

# If you really knew Eric Dunford...

**O**n November 23, 2013, I embarked on my fifth mission trip to a small village in the poverty-stricken country of Guatemala. I went with a group of seven other volunteers, many of whom were family and members of my church. Together we traveled five hours by plane, four hours by passenger vans, and two more by boat to our destination, San Pablo.

We worked for a week alongside numerous native workers to construct a two story medical clinic. The previous year, we helped dig the foundation to a building that now only needed finishing touches. We applied an all-natural layer of mud to the walls (they don't have drywall or sheet rock). Also, we put in frames for windows and built

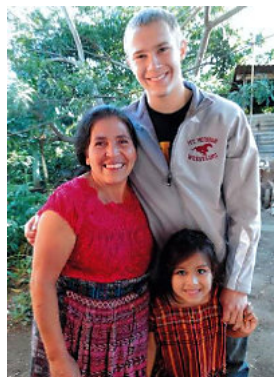
cabinets for the pharmacy. After a tiring week of hard work in extreme heat and high altitudes, it was time to make the long journey back home.

People have always asked me why I keep going back. To many, it seems silly to go through the stress of missing school, risk the chance of getting sick, and travel to a foreign country to work instead of have fun.

The answer is pretty simple. It's our duty as humans, and as well-off Americans, to help those who are less fortunate and are in need.

It only took me one trip to realize that the people of San Juan and San Pablo are in dire need of assistance. While it isn't easy, it's definitely worth it.

I've learned a lot of valuable lessons on my trips. The people of Guatemala are incredibly poor, but still seem happier than the citizens of this wonderful free land that we live in. Our society has become on dependent on "stuff" to make its people happy. My trips to Guatemala have been extremely humbling and send me home with a whole new appreciation for the life that I am fortunate to live.



Eric Dunford

Class of 2017

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Justin Manternach Casey Martin Aurora McCollum Sydney Meeker Ellie Meineke Alex Moore Samuel Moore



Lucas Moran Ryan Murphy Samuel Murray Ella Norton Nathan Novak Kevin Otten Jamie Parker

*Journey Dawa*

**Longest I've stayed awake:**

38 hours

**Best gift I've recieved:**

A unicycle

**Song I know all the words to:**

"Get Up, Stand Up" by Bob Marley



*Grace Pelley*

**Favorite singer:**

Blake Shelton

**Dream place to live:**

Tennessee

**Longest I've stayed awake:**

24 hours



*Jared Booth*

**Best Halloween costume:**

Roberto Clemente

**Go to order at a restaurant:**

Cheeseburger

**Favorite brand:**

Nike