

2024 4TH QUARTER

RAIZ
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MERRY CHRISTMAS!



Raíz Empowerment Program Christmas Party!

Definitely one of our highlights this year was giving our students a Christmas party. Most of them would never have the opportunity to celebrate like this. They were all so excited and dressed their best for the occasion. Thank you so much to our supporters for making this possible!



Raíz is Impacting & Touching Lives Everyday

Thank you to our 2024 Teams and Team Leaders!

Camps are one of the many ways that Raíz impacts at-risk young adults in the Dominican Republic. Short-term teams help host these camps and make an everlasting positive impact on our students who are in desperate need of encouragement & unconditional love. What a great year!



2024 IMPACT REPORT

Project Costs & Social Impact Stories

Cost Summary

Empowerment Educational Program (impacted 40 Youth & Young Adults) = \$13,833.45 USD

Camps (funds only spent on local participants - impacted 76 local youth & adults) = \$12,192.82 USD

Benevolence & Medical (impacted 16 families) = \$4,663.00 USD

Emergency Feeding Program (impacted 14 families) = \$5,503.00 USD

All 2024 Teams (impacted 40 US participants) = \$52,450.00 USD

Total Impact Cost = \$88,642.27 USD

Social Impact Report

We could have written a book with the amount of stories that came from our camps and programs this year. Raíz has been so blessed with an incredible group of students that we are inspired by every day. It was difficult to choose, but here are two that we would like to highlight. Meet Carmen and Kervenson.



Carmen

What does it mean to show love? It is a question we often ask ourselves. There are many answers to this question and many faces that appear in our minds when we think of love. Love given and love received. But this year perhaps the sharpest face we see is Carmen's. First, a face in pain. We find her crying in her concrete home, hopeless and in need. We ask her the same question. How can we help you? How can we show you love? Food for her children is her only request. She is out of water, too, giving everything she has to make sure her kids are okay. But mostly, Carmen feels alone.

Only twenty-eight and a single mother of two, Carmon has very few options. We place her immediately on our feeding program and invite her to our Women's Empowerment Camp. It does not solve all of Carmen's problems or take away her pain. But she feels seen, like a hand on her shoulder as she walks through the fire.

Carmen comes to our women's camp and shines. She is suffering from many health problems, but she does not say anything. She lights up the room instead and extends her hand to the other girls to help raise them up above their circumstances.

Carmen starts to trust us. She asks for help with her health. It is becoming too much for her to even get out of bed, let alone care for her two young children. We keep walking with her through this journey, doing everything we can to get her answers. All the while, she participates in our programs, still suffering silently but as compassionate as ever.

At the end of 2024, Carmen is healthy. She received the treatment that she needed for her physical needs and is now in the process of recovery. Her smile now has hope behind it. She is a leader in our community, showing the younger generation what it means to be strong.

If you ask Carmen, she would say that this year has shifted her life and her thinking. She now has the motivation to fight for her family and her goals. Raíz had the opportunity to love her, to show her that she is valuable and worthy of support, and to speak life over her and her children. Carmen is no longer alone. And Raíz cannot wait to see the difference she makes in 2025.



Kervenson

Kevin has the brightest smile you have ever seen. From the moment he first shows up to our sports camp in July, he just radiates positivity. He has one of those personalities like sunshine, brightening up everyone's day. Kevin brings this energy every day to camp, and people are drawn to his inclusive style of leadership.

Kevin is Haitian which should not matter when it comes to his future. But here in the Dominican Republic, it does. Haitians are given very little opportunity to succeed and are often taken advantage of in the workforce. Many of them are denied the ability to become citizens, even if they are born here, and are taken back to Haiti if they do not have papers. It is a harsh reality, a scary one, for many Haitian people living in the DR.

Kevin is only 18 and should not live in fear of being taken from his home, but he does. He has to be careful when he goes out in the street, where he works, and even where he goes to school. One day, after our Empowerment program, Kevin is picked up by immigration and put in the back of a truck. A few of our other students call us, and we are able to find his family and get him released this time, but we are lucky. Our Haitian students have to deal with this reality every day.

Raíz programs are open to Dominicans and Haitians alike, and it is beautiful to see the barriers of racism being broken down in the younger generation. They help each other and love each other without prejudice. Especially Kevin, who has found a strong and uplifting community through our programs.

Raíz cannot change the systematic oppression within the government here, but we can provide a safe place where Kevin feels like he belongs. We are in his corner, and we are fighting to make it possible for him to achieve his goals and have a successful life. Kevin always has joy, but now he has hope too. And Raíz is excited to help guide him towards a future that is as bright as he is.

**We thank you for your continued support,
prayers, and encouragement!**

*Holly & Timothy Garland,
Board of Directors & Raíz Staff*