

a partnership
for sustainable
community
development
between the people
of nagarote,
nicaragua and the
greater norwalk
area in connecticut

Norwalk) Nagarote

SISTER CITY PROJECT

Autumn
16

Visit Our Web Site at www.sistercityproject.org

How We Got It Right

A GROUP OF KIDS IS DROPPED into an impoverished community in a developing country like Nicaragua. Their parents paid a hefty price for the trip and their goal is to build a school. The school they build may or may not be authorized and requested by the local Education Ministry. The building may or may not survive the first hurricane or earthquake. The kids are unlikely to ever have any continued, meaningful contact with anyone from the community.

That, unfortunately, is the all-too-common result of volunteer tourism. Trips are planned that boost college application resumes and make kids and parents feel good about what they're doing, but in the long run the biggest beneficiary is the tour promoter who makes a decent profit off the trip.

"...consider lower profile, small or medium-sized organizations with strong links to the communities they serve."

Dr. Samantha Nutt

At N/NSCP we try hard to anticipate the impact our actions will have on the community. We hired Nicaraguan builders and engineers to build our community center, and it survived the recent powerful earthquake in Nagarote with barely a chip.

We buy what we need in Nagarote rather than getting material donations here (with the important exception of laptop computers). Our monthly payroll for our staff of 20 Nicaraguans boosts the local economy. Not only do their families eat better, but the families of the shop keepers they buy from benefit as well.

We don't own a car or truck but hire local drivers when needed. We feel closer to the people we work with traveling by bike or foot.

We don't bring any of our kids here because we want them to become leaders in Nagarote and

the money we save on travel can help many more children attend school, experience community service and develop those necessary leadership and life skills.

In *Damned Nations*, a book by Dr. Samantha Nutt, a medical doctor and public health authority who has spent fifteen years working for the United Nations and other aid organizations and has witnessed many non-governmental agencies (NGO's) like N/NSCP in action, she discusses how to move beyond outdated notions of charity towards a more progressive, inclusive, and respectful worldview.

Two key points:

- "Rather than giving to big organizations reliant on a large expatriate infrastructure at the field level, consider lower-profile, small or medium-sized organizations with strong links to the communities they serve."
- "Ask questions: Does the organization work with local partner agencies or communities? What is its commitment to employing national staff in leadership roles at the field level? Does the organization make training at the local level a priority and what capacity does it leave behind?"

For 30 years N/NSCP has worked closely with the local government in Nagarote, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and other NGO's in the community. All our staff in Nagarote is Nicaraguan including our Field Director and we have only one part-time staff here in the U.S.

In our 30 years of working with the people of Nagarote, we have created a model of community development which achieves Dr. Nutt's vision of a more progressive, inclusive and respectful worldview.

MEMBERSHIP/DONATION COUPON

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Friend \$50 Sustaining \$200 Benefactor \$1,000 Hero \$5,000 Other \$_____

Please make your tax deductible check payable to NNSCP and return it with this form to:

John Woyke, Treasurer, P.O. Box 382, Norwalk CT 06852 • Or use your credit card to donate on line at www.sistercityproject.org

30th Anniversary Fiesta A Smash

EVERYONE WAS THERE, even U.S. Senator Chris Murphy and Norwalk's Mayor Harry Rilling. It was a record turnout and a spectacular event. Here are a few of Tom Kretch's photos.



Board members Catherine Murchie and Kay Anderson in foreground; Mayor Harry Rilling and Michelle Gibbs in background



Members of the founding board
Left to right: Scott Harris, founder; Cheryl Pansioan, Robin Stein, Jud Aley, Virginia Auster, Catherine Urbain, Bill Collins and Tish Gibbs, Director

Special Benefit Performance

A Little Night Music

A Cabaret Evening of Gifted Singers and Musicians

Saturday, November 19, 2016

**Saugatuck Congregational Church
245 Post Road East, Westport CT**

Doors open at 7:00 music begins at 8:00 PM

Tickets \$40

Bring food, beverage and friends

To reserve contact Tom Kretsch
203-227-1528 or kretsch@yahoo.com



U.S. Senator Chris Murphy accepting our first ever International Insight Award from Director Tish Gibbs

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