

Your Personal Code: **HS2402-**_____

2023-2024 HIGH SCHOOL MISSION TRIP



FEBRUARY 17-24, 2024

COST: \$2,095

Register from September 17 - October 29, 2023
or until all spots are full

westridge.com/students

High School Student,

Thank you for wanting to be part of the Nicaragua 2024 Team! Since 2011, we've taken hundreds of students just like you to serve in Nicaragua, and God has used each of them to impact people with the love of Jesus! This packet is designed to give you all the details you need about the trip and why we want you to be involved! Whether you've been on a mission trip before or not, this trip will pull you out of your comfort zone and put you in situations to minister to people in a Third World Country! I promise, you will never be the same!

The needs in Nicaragua are greater than any other time over the past decade! Your involvement on this team will be an opportunity to provide hope and encouragement to people who desperately need it! And in spite of what people are dealing with, God is moving and we get to join Him in His work to the people in Nicaragua.

The organization we are working with, Chosen Children Ministries, is top-notch and will take care of us throughout the trip!

You can register online at westridge.com/students beginning September 17th at 4pm. The registration deadline is October 29th at 11:59pm (*or until all spots are filled up*) and \$150 is due when you register.

I am excited about the possibility of serving with you on this trip! Get ready, because it will be a trip that will change your life! I hope and pray that you will join me and other team members for Nicaragua 2024!

Todd Hampton
High School & Family Ministries Pastor
West Ridge Church
(770) 222-2125
toddh@westridge.com

WHY NICARAGUA?

There are many countries with needs, so why did we choose to be involved in the country of Nicaragua? Here are some facts to consider:

- Nicaragua is the 2nd poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.
- Almost 80% of the population lives on less than \$2/day (www.hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/NIC). The COVID-19 pandemic has caused many people to lose their means of income, making the fight against poverty even more difficult!
- Less than 43% of the country is considered Evangelical Christians (<https://joshuaproject.net/countries/NU>). The need for the Gospel is great!
- The two biggest physical needs in the Nicaraguan villages where we visit are food and water. Many of these villages don't have clean drinking water and children can sometimes go days without food.
- The organization we work with is one of the most dedicated, organized, and missional ministries in the entire country. They keep the team safe but also provide us opportunities to make a significant impact on the people.
- Because of our involvement since 2011, we've been part of bringing transformation to villages like The Flags and Rene Nunez, two of the poorest villages in the entire country. We've helped build churches, homes, a school, a feeding station, wells, given financial resources to send over 150 kids to school, and provided resources to help them develop an agricultural system. Best of all, we've seen hundreds of people trust Jesus as Savior!



COST & TRAININGS

FINANCIAL DEADLINES

The following amounts need to be turned in by the dates listed:

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. AT REGISTRATION | \$150.00 (deposit) |
| 2. DECEMBER 10, 2023 | \$900.00 |
| 3. JANUARY 21, 2024 | \$1,045.00 |

TOTAL COST - \$2,095.00

**Please note that these are hard deadlines due to purchase of plane tickets and other expenses. If amount is not turned in by date listed, the student's spot on the trip could be forfeited.*

***All Paperwork and Passports due by December 10, 2023**

MANDATORY TEAM TRAININGS

*The following Pre AND Post Trip Trainings are **required** for all members of the team. The Trainings will be in the Multi-Purpose Theater unless communicated otherwise.*

Sunday, January 21st - TEAM TRAINING #1, 12:45-2:45pm

Sunday, January 28th - TEAM TRAINING #2, 12:45-2:45pm

Sunday, February 4th - TEAM TRAINING #3, 12:45-2:45pm

Sunday, February 11th - TEAM TRAINING #4, 12:45-2:45pm

Sunday, March 3rd - POST TRIP MEETING, 12:45-2:45pm

RAISING SUPPORT

One reason why many students don't sign up for a Missions Trip is because they don't have the money. The truth is not many families can write a check for the full amount. That's why one of the key aspects of your involvement in these trips is raising funds to help underwrite the cost of the trip. And it is possible!

All gifts are tax deductible (**checks should be made payable to West Ridge Church, noting your assigned code in the memo.**) In accordance with IRS Contribution Code, these funds, though tracked for administrative purposes in association with your personal code, are not funds specifically for you to use or for your own benefit. These funds will be solicited as contributions, and as such, are **non-refundable to either the team member or donor**, unless the team member is unable to attend for COVID-19 reasons. In that case, we will give the team member the option of joining a future missions trip using the available funds. That being said, typically funds are to remain in an account for this trip alone, and are non-transferrable towards other trips. NOTE: West Ridge Church does not organize or put on fundraisers, nor is fundraising allowed during services or events.

Here are some helpful tips about fundraising for this trip:

- Send your support letters out as soon as possible! The longer you wait to do this, the harder it will be to meet the financial deadlines. Deadlines are absolute! Failure to meet deadlines can result in you not being able to participate on the trip. Members with a balance at the time of the trip will be unable to participate.
- You will find a sample letter in this packet. Take the letter, personalize it, copy it, and send it to as many people as you can.
- Also include a self-addressed stamped envelope with every letter your mail out. Put your Code in BIG letters and have it come to the WRC office by using the church's address below. Once you have been approved to be part of the trip, you will be assigned a personal code for accounting purposes. It is important that this code be referenced not only on your outgoing envelopes, but also incoming checks.

West Ridge Church
High School Missions - HS2402 _____ (*Your Code)
3522 Hiram Acworth Hwy
Dallas, GA 30157

- If you have any money to turn in please hand-deliver cash or checks to the WRC Office.
- Keep a record for yourself of all gifts you receive.
- Cash and checks are ok to turn in but you can also make donations online. If someone gives you a check they can receive a tax-deductible receipt from the church. You will also be sent a donation link once you register for the trip that people can use to donate online. Anyone who makes online donations will also receive a tax-deductible receipt.
- Never, under any circumstances, mail cash.
- Send each person who sent you money a 'Thank You' note.

RAISING SUPPORT (CONT.)

Raising support for this trip starts with forming a Support Team. Your support team is a group of people who join you in ministry through prayer, encouragement, and financial support. Those who give you money and pray for you are just as important as those who go on the trip.

Question: *Who do I send letters to?*

Answer: *Everyone you can think of!*

- Make a list of possible supporters. Pray about who should be on the list. Ask God for wisdom. Have your family help you with a list of people too. Your list could include relatives, co-workers/parents' co-workers, neighbors, friends, teachers, coaches, etc.
- Pray over each letter that you send out. Your faith will increase through this process as you trust God to provide the needed funds.
- ***If you need help writing Support Letters and forming a team, we will have a Support Raising Meeting on Sunday, November 5th at 12:45pm in the Discovery Room at West Ridge Church. During this meeting we will help you develop the heart and practices to effectively raise support for the trip. There are also scholarship opportunities through various missions organizations that we will make you aware of.***

SAMPLE SUPPORT LETTER

Dear _____,

I would like to tell you about an exciting opportunity that I have coming up in February 2024. I am going on a mission trip to Nicaragua! For one week, I will be part of a team from West Ridge Church. I will be visiting and ministering with a church, school, and with community outreaches to help impact this area. I will also participate in sharing the Gospel, construction projects, ministering to children, as well as helping serve those struggling with poverty and other issues. My prayer is that I will be an instrument to be used by God.

This trip is being organized and led by West Ridge Church. The pastors leading this trip have had extensive experience in missions and trips to this area.

I would like to invite you to be part of my Support Team. I consider my Support Team to be just as much a part of the trip as I am. Through prayer, encouragement, and financial provision, you are playing a huge role in helping people experience the love of Jesus!

In order for me to be part of this trip, I have a responsibility to raise funds for the trip. I am responsible for raising \$2,095 to help pay for the cost of the trip. This is a significant amount of money. But with God's help and provision, I know that this will be met. I can't wait to see what God does as a result of my time serving Him there!

Would you please consider joining my Support Team for this trip? Any gift you could send would help make a big difference to underwrite the cost of this trip. Also, every prayer you commit to praying for me daily will make a huge difference in the lives of the people we will be serving. Please pray that God will bless our efforts as we travel to share God's love.

In Christ,

(YOUR NAME)

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions:

- All gifts are tax deductible (Please make checks payable to West Ridge Church).
- 100% of your gift goes towards underwriting the cost of this trip and the team member will be credited for amount raised. These funds are not transferrable towards other trips in the event the participant is unable to go.
- Each team member is responsible to raise their funds (just like missionaries do).
- My first financial deadline of **\$900** is due **December 10th** to secure my airfare. The balance is due by **January 21st**.
- **Please reference the code # (not the name) listed on your return envelope in the memo portion of your check. (PERSONAL CODE: HS2402 _____). This is very important!**

PASSPORT INFORMATION

****Routine service can take 8-12 weeks for the processing of a U.S. Passport and expedited service takes 4-6 weeks. We strongly recommend that you apply for your Passport once you register for the trip to ensure that you get it back in time.***

For New Applications:

Visit http://travel.state.gov/passport/get/first/first_830.html

Because of COVID-19, some of the requirements and processes have changed to apply for a Passport. This website will have up-to-date information on how to apply for a Passport and what locations you can go to in order to apply. The Paulding County Courthouse is not accepting applications, but there are other locations in the area that are.

For Renewal Applications:

Visit <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/have-passport/renew.html>

SKILLS NECESSARY FOR ALL TEAM MEMBERS

- Willingness to grow
- Ability to be flexible and adapt to changes in schedule
- Courage to try something new
- Unity - Focused on building God's Kingdom and nothing else!
- Hard work
- Servant Attitude
- Encouragement
- Selflessness
- Teachable
- Love for People
- Desire to share the Gospel

COMMITMENT FOR ALL TEAM MEMBERS

- Attend all Team Meetings and Team Trainings.
- Take on the attitude of a leader in our high school ministry. Lead by example.
- Consistent walk with Christ.
- Regular attendance at Reckless and Small Groups throughout the year.
- Serve/Worship at West Ridge Church on Sunday mornings.

vaccines

Currently, no routine Vaccines are required for entry into Nicaragua, but several are recommended. The CDC recommends that all people entering the country are up-to-date on their routine vaccines, and there are additional ones (*Hep A, Malaria, Yellow Fever, etc*) that are optional. You can go to <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/nicaragua> to check for up-to-date vaccine information leading up to the trip. *NOTE:* As of September 1, 2023, COVID-19 Vaccines are not required for International travel to Nicaragua.

COVID-19 GUIDELINES

As of September 1, 2023, the government of Nicaragua no longer requires a negative COVID PCR test in order to gain entry into the country. The United States government also does not require a negative COVID test to enter back into the country. If any of this changes, we will communicate that out to all team members and work to provide the necessary options for testing.



West Ridge Church
3522 Hiram Acworth Hwy
Dallas, GA 30157
Phone: 770-222-2125
Fax: 770-222-2128
www.westridge.com/students