



University of Nebraska



**2019 CGHH Conference
Tempe, AZ, USA**

**Stacie Ray, Au.D., CCC-A
Assoc. Professor of Practice**

Disclosures

- Employed by the University of Nebraska
 - Provided travel funds for this conference
-

University of Nebraska

- Public research university
 - Lincoln Campus – Barkley Memorial Center
 - Doctoral (Au.D.) education program in audiology
 - >35 year history of coordinating statewide programs assisting low-income Deaf & Hard of Hearing individuals across the lifespan
 - Hearing Aid Banks of Nebraska
-

University of Nebraska

- University of Nebraska – Omaha Campus
 - Social work program in Leon, Nicaragua
 - Could not identify those children who were Deaf or Hard of Hearing
 - Established a School for the Deaf
 - Needs assessment conducted in 2014-2015 by UNL audiology faculty
 - No audiology services available in Leon
-

Leon, Nicaragua

- Second largest city with a population of ~206,000
 - 50 miles northwest of Managua
 - Political and intellectual center of the nation
 - National Autonomous University of Nicaragua (UNAN)
-

NICARAGUA



From Connection to Collaborati

- **Connection**

- American Academy of Audiology
 - Humanitarian Audiology Session
 - Mayflower Medical Outreach
 - Extensive conversations
 - Numerous emails & video chats
 - Common goals
 - Building/expanding capacity
 - Focus on sustainability
-

From Connection to Collaboration

- **Initial In-Country Collaboration**
 - Arranged our initial trip to coordinate with MMO's mission trip
 - Two faculty from UNL & 4 Au.D. students
 - Worked with MMO in Jinotega clinic
 - Tremendously valuable: Model for our work in Leon
 - Met MMO in-country staff
 - Tested all students at the School for the Deaf and saw patients in a small village outside of Leon
-

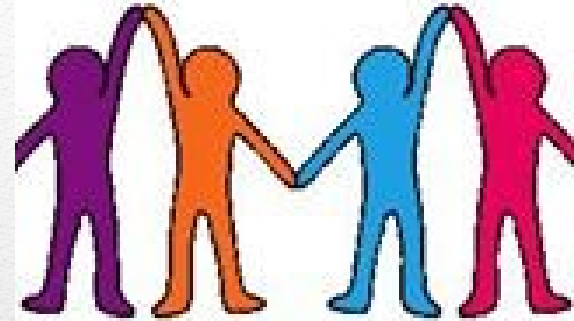
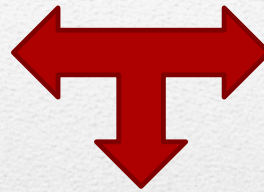
From Connection to Collaboration

- **Continued Collaboration**

- Multiple trips (with MMO and separate)
 - Two faculty from UNL
 - Au.D. Students (4-6)
 - UNAN-Leon & School for the Deaf
 - Diagnostics and hearing aid fittings
 - Clinical training for two UNAN faculty members
-

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Lincoln

HearU International



Mayflower Medical
Outreach



UNAN- LEON

From Connection to Collaboration

- **Meeting with stakeholders – February 2018**
 - UNL faculty – Stacie Ray and Hannah Ditmars
 - UNAN Faculty – Two M.D.'s & one occupational health
 - Dean of UNAN Medical College
 - Local ENT physician
 - MMO: Dr. Saunders (Medical Director), Debra Fried (Audiology Director), Dr. Mojica (Nicaraguan Medical Director)
-

Purpose of Meeting

- **To discuss the feasibility of establishing the first university-based audiology training program in Nicaragua**
 - Challenges were identified
 - MINSA
 - Funding
 - Training faculty members
 - Building the curriculum
 - Collectively, there was support to pursue this as a collaborative effort.
-



and then.....

- **Political uprising – April 2018**
 - Very quick escalation
 - Travel warning - level 3
 - Trips were postponed



New Challenges

- Follow-up with patients
- Growing waitlist
- Difficulty re-stocking supplies
- Pause in training of UNAN faculty
- Possible solution: Bring UNAN faculty to the United States



MOVING FORWARD

- University of Nebraska will host one UNAN faculty member for 4 months
 - Priority: create a curriculum that UNAN can use to train health professionals within their college of medicine
 - This will be a collaborative effort between UNAN, MMO, and NU
 - NU faculty and students will travel to Leon midway through the 4 month period
-

ADVANTAGES OF COLLABORATION

- **Combining strengths**

Mayflower Medical Outreach	University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Successfully established strong connections in Nicaragua	Teaching: basic to advanced audiology skills
Non-profit status in Nicaragua with established relationship with MINSA	People power – faculty & students
In-country staff /medical coordinator	Commitment to building a long-term relationship
Knowledge of available resources in Nicaragua	Connection to UNAN – Leon & School for the Deaf in Leon
Has a strong network including: Medical, Educational, and Hearing Services	Different perspectives – fresh ideas

Summary

- Perform a thorough needs assessment
- Do not reinvent the wheel
- Only begin if you're willing to fully invest for the long-term

- Create a strategic plan
 - Revisit this plan often
 - Sustainability should not be one of the goals, it should be the only goal!
-

