There’s No Place Like Home...

But it’s not what you think of as home. Here, “home” is a wooden shack with no door and a leaky corrugated tin roof.

There is no indoor plumbing; public water service is only available for a few pre-dawn hours each day. Residents collect rainwater in barrels and use outdoor sinks, showers and latrines. With no sewage system, waste water drains into streets where children play. Some are not in school because they do not have proper clothing, shoes and books. They sleep on hammocks or cots, three or four to a bed. The local clinic lacks supplies and equipment.

Welcome to Villa Libertad, an urban barrio in Managua, Nicaragua. For 18 years, junior, senior and second degree students from Duquesne’s Nursing School have come here—and to equally impoverished rural communities just south of the city—for a life-changing service learning experience.

Students forego their Spring Break to work in health centers and in family dwellings. They assess health and environmental conditions, provide patient care and humanitarian services, and return to school profoundly changed.

They leave behind priceless gifts—medical supplies, lab test kits and medications; water filtration systems; beds and mattresses; and improved housing. They share knowledge that allows residents to take better care of themselves. And they provide scholarships for residents of the barrio to study nursing at a sister school, the Polytechnic University of Nicaragua.

Our students emerge transformed. So do the people they serve. Little by little, Duquesne students are making a real difference in the residents’ lives.

Our efforts are made possible, in part, by alumni and friends like you who support the Nursing School’s Nicaragua Health Fund. Will you join us?

In just a few weeks, our students will return to Villa Libertad. Please help change even more lives by making your gift today. Simply complete and return the enclosed card, or give online at www.duq.edu/give-now.

Our students—and the people of Nicaragua—appreciate your generosity!

“I always knew I had a desire to travel, but I wasn’t sure where or when this journey would begin. Upon hearing about the Nursing in Nicaragua School of Nursing trip, my heart was ready.

“We worked with UPOLI nursing students, faculty, residents and other health care professionals. After 10 days of conversation, primarily in Spanish, I learned so much about myself, the health care and the culture of Nicaragua. The students we worked with were humble, intelligent, patient, and professional. I was impressed with how thankful they were to have an education. This sounds cliché, but it put everything into perspective. Sometimes I get caught up in the stressors of everyday life and forget that I am so incredibly blessed to have the opportunity to grow and develop through higher education.

“I met families who were so grateful and willing to let us into their homes. I met a whole community of elderly men and women who deal with chronic illnesses and have essentially no access to health care. I am so touched remembering one elderly woman with whom I shared the same name. She kept embracing me and was delighted that I was able to listen and understand her in Spanish.

“I left feeling amazed and inspired not only to go back, but to spread the word. This trip helped shape me into the nurse and the person I want to become. When I think about the people I met, my heart still melts with joy. I could not be more thankful for this opportunity.”

—Katherine Kinney, N’14