



# Miller MISSIONS

## Fall 2018

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Happy fall! We are thankful for all that God has been doing in our lives over the past few months, and we are excited to share it with you!

### DUSTIN'S UPDATES

This summer, Dustin jumped full time into his new role with Kids Alive International (KAI). In the Dominican Republic, there are about 35 high-schoolers living in three different KAI residential homes. Once these teenagers graduate, they will need to move out of the residential homes and live independently. To prepare our teenagers for this transition we have developed a plan at each site which includes assigning each teenager a spiritual mentor, providing life skills training, and helping them actively consider and pray over where God may be calling them vocationally. To launch this new project we brought together all of the students and their mentors for a summer camp (pictured at right) where the students received training in how to manage finances, romantic relationships, and a thriving spiritual life, and how KAI can help them during this significant life transition. Your prayers are coveted as we continue to implement and enhance our aging out program in the Dominican Republic.



This fall we were able to attend the Christian Surfers International Conference, which was Dustin's farewell to Christian Surfers. It was exciting to share one last time with



CS leaders from around the world that we have grown to love and cherish so dearly. CS did a great job honoring our family and thanking us for the last eight years we've invested in the ministry. We are sad to say goodbye to a great ministry but excited to see all that God will continue to do among surfers using Christian Surfers.



### Meet Samuel

Samuel moved into a KAI residential home in Monte Plata with his sister when he was eight years old. Under Kids Alive's care he was able to receive an education, live in a healthy family setting, and participate in a Christian community. Because of his good grades and good character, Samuel was awarded a full university scholarship from KAI. He transitioned out of the residential home successfully and is currently a leader in his church and one year away from graduating university. But the best thing is that he's mentoring current high schoolers in the same residential home where he grew up so they can transition into independent living as successfully as he has. Please pray for Samuel and our team at KAI as we continue to prepare teenagers in our care for aging out of our residential programs.

# EMILY'S UPDATES

In Caraballo, less than 40% of adults have graduated 6<sup>th</sup> grade. As you can imagine, literacy rates are extremely low. To combat this, Emily led the launch of a new model for teaching reading, called Reader's Workshop, at the Park Care Center this year. It involves daily literacy lessons, independent reading time, and small group reading instruction. Emily and a former missionary, Karen, trained the teachers in why and how to have daily independent reading time, wrote lesson plans for the teachers, and assessed every student's reading level. In almost all our classrooms, you can now find students reading books at an appropriate reading level each day, meeting with their teacher in small groups, and talking about what good readers do. In the second round of assessments at the start of November, nearly all our students improved their reading skills by at least one level - a huge accomplishment! We still have a lot to do to fully implement Reader's Workshop, but we are encouraged by our progress thus far.



A 5<sup>th</sup> grader "shopping" for books at her reading level



Reader's Workshop in action!

At the start of the school year we also spent three days as an entire site staff receiving a Trauma Competent Caregiving training from our national trauma care coordinator. We learned about the brain, attachment cycles, trauma's effects, and how to become safe adults for the kids around us. Implementation of this training looks less like programs and more like mindset shifts, but we look forward to the ways that God will use what we have learned and how we have grown to help us help our students better. Emily is working alongside Alexandra, our new school psychologist, to figure out how best to implement the ideas of trauma competent caregiving.

**Brennan** continues to be a joyful, energetic little boy with plenty of personality! He started walking in July, and he's on the move all day long. He loves to play outside, visit our local cows, wrestle with Dustin, and get smothered with attention in Caraballo. He also likes to read books, play soccer, and eat rice & beans. He spends at least one day a week at the Park Care Center, and he is learning both English and Spanish.



# THANK YOU

We are thankful for a smooth transition thus far into Dustin's new role with Kids Alive. We are grateful for your prayers, encouraging notes, and financial support - as cliché as it sounds, we couldn't serve here in the Dominican Republic without you, our support team. Please continue to pray for the work that God is doing in Caraballo and across the DR. Pray that God would continue to sustain our family, since we know that our family is our first mission field and our strongest testimony to those around us. Please be in touch and let us know how we can be praying for you as well!

*Blessings,*  
Dustin, Emily, *AND* Brennan

## CONTACT US!

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