

Costa Rica Project June 10-19, 2017





Welcome to Courts for Kids. Most likely, this is your first trip with our organization and we are confident that this trip will impact you in ways you cannot even imagine. We work closely with our in-country partner to make sure your basic needs are met, so we can all focus on the task at hand, creating a multi-purpose sports court with the initiative, help and support of the community.

A sports court is a great project because it requires the help of many community members, provides plenty of work for everyone, and becomes an asset that provides not only safe places for children to play, but also various other benefits. The hard work of our team will be a great bridge between us and the community and we will develop a mutual respect that will help provide inroads into a rich cross-cultural experience and first-hand insight into a developing world community.

We are looking for great cultural ambassadors, so please only sign up for this trip if you are willing to step outside of your comfort zone. You will need to work hard, you will be eating different foods, sleeping and bathing in less comfortable environments. But, as they say, if you want to live like you're in America, why leave!

Most importantly, we ask that you enter into this with a great sense of humility. We want you to be eager to learn and grow in this process as we are entering into a different culture with different values and norms. We want you be quick to listen and slow to speak.

We will not be giving you a detailed itinerary as things are very prone to change with this sort of construction project. But your time will be spent working on the court, taking part in various cultural activities and doing a camp on the court when it is all finished.

Please look through this informational packet and feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

If you choose to go, I can almost guarantee you will look back on this trip as a life-changing experience. You will grow so much in a week it will make you wish you could stay for longer. In fact, you will probably say this was the best week of your year.

Hope you can come!

Derek Nesland
President
Courts for Kids

Site Details

A humble community located in the mountains between Nicoya and Hojanca, Matambú is a breath of fresh air filled with peace and tranquility. In a place where everybody knows one another, Matambú is warm and welcoming to all outsiders. Its 1,600 inhabitants may seem large, but in reality the population is spread out among its large territory, which gives it a very rural small town feeling. Although the indigenous people do not live their day to day lives as they did one hundred years ago, the rich Chorotega culture can still be found within the community celebrations and activities. As one community leader says, "It is the blood that flows in our veins which makes us indigenous, not the materials or artifacts we own." Matambú is a modern community blended with a rich cultural history, creating a unique balance of culture and customs.

In Matambú, the most common sources of income are seasonal labor and government pensions. Common seasonal labor jobs include coffee harvesting, melon harvesting, bean harvesting, and corn harvesting. According to a national census conducted in 2011, 63.1% of the community is unemployed. Due to the lack of employment opportunities in the territory, the majority of the population has to travel to Nicoya, Hojanca, or other nearby towns for employment. Many people also migrate to the capital, San José, and to the beach towns for seasonal labor.

There is one elementary school in the center of Matambú and another one in another part of the territory, Matambúguito. The court will be built relatively close to the central elementary school, giving kids the opportunity to go there after school and play. Currently the school does not have a court, only a jungle gym. After the kids complete elementary school in the territory they have to travel to Nicoya or Hojanca for high school, since there is no high school in the territory. This limits their recreational opportunities, especially since the majority travel through public bus that departs right after classes end and this gives them no time to stay in the towns to do any sports. According to a national census conducted in 2011, out of 150 high school students only 8 receive a diploma, out of those 8 only 3 attend college, and out of those 3 only 1 completes college.

In addition to the traditional Costa Rican plates, such as Gallo Pinto and Arroz con Pollo, the community maintains a lot of the indigenous food customs. Corn is the base product for many of their most well-known plates, including beverages and desserts. There are over 30 different types of plates that the community makes with corn. The community is in the "blue zone," which is a location that indicates living longevity, which is according to their corn diet.

You will be staying in the heart of the community in a meeting hall. Please prepare for primitive, camping type accommodations which will allow for a full immersion into the community.

Courts for Kids makes your safety our number one priority. Being in a community with strong local awareness and ownership of the project will provide an entire town of people who will be personally invested in the safety of the team. We will have transportation available to medical facilities in the case of injuries and we also will cover all volunteers under our travel insurance policy which will provide evacuation out of the country in a worst case scenario.

Trip Costs

The Courts for Kids project will cost \$2,100 for each participant. Each student athlete is required to raise a minimum of **\$250** in order to participate. We encourage participants to raise more than the minimum, if possible, so that more students are able to participate on this trip and future ones.

The price includes airfare, airport taxes, baggage fees, food, lodging, in-country transportation, and special activities. It also includes materials to complete the construction of the court, such as cement, sand, gravel and the hoop systems. It does not include food at airports and spending money for souvenirs and snacks.

**All donations are non-refundable. If you raise/donate more than the above amount, the excess will be applied to your passport or immunization costs, the court construction costs, sports equipment or toward the balance of another trip participant.*

Flight Itinerary

Flight Itinerary

Date	Fl. #	Departure	Arrival
6/10/2017	UA 1696	Seattle 10:55pm	Houston 5:10am
6/11/2017	UA 1096	Houston 9:10am	San Jose, CR 11:55am
6/19/2017	UA 1490	San Jose 12:55pm	Houston 5:50pm
6/19/2017	UA 1744	Houston 7:10pm	Seattle 10:05pm

You will be eligible for frequent flier miles on United. To enroll, go to www.united.com.

Trip Checklist

1. **Passport-** Make sure you have a passport that will not expire before December 11, 2017*. If you need a passport, go to the nearest post office for assistance. **In order to avoid the headache and stress, make sure you get your passport on time, do it ASAP.**

2. **Payments–** Submit all payments according to the schedule below.

Amounts Due:

- \$250 by April 10, 2017

** All donations are non-refundable unless the entire project is canceled.*

3. **Vaccinations-** The recommended vaccinations for travel to Costa Rica according to the Center for Disease Control are the following (**keep in mind these are recommended, not required. Check with your local doctor and make the decision best for you**):

- a.Hepatitis A
- b.Hepatitis B
- c.Typhoid
- d.Routine (DPT, MMR, Polio)

** If your passport expires within 6 months of your entrance into the country, you will most likely not be allowed to enter.*

Additional Info

- **Social Guidelines–** Each participant will agree to abide by Courts for Kids behavioral policy which includes: 1. No drugs/alcohol, 2. No inappropriate relationships, 3. No violent behavior. For the safety of the participants, as well as the reputation of all organizations involved, we have a zero tolerance policy and will send a student athlete home upon breaking one of the above.
- **Courts for Kids Representative–** A representative from Courts for Kids will accompany the team and facilitate trip logistics.
- **Questions/concerns–** Please do not hesitate to contact Derek with any questions regarding the trip. Contact information is found on the cover page.

Sign-up form

To ensure your spot on our **University of Washington Costa Rica** trip, please return this form to:

Liberty Bracken

Name (IMPORTANT... spelling must match your passport/birth certificate including middle name (s))

Email _____

Secondary Email (Parent's if a minor) _____

Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Date of Birth _____ Grade _____

Emergency Contact Name _____

Emergency Contact Number _____

By signing below, I understand that in order to participate on this trip, the following are requirements:

- Submitting trip payments on due dates, securing passport and necessary immunizations.
- Signing a release of liability form prior to trip (To view the verbiage of the form, please contact Courts for Kids).
- Attend **mandatory** pre-trip training(s).

Signature of participant _____

(HERE IS A SAMPLE SUPPORT LETTER. IT IS BEST TO REWRITE THIS LETTER ADDING YOUR OWN WORDS TO GIVE IT A PERSONAL TOUCH. USE THE FOLLOWING AS A GUIDE)

November 1, 2016

Dear _____,

I am excited to share with you about an upcoming service project I will be taking to Costa Rica this summer in partnership with The University of Washington and Courts for Kids. I need to raise a minimum of \$250 in order to make this a reality so I am asking friends and family members to consider helping out with a tax-deductible contribution.

We will head to Costa Rica on June 10th and make our way to a rural community where we will build a multi-purpose athletic court for a community with great need for a safe place for their kids to play. Although Costa Rica is famous for its resorts and eco-tourism, many communities are far behind in basic development, leaving kids to struggle with few opportunities. The community determined that a safe place for kids to play is at the top of their list of pressing concerns.

Our primary project will be to work with this community to build this court, but we will also take part in other service and cultural learning activities as well. Our primary purpose is to serve the Costa Ricans, but also to grow and learn as we get out of our comfort zone. I am excited for the change I am sure will happen in my life and the impact we can have.

(Add a personal note here of what this trip would mean for you)

Would you consider supporting me as well as the Costa Rican community in this project? If you are interested, please make a check out to **The University of Washington** and return it in the enclosed envelope. Could you please return this envelope as soon as possible in order to make sure I hand everything in with enough time to spare? Your donation is **tax-deductible** and **100%** of what you give will go directly to this trip.

Sincerely,

- Yes, I would like to support _____ on the Courts for Kids Costa Rica UW project in the amount of:
 - _____ \$500
 - _____ \$200
 - _____ \$100
 - _____ \$50
 - _____ \$25
 - _____ other amount
- Please check this circle and write your email to the right if you want your donation receipt e-mailed to you to

Please make your **tax-deductible** contribution out to **University of Washington**, and return using the return-addressed envelope as soon as possible.

Name _____
 Address _____

 City _____ State _____
 Zip Code _____
 Phone Number _____
 Email _____



- Yes, I would like to support _____ on the Courts for Kids Costa Rica UW project in the amount of:
 - _____ \$500
 - _____ \$200
 - _____ \$100
 - _____ \$50
 - _____ \$25
 - _____ other amount
- Please check this circle and write your email to the right if you want your donation receipt e-mailed to you to

Please make your **tax-deductible** contribution out to **University of Washington**, and return using the return-addressed envelope as soon as possible.

Name _____
 Address _____

 City _____ State _____
 Zip Code _____
 Phone Number _____
 Email _____



- Yes, I would like to support _____ on the Courts for Kids Costa Rica UW project in the amount of:
 - _____ \$500
 - _____ \$200
 - _____ \$100
 - _____ \$50
 - _____ \$25
 - _____ other amount
- Please check this circle and write your email to the right if you want your donation receipt e-mailed to you to

Please make your **tax-deductible** contribution out to **University of Washington**, and return using the return-addressed envelope as soon as possible.

Name _____
 Address _____

 City _____ State _____
 Zip Code _____
 Phone Number _____
 Email _____



- Yes, I would like to support _____ on the Courts for Kids Costa Rica UW project in the amount of:
 - _____ \$500
 - _____ \$200
 - _____ \$100
 - _____ \$50
 - _____ \$25
 - _____ other amount
- Please check this circle and write your email to the right if you want your donation receipt e-mailed to you to

Please make your **tax-deductible** contribution out to **University of Washington**, and return using the return-addressed envelope as soon as possible.

Name _____
 Address _____

 City _____ State _____
 Zip Code _____
 Phone Number _____
 Email _____



Courts for Kids
PO Box 873786
Vancouver, WA 98687
www.courtsforkids.org
(360) 521-0592
derek@courtsforkids.org