



FUERZA HONDURAS

Fuerza Honduras is an organization that provides leadership development programming for youth in Honduras. Each year, a team of 6 Dartmouth undergraduates (2 co-leaders and 4 participants) design curriculum and implement the program in country for 7-10 days during winter break.

La Fuerza para el Futuro (“The Force for the Future”) began in 2009. The program is run in partnership with ACTS Honduras, a VT-based NGO that partners with Hondurans to promote sustainable programs for health, education, agriculture, and economic development. The program’s students are young people ages 12-25, who live in the local Locomapa region of Honduras (a cluster of rural farming villages ~3 hours east of San Pedro Sula).

The program is design to accomplish three primary objectives:

- 1) Teach young people the skills they need to lead and become the future leaders in their communities
- 2) Stimulate an ethic of social awareness and spirit of volunteerism
- 3) Build a strong network of young people throughout the region

Education is a challenge in rural Honduras. Government-designed school curriculum typically does not teach important leadership skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, and public speaking. Fuerza aims to motivate and equip young leaders to make a difference in their community.

These leadership skills are taught using the following structure:

- Curriculum: teaching leadership skills in an interactive classroom setting
- Construction: volunteering to improve the infrastructure of their community and neighboring communities
- Special Projects: giving students the chance to implement the skills they’ve learned by leading community-wide projects (typically focused on educating community members on important health and development initiatives)

Over the last 9 years, Fuerza has become a substantial presence in the community. Each year, local community leaders excitedly share new project ideas. Children update us on the number of years left before they meet the minimum age requirement to join. Students from distant villages hike 3 hours a day to participate. Our foothold in the community has enabled us to grow the program’s impact, with students feeling empowered to initiate community involvement outside of Fuerza. The program has and continues to develop the community’s future leaders, which is a crucial element to achieving sustainable development.

Learn more about past Fuerza Honduras projects by reading Fuerza Newsletters at <https://goo.gl/kVtF2H>

For more information about ACTS Honduras, visit <http://actshonduras.org/>.