



¡Hola!

My name is xxx, and I'm a sophomore at xxx. I have been taking Spanish for only a year and a half, but already have become passionate about the language and culture. This year, I am participating in a non-profit organization called AMIGOS de las Americas. This is a program where jovenes (young people) from different chapters across the Americas volunteer to spend six to eight weeks of their summer to work on projects in Latin America. Along with being an enriching cross-cultural exchange, AMIGOS allows young men and women to improve their leadership skills, collaborate with communities in Latin America, and work with the people there to support them in promoting sustainable projects. Although I will not find out where my assigned location will be until the late February, I am hoping to go to Ecuador, Peru, or the Dominican Republic.

As an AMIGOS volunteer, there are all sorts of different projects to be assigned to, from leading classes about health and hygiene, to assisting in organizing a community event. I will be living with a host family and will be engrossed in Spanish. The mission of AMIGOS is to inspire and build young leaders. An important aspect of being an AMIGOS volunteer is the emphasis on the fact that we are NOT "helping" the Latin American communities, but supporting them in their goals that benefit the community. They will have as much of an impact on me as I hope to have on them. We are not on a level over them, but collaborating with them.

My family pays a fee which covers the cost of my trip. Your donation will help pay for community projects and will help provide financial assistance for families who cannot afford the full family fee. Contributions help to pay for paint, cement, seeds, class workshop and training materials, and other needed items. Any amount is greatly valued, but some examples of how an amount would be used include: 10 dollars pays for 30 toothbrushes, 45 dollars can buy a water storage tank to provide clean water, and 250 dollars provides seeds for a family garden in over twenty communities.

If you would like to donate to AMIGOS, I have enclosed a stamped envelope for you to use. Writing a check (remember, any amount is appropriate!) and sending it back to me is all you would need to do, unless you would prefer using a credit card and donating online. To do so, you can follow this online link at <http://www.eastbayamigos.org/letters/smartin>. Checks should be made payable to "Amigos de las Americas". AMIGOS de las Americas is exempt from federal income tax as an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions made by donors are tax-deductible.

I would like to thank you in excess for reading my letter. I would love to spread AMIGOS awareness so that everyone knows about this fantastic organization. I can't explain how excited I am for my summer in Latin America! You can count on me to let you know how my experience is upon my return.

Otra vez, ¡muchas gracias!