Disc Golf in the Land of Lakes and Volcanoes

After receiving the Marco Polo Grant from the PDGA in March of 2016, the Disc Golf Nicaragua team, partners, and friends have been hard at work.

Federación Nicaragüense de Disco Volador (FENIDIVO) and the Nicaraguan Olympic Committee

As one of our first steps, our team submitted a request for four associations and a national federation through our legal advisor in order to obtain official status as an organization within the Nicaraguan government. He created the constitution for the associations and we have been visiting various departments to foster growth of disc golf in each department of Nicaragua. After the associations are finalized, then we will submit an application of the creation of a federation under Nicaraguan legal guidelines. Currently, we are running clinics and events in the department associations in order to build the executive boards and acquire new members. After the process for associations and federation is finalized, the organizations will be established as a non-profit, opening doors for further grant funding. Serendipitously, Breaking Borders, a group promoting Ultimate Frisbee has been simultaneously introducing the flying disc in Nicaragua and we have since partnered in FENIDIVO to strengthen our communications and collaboration.

By having these official organizations we can participate in international events, such as the Central American Olympics XI held in Managua December 2017. As well, it allows us to educate students about the sport in schools, universities, and communities which provides us credibility and access to additional funding.
Empowering the Youth, Encouraging a New Path, and Creation of the First PDGA Marco Polo Grant Course

The second part of the grant was to work with a ministry and the students of Finca Belen. Finca Belen is a rehabilitation farm/school that works with local impoverished communities and street kids. The property is located directly on the Pan-American Highway, just south of the Honduran border. They teach and work with local communities in the areas of higher yield agricultural practices, beautician schooling, sports development, and welding/woodworking. Approximately 6-12 different students have been learning how to build disc golf targets as part of their welding school.
On this same property, we have designed and constructed a 9 hole course with 2-3 tee pads for developing varying skills and growth. With their schooling and new trade, the students have constructed targets that look and function amazingly. Course construction was performed by our team along with the students and other volunteers. It was a fantastic experience, especially when they didn’t fully understand what the concept of disc golf fully was besides the fun we had practicing beforehand. Once the course was completed, they have enjoyed seeing the results and have been able to play the new sport, empowering them in various facets. Pastor Martin has really taken to the sport and has been a spokesperson for disc golf already with his fun and energetic attitude. We think he might get the first ace on the course!

Multiple work trips over several months finished with a grand opening on June 24th, 2016 for Finca Belen Disc Golf. A mission team from California, the students, local community members, pastors from around the country, and sports programmers were all in attendance adding to over 50 participants. An introduction regarding the PDGA grant and vision, a clinic, and a doubles event lasted for 4 hours and the results were all positive with great feedback from the players - 6 years of age to 65 years of age. The local communities have brought people to play at the course and another mission group planned a trip to bring more discs and continue enhancing the course.

**Campamento Converge Disc Golf Course in Honduras**

Through the ministry, we were invited to a church camp in Tegucigalpa, Honduras in February. Other pastors from different parts of Honduras and the facility directors and managers became very interested in disc golf, especially a course on the property of Campamento Bautista Converge. We arranged the next trip to design and construct the course in coordination with Oglesby Union Church mission group for June 30 - July 4th, 2016. The 8 team members
from Oglesby Union Church had a very successful disc donation, gathering around 210 discs, 40+ solar lights and other equipment for night disc golf.

The 6 hole course was completed in a beautiful pine forest with painted rock tee signs, 2-3 mulch tees per hole, benches, 2 targets for Disc Shoes, and 1 target for Around 9 all within 3 days! The targets were also created by the students and staff at Finca Belen in Nicaragua and delivered with final assembly in Tegucigalpa. The trip ended with a very successful grand opening of more than 100 Hondurans of all age ranges. Spirits were high, and the on-site manager is now a big advocate for disc golf (he even got a difficult hole in 1 for a beginner)! The course has been in continuous use as they host many camps throughout the year and the guests have been loving it!

NCA - Matagalpa Feria Familiar

Following these grand openings, we have also offered our devotions as part of the associations/federation to the Nicaraguan Christian Academy - Matagalpa. Several years ago, a mission group installed a homemade disc golf course on the property, and through the successful development of the school and classroom expansion, it had been disassembled. Pro disc golfer, Tim McDill, and I offered to teach the director and physical education teachers the rules and play of disc golf. They were intrigued and invited our team back to redesign the course. Once an 18 hole mix of object and homemade targets, we reduced it to a quality 9 hole homemade target course for youth ages 5-12 in a safer area of the property away from buildings and easily visible by teachers when students are playing the entire course. On July 31st, 2016 we were invited to attend a school fair open to the community called Feria Familiar that is themed for the International Olympics. We had a booth and taught students and family members how to play disc
golf. There was even an ace had that day! It was a great opportunity for us to show community members the fun and excitement of disc golf - and was well received by all who participated.

**Impact Disc Golf**

We then touched base with another mission group, Faithful Stewards and Impact Disc Golf that wanted to develop two 9 hole courses in a community they have been working with the past 11 years near the capitol of Nicaragua in Managua. They brought a great crew led by Brandon Meier including professional and world champion, Jim Oates. With discs, portables, and permanent baskets, the week long trip included clinic demonstrations, course design/installation, and grand opening play. Our partnership has been tremendous with other projects in the works including league development for the community and a national tour of 8 new courses (mix of temporary and permanent). Nicaraguan leaders, both adults and youth, have gained interest in furthering the sport within their communities.

With the creation of the disc golf associations, our goal is to have at least one course central to each department that will help build the involvement and strengthen the bonds of the association. Through further networking and extensive research, we have found another ministry that educates students in welding that is central in the country. Their craftsmanship and passion for what they do has been outstanding.

**La Finca Vida Joven, Jinotega, Nicaragua and Creation of the Second PDGA Marco Polo Grant Course**

Once we completed the first portion of the grant funding, the PDGA released the second portion of funds. We were then introduced to La Finca Vida Joven (LFVJ) in Jinotega, Nicaragua. “Vida Joven” means “young life” in Spanish. This has been one of the best projects we have worked on as our visions align for presenting one of the best disc golf courses possible on their property for the youth, making it a main activity for their camps, mission groups, and other visitors. As well, it is the prime facility and group of people to host youth championships. Most importantly, the team of directors and staff are some of the friendliest people and an incredible group to work with, which has been truly heartfelt.

LFVJ has quickly become Central America’s premier disc golf course, with 2 sets of large cement tee pads, 2 movable pin positions, and walking trail/cart paths. The beautification of the grounds, as well as the effort they have
dedicated to the project is something highly admirable and will only continue to grow with future mission groups and volunteer projects. The course traverses through the large rainforest trees, exotic vegetation, orchids, the coffee farm mountains, and will be highly memorable for all. The course tells a story of coffee from seed to cup, as well as spiritual references to daily life - dreams, struggles, faith, and perseverance.

LFVJ is one of the largest Christian youth camps in Nicaragua with 96 clubs consisting of more than 3,840 new members join the groups located throughout the country and many more world-wide. Every year, more than 9,000 campers, mission groups, and other guests visit this beautiful property. Next May, there will be the first ever Young Life international conference held at LFVJ which will introduce more people around the world to disc golf. They even produce coffee that is ranked in the top 3% internationally!

A couple months after the majority of the construction was finished, we had the opportunity to host the first annual disc golf tournament for all the leaders of Vida Joven around the country. With 50+ participants enjoying a friendly and exciting competition (it reminded us of “Survivor” - disc golf edition), both the first ever male and female champions were crowned and are spreading the word of disc golf back in their communities.
We are honored to help create this majestic course and promote the sport with help from the Professional Disc Golf Association’s Marco Polo Grant and an absolutely incredible team of staff and volunteers. After successfully implementing the PDGA Marco Polo Grant, we have now received the Development Grant from the World Flying Disc Federation (WFDF). These funds are going toward the permanent installation of a course on the largest university in the capital of Managua, Nicaragua with over 20,000 students.

**World Flying Disc Federation Development Grant for Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua (UNAN)**

With all our unified combined efforts, we are now hosting the Nicaragua Disc Golf Tour 2017 in association with the Central American Olympics XI with an exhibition game on the campus of Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua (UNAN). The dates are November 26 - December 4th, 2017. We are inviting all disc golfers, top players, movers and shakers of the sport to further help educate and keep the momentum going by hosting clinics and sharing the love of the game with teachers, professors, students, and anyone interested. The tour will visit 8-9 disc golf venues including several incredible courses directly on the Pacific Coast oceanfront. We look forward to around 1,000-2,000 participants throughout the tour as we have been reaching out to large companies for sponsorships and have been asked for interviews on the major television networks and radio stations.

**Nicaragua Disc Golf Tour 2017**
LEARN AND PLAY DISC GOLF WITH SOME OF THE BEST PLAYERS IN THE WORLD

DISC GOLF NICARAGUA TOUR CALENDAR 2017

Young Life Camp ~ Jinotega
November 28, 8am - 4pm

UNAN Exhibition Game ~ Managua
November 29, 8am - 4pm
Part of the Central American Games!

Marsella Valley ~ San Juan del Sur
November 30, 8am - 4pm

Finca Popoyo ~ Tola
December 1, 9am - 12pm

Gigante Bay ~ Tola
December 1, 2pm - 5pm

Hacienda Iguana ~ Tola
December 2, 9am - 12pm

Gran Pacifica ~ Villa El Carmen
December 2, 4pm to December 3, 4pm

The first 100 registered participants get a golf disc, glow in the dark mini, and other items. A $25 value!

For More Information: info@discgolfnicaragua.com - www.aventuradiscgolf.com
Nicaraguans have already taken to the sport, it’s now up to the international disc golf family to help us reach out to the kindest and very deserving people disc golf can bring joy to. As many recent natural disasters have devastated many parts of the world, Tropical Storm/Hurricane Nate hit Nicaragua hard and just a few days ago another major storm affected a different part of the country with similar results. Through our efforts we would like to help bring attention to the aid needed in these affected communities and provide them a break from time to time to enjoy this great sport that we know can help be healing and uplifting.

**Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners of the Americas**

Another group we have been coordinating with is the Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners of the Americas. Since the inauguration in 1965, invaluable collaboration and outreach has evolved in the areas of cultural diversity, education, health, humanitarian assistance, sports, women and family, and youth. Even the United States Air Force has participated delivering firetrucks, ambulances, and other aid. Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners of the Americas has recently approved the acceptance for donations of Disc Golf and Ultimate Frisbee equipment. The headquarters in Wisconsin is based out of Stevens Point, one of the leading hotbeds of disc golf culture in the midwest. For those interested in helping with any donations, multiple shipments are delivered throughout the year.

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For anyone interested in donating, please address to FENIDIVO. All donations help with community and association development. The people with whom we have worked with and built relationships have become close personal friends we value deeply. The communities we’ve interacted with, families that have welcomed us into their homes, and the social/economical issues we are able to address are invaluable and empowering for everyone.

On behalf of Federación Nicaragüense de Disco Volador (FENIDIVO), SEED Discs, Disc Golf Nicaragua, Aventura Disc Golf, and Impact Disc Golf, we graciously thank the Professional Disc Golf Association for this opportunity to spread the love of disc golf throughout Nicaragua and Central America with all the continued support.

For more information on our projects, events, and more, please visit us at [seeddiscs.org](http://seeddiscs.org), [aventuradiscgolf.com](http://aventuradiscgolf.com), [impactdiscgolf.net](http://impactdiscgolf.net), and [wisnic.org](http://wisnic.org)

**Nicaragua Disc Golf Tour 2017 Trailer**

Oh, and we also planted some Bamboo....