

## TESTIMONIALS – AMBASSADOR EXPERIENCE!

### #1

This year I had the opportunity to be an exchange student and it's been one of the best experiences of my life. At the beginning, I was really nervous but I knew that this experience was going to help me in a lot of aspects of my life. In this trip, I became more mature, and I had to choose between good and bad because I knew my dad wasn't going to be there for me, and that's why at the same time I became more independent. Davidson Academy was the school in which I spent the 2 months, and this school is incredible. Everyone was really nice and everybody was really interested to know about Guatemala, then I became the ambassador of my country because I shared my culture with them.

My host family was really nice too, but I need to say that my experience was different from almost every other one, because I didn't have a sixteen-year-old sister with me, I had a six-year-old brother with me. But this family gave me the great opportunity to go and get to know Washington and New York. Well, this means that I had one of the best opportunities in life, during this trip I became I different person, and I get to know and learn things about life that I didn't knew before this and I know that this will help me a lot when I grow up. Besides that, I get to learn about another culture and I taught about my own culture. And one of the most important things is that I had fun. It was incredible.

***Sofia Alarcón***

DAVIDSON ACADEMY

### #2

What could I tell about my experience as an exchange student in Nashville? I could say everyone that this experience was a really good experience for, I did not only learn and perfection ate my English but also met all this magnificent persons and friends. This experience helped me to be more independent and not to be afraid in communicating with other people. Participating in the Faces Program made me realize how fortunate I am. At first, I was really nervous, the idea of being with a new and different family made me really nervous, but not as to be in a new school with totally new people. The life with my new family was really different, because there I was in a house full of girls (that was something more comfortable), and I am used to life with boys because I have two brothers. We spend really nice times, either talking or playing (with the little one, Kendra).

At school it was really nice, everyone was always nice with us, and we had a lot of nice experiences like; the football game ... we went to all the games until the last one (the one for the state championship), we also had the fall formal, and al lot of nice moment in our classes. I believe that one of the things we will never forget, is that in our last day of school, we weren't



able to go, because our school closed. All in all, I will never forget all those two amazing months I spend with my exchange family (Kara, Kendra and Sherry), my Davidson friends and last but not least my new friends from Guatemala; Sofi, Pablo, Sam and Victor.

***Sofia Ruballos***

DAVIDSON ACADEMY

**#3**

My experience as an exchange student changed my life. It helped me in many ways, not only I learned more English but I learned about another culture, and mostly about myself. I was so nervous to go to another country with a different language but I was really excited. I felt so happy and comfortable with my host family since the very first moment at the airport. I spent two amazing months with my host family, they are amazing. They are now a big part of my heart. This great experience taught me to open my mind and try new things and to be more independent. I did so many things I didn't know I was capable to do, this was the first time without my family and it was hard, but I'm glad because I learned how to do things by myself. In my school everyone was nice to me and wanted to know how I was doing while I was there. It was fun to share the classes with all the students, mostly Spanish. Although everyone treated me nice at school and my house, sometimes I felt homesick but I learned how to trust God and to know that everything was going to be all right. When I was in TN, I felt so good talking about my country because most of the people didn't know anything about Guatemala, so I was so happy because through the exchange students they get to know more about this beautiful country, and they get to know too that we have almost everything they have. I had an amazing experience, but this wouldn't be possible without the support of my dear host family and faces program... I'm so grateful with them, and I'm happy that I had the opportunity of participate in this exchange program.

***Sofia Chang***

FRANKLIN CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

**#4**

First of all, I would like to start by saying that my experience as an exchange student was amazing! I always got this crazy idea about Nashville being a really old fashion city! But guess what?? I was completely wrong, because it turned to be a really nice place to visit. Through my journey I got the chance to meet some of the most wonderful I will ever know, and I am glad to say that now I have friendships that will last forever! One of the things that I liked the most was my host family; they always tried the way to make me feel welcomed and loved. I certainly had a good time and Hendersonville Christian Academy was awesome! But the place that I liked the



most was the church LONG HOLLOW! I really liked the way people treated me since the beginning, most of the people I met was from this church, they were really nice and they always tried the way to get me involved with the American culture. liked everything about my journey, but, I guess that the thing that I liked the most was the lesson I learned through this experience, and it is that I love my Guatemala, now I realized how lucky I am for having the life that I have, now I know that I would not change it for anything in the world, the love of my family and the warmth of my people makes me feel thankful for my life, I definitely liked this experience, but the place I belong is GUATEMALA!

***Jaqui Charupe***

HENDERSONVILLE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

**#5**

My experience as an exchange student was awesome I still missing been there. I learn a lot of things like appreciate more my family and all that I have because been a thousand miles from your home it's not easy, but of course when you arrive in the airport you are very nervous but when you meet all this wonderful people you forget all the nervous that you had.

I can say that the changes are always good I mean changes like going to another country and leaving everything but you still are the same person you learn to be more independent, more open with the people.

All the people that I met there were awesome. I'm thankful with my families and my schools. I learn a lot of each one as my friends, family and teachers. It's something that I can't forget and its people that are in my heart. They were always for me if I was homesick they give me their affection. The cultures are very different like similar but you learn every day of that, and now I see all with different eyes in a good way. You see that been from different cultures you still been human and all the people were always watching if we were ok asking every time that we talk with them... Been an exchange student from faces it's something that I'll never forget.

***Monica Pivaral***

HENDERSONVILLE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

**#6**

My experience of being an Exchange student in Jackson, Tennessee was amazing. I learned how to speak English very good. I also learned to speak it without shyness because now I can talk to anyone I want in English; I just refine it. In this experience I made new friends that had been incredible with me in this past two months, they will always have a space in heart and in my life



as also as my family. My family was really awesome because they were always attentive with me and also really sweet. In this past two months, I also missed my family and friends from Guatemala but I needed to know how to be independent in a new country and how to defend myself. This experience changed my life, now I appreciate all the things that I have here because it made me realize that nothing compares it to what I have in my country, my culture, my family and my friends. I learned about the American culture and it was really interesting what they did different from us but it was great doing some new things because I'll never do it again like I did in this 2 months. I'm glad I went in the Faces Program 2008, it really changed my thought, it made me practice my English and I made friends that I will never forget. I'm so glad that I met them.

***Carol Sabrina***

JACKSON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

**#7**

IT WAS AMAZING. My experience as an exchange student in Jackson, Tennessee was really big and full of amazing things and many life lessons that I can apply my life. When I was there I opened many doors to the world and myself, I greatly improve my English, I knew a culture and what made it more interesting is that I lived with it and learned from it, the new thinking and perspectives that I acquired, my independence, responsibility and wider perspective for every situation. When we left Atlanta to Nashville I felt more pressure, nervousness and intrigue on how would be my family, my school, my colleagues and all those people that I shared with. And now all finished very soon and I am very grateful to all the people who I knew because they always tried to help me, they really make me felt comfortable and with a lot of wishes to go back, they were unconditional, comprehensive and above all very good to me. I am particularly grateful with my Jackson family (The Powell's) because they are really wonderful and I join many ties and I am sure that it will be forever. Being an exchange student has given me some of the best memories.

I am pretty sure that as I learned so many things when I was there, they also learned something from my visit and what I did in representation of our culture and our country Guatemala. I missed my family when I was there but the experience was much bigger for me that I am so appreciated and thankful with my family for giving me this great opportunity. I am very happy to have participated in this exchange and the truth is that I do not regret of anything.

***Mariale Morales***

JACKSON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



## #8

I'm so glad I had the opportunity of this trip not just because I learned better English but also because I had a great host family and an awesome school to assist. At the first time I was really nervous but I just got in the family really fast. The second thing wasn't easy was starting at another school, that was pretty scary because I was the only exchange student at "Saint Edward." That was scary at the first time but I get used to it. I think that also made me learn a little bit of more English because I couldn't speak any Spanish. I'm really thankful because I met pretty cool and nice people. It was really difficult for me when I had to leave. It was sad because my host family was so nice with me as well as my friends but I was also happy because I was going to see my family again.

When I was leaving I just could wish to stay there for a little bit longer because I had an amazing time there at school and at the house. I noticed that my life was going to change since I went there but I realized that it changes more than what I thought. It was more than good been with the Drexler's I can't think at another family; I could feel better that at theirs. And I can't think at another school either. I just needed to thank everyone I knew there even the people I just talk once. I'm so thankful of having the opportunity of meeting every single person I meet there. I had the opportunity of meeting some people more than others but I'm so thankful cause I did I got really good friendships from there. It's weird but I'm thankful because I have a computer to write emails to most of the people.

***Alejandra Rubio***

ST. EDWARD SCHOOL

## #9

I got to say that my experience as an exchange student was wonderful, from the family I stayed with, to the school I went, the whole experience was unforgettable. I really didn't know what to expect from Nashville, from my family or from my school. It was all really a surprise to me, even though I knew to which school I was going to attend to and I had already contacted my family. I didn't feel nervous, as many others did, because I knew it was going to be an amazing experience, and indeed it was.

It was kind of weird at the beginning to start talking to people, because I am a shy guy, but as time went, I got to meet really wonderful people, to whom I can call my friends now; actually, I got to meet more people and made more friends than what I thought I would meet. I did some things I wanted to try, like being part of the newspaper in my school, and I really enjoyed every activity I was part of.



As any experience, there are some hard times, but I had really none of them, and if I had some, they were irrelevant or silly, so I went through them, like some disagreements with my siblings or other tiny things like that.

I really appreciate the relationship that was built with my siblings, they were really kind to me, really friendly, they gave me someone to trust in, and they seemed to trust in me too. We shared lots of good and fun times together, and I really miss them because of that. I also made some really good friends that were open to me from the beginning and with whom I also had a great time, like being part of a team with some of them, making a funny video for a class, helping in a cookie store, and other really fun activities.

I had a really great time with my family, especially over Thanksgiving Day, when I met my oldest brother. They were so thoughtful and were always watching over me to see if I needed anything. They also shared a lot of things with me about the family; as well as I did with them about my family.

The experience at the school was the best; I just love the school I went to. The teachers and staff were really nice and taught me a lot of things. They were also checking if we needed something. We became good friends with the other exchange students too. I just wish I could repeat the experience.

***Estuardo Villatoro***

UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF NASHVILLE & CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN ACADEMY

**#11**

"Is a way to waste your vacations!" that was my opinion about the exchange programs, before I know about FACES. The experience that you lived on an exchange program, is just AMAZING because there are a lot of thing that make it be like that.

The first big experience that you lived is meeting with your host family, that let you feel that you are in home and also will come your family. I never thought that my host family will be such as my family. I said this because we have a lot of characteristics that makes us alike, such as we are 4 in each family (father Tom, mother Susie, son Hunter and daughter Meghan), I'm 16 so is my brother, my sister is 20 and Meghan is 19, they way they act is the same, etc. Another characteristic is that we like to do similar things on weekends. For all this things, the roll that the host family plays on the exchange is really important and that's why they are for me they are more than a host family.



Another part where you are most of the time is the school, a place where you can find friends, fun, education and good memories. The school that I went was CPA (Christ Presbyterian Academy). The first day I went to it, the principal of high school received me and the others exchange students with three seniors that are going to show us the school, where are our classrooms, the schedule and give us material to start our school time! Also there are a lot of challenges in it, for me the first two weeks I had problems to understand what they said to me. I like the way they received classes more, because they use computers more than in here, classes with different groups of people, one hour for lunch, and a lot of more things. To have a small number of persons in each class help you to know them and make friend. The games of football, volleyball, basketball are really fun; with everyone following the cheerleaders to cheering up the team is a really good combination. But the best part of school are the friends you make there, because they invite you to go to their homes without knowing about you, and help you with everything you need, making so special you time in school.

Been an exchange student help me, because sometimes you during the exchange you have to take your own decisions, you have take care of your money, yourself, in other words you have to take care of everything. I learned about these things during the time I was there. I know another culture, another way of think, and another way to be. Also you make thinks that you never think you are going to do or see, like: real camping, shoot with a shotgun, snow, or the trees on fall.

Something really important that, for me, will be useful on the future is that you learned is to don't have fear about speaking English, now I feel more comfortable writing, and reading it, because I understand it better, because you learned to think in English.

For all the things I lived and all the things I learned I'm so glad for been part of FACES '08, and have all those good moments, friends and family that are going to be always in my heart. Thanks FACES, CPA and Klein family for everything.

***Rodrigo Pacheco***

CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN ACADEMY