

"I'm a friend to everyone who honors you, O God, and to all who keep your precepts."

Psalm 119:63 CEB

Giving and Receiving

The Latin America Biblical University (UBL) was my home for three months as a volunteer earlier this year. The University is a shining light for Protestant students to explore innovative and challenging perspectives of the Bible. In the midst of conservative tendencies in churches throughout Latin America, students at UBL are challenged to re-encounter the Good News of the Gospel.

As a small community, UBL offered me a chance to build relationships. It has a long history of receiving volunteers and knows how to allow them to bring their gifts and talents in a variety of ways through the day or week. Some volunteers return year after year and those who have left are still remembered in the community.

I got acquainted with students from other countries who lived in the dorm and also wanted tutoring in English. The staff is Costa Rican with two American professors, and other volunteers, mostly retired. The staff got together every morning for coffee hour, which was a good chance to practice some Spanish and become better assimilated into the community. The two American missionaries there who had served in other Central American countries were a useful Q and A link when needed. Everyone helped each other in many ways. Whether I was working in the library, typing a document in Spanish or teaching English, I received as much as I gave. It was a privilege to work at UBL.

Would you like to serve as a short term volunteer as Mary has?

Contact the Latin America Office, arivera@dom.disciples.org

Mary Bjork, a member of Living Table, UCC, Minneapolis, Minnesota, served as a short-term volunteer teaching at the Latin America Bible University (UBL) in Costa Rica from January 15 – March 15, 2015.

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