juan Ramón Montejo Ivonne & Zeynep Mexico



2020 BSA Graduate Jaime Montejo López Wife: Ana/Daughter: Izel Palenque, Mexico



2010 BSA Graduate Wilson Viloria González and family Antofagasta, Chile

2022 BSA Graduate Norberto Valdez Los Alcarrizos, Santo Domingo





v Go into all the world and proclaim ...

BSA Alumni per Country				
Honduras	37		Colombia	20
Panama	150+		Peru	19
Nicaragua	45		Chile	2
Costa Rica	33		Dominican Republic	6
El Salvador	12		Mexico	6
Ecuador	2		Venezuela	3
Argentina	1		Guatemala	1

Mark 16:15

... the gospel to the whole creation."

12

Ladies of LAM

Teaching the Sisters at BSA

y heart fills with emotion for the opportunity to share these thoughts with you, dear readers. My name is Melissa Ochoa. I was a student at the **Bible School of the Americas** (BSA) and graduated in December 2022. I will share with you my personal experience at this great institution.

Receiving Bible training in Panama was a blessing to my family. I knew we would have the opportunity to know God better and grow closer to Him. From the first day on campus, I was surprised to find myself in a place full of so many spiritual and material blessings. It was wonderful to get to know the teachers, and my admiration for each one of them grew and grew as I got to know them better. I appreciated how they taught the classes with all that is humanly possible. Their love and dedication was shown in their job performance, and most of all, their love for God.

Can honestly say that I loved all the classes. They were beneficial for our learning. For example, the class on the books of Acts and James taught by our teacher, Rafael Paguaga, was one of my favorite ones. And, I have to mention the class, "The Preacher's Wife," taught by Sister Loida Cruz, wife of Minister and Director, Agenor Rudas. I want to clarify that all the classes were excellent, but those impacted me greatly.

All the training was suitable for the sisters. The classes gave us the necessary tools to work well in our congregations. The presentations we were assigned and shared with others were a challenge, but it was gratifying to go through them. For the first time ever, I was teaching classes. Each project was an opportunity for us to gain experience and give the best of ourselves.

Melissa Ochoa, Minister's Wife in Honduras



The chosen methods were excellent in gaining better а understanding and knowledge which goes hand in hand with the application. Why? There is no use in training if we do not apply the knowledge to our lives. As James 1:25

says, "But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing." At the BSA we are encouraged to not be only hearers, but doers of the learning.

A lso vitally important is that these teachings continue to be given to the wives of the students, so they can be helpers "fit" for their husbands. We are to rightly handle the word of Truth. Training the women can only bring more efficacy and efficiency to the labor of the Lord. In the area of technology, there is a great need to provide more training to the sisters. We live in times when technology plays a huge role in our lives. It is necessary to be skillful in using this tool for the glory of God.

In conclusion, my experience with the training offered at the Bible School of the Americas is necessary and important. I am certain that because of my training, I am now better prepared to work alongside my husband at our congregation and be the wife that God wants me to be according to His word.

Honors & Memorials January - March, 2023

In Honor of ...

Doug & Stacie Daugherty Andy Hendrix Alan Fonville Buddy Johnson

In Memory of...

Susan Boyette

M/M Paul Swanson Lawanna Batten Geraldine Dailey

Arnold Johnson

M/M Paul Swanson Lawanna Batten Geraldine Dailey M/M Bill Ward

Billie Hendrix

M/M Paul Swanson Lawanna Batten Geraldine Dailey M/M Bill Ward Jerome Blanton

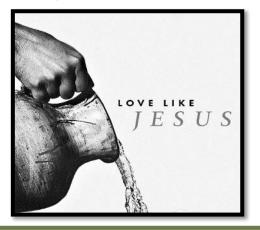
M/M Paul Swanson Lawanna Batten Geraldine Dailey M/M Bill Ward

Bunny Spell

M/M Paul Swanson Lawanna Batten Geraldine Dailey M/M Bill Ward Sylvia Higgins M/M Paul Swanson Geraldine Dailey Lawanna Batten Pat Lester Wally Colson Lawanna Batten

Ryan Steis Angela Woodcock Barbara Sapp

Angela Woodcock



Sandy Sapp Angela Woodcock Florene Guess Angela Woodcock Spencer Broome Angela Woodcock Sharon Lewis Angela Woodcock Bob Batten Lawanna Batten Steve Gibson M/M Donnie Wisenbaker Lawanna Batten Geraldine Dailey M/M Bill Ward

M/M Paul Swanson

Dickie Wheeler

M/M Paul Swanson Lawanna Batten M/M Bill Ward Geraldine Dailey

Sophie Smith

South Florida Avenue Church M/M Jeff Bingle

About HONORS & MEMORIALS

You may "HONOR" a special person or group of people by making a donation of any amount to LAM. You may also make a "MEMORIAL" donation to LAM in memory of a loved one who is deceased. Please use the printed form on the back page of this newsletter when sending your donation to the LAM office.

Bible School of the Americas' Adjunct Instructors Fall 2023 Schedule of Upcoming Courses

October 23-27Daryl Trip - Joshua-RuthOct. 30-Nov. 3Steve Curo - 1 & 2 SamuelNovember 6-10Mike Houts - Apologetics 3: Science #2November 13-17Steve Johnson - Jewish Customs

Please pray for these men as they travel to Panama and teach their assigned courses!

Servants in Need of Financial Support!

BIBLE SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS: Students & Recent Graduates

PERU:

Alberto Calderon

Ruben Chacon

Please consider supporting one or more of these Godly men and their families. Your support of \$25, \$50, \$100 or more per month has an impact on the lives of these faithful ministers.



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Please fill in and enclose this form when mailing your charitable contributions.

AREAS WHERE YOU CAN HELP!

MY DONATION IS FOR:

- □ Where most needed
- □ Bible School of the Americas
- □ Preacher in Need (Please write in name)

□ Benevolence Fund

MY DONATION IS:

One time gift
Monthly giving of: \$_____

IN MEMORY OF: _____

IN HONOR OF: _____

Given by: _____

Address:

City, State, ZIP: _____

SEND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO:

Name: _____

Address:

City, State ZIP: _____