

The Dream Team



MTI Class of 2007

In the early 1990s, the original Dream Team was assembled to compete in the 1992 Olympics. Since then, according to NBA.com, the Dream Team has left a legacy of being the "greatest team ever assembled, in any sport". So much so, that 15 years later the Dream Team is still a well-known phenomenon, not only in the world of sports, but in everyday life. The intent behind assembling this unbelievably talented group of players was to expose the world to what "basketball at its finest" looked like and to leave no doubt in the minds of fans all over that this team was capable of dominating each and every opponent.

We, at Agua Viva, are working hard to assemble a dream team to accomplish our ultimate goal. Much like the original dream team, our intention is to show the world, starting in Mexico, what love at its finest looks like and to leave no doubt that we will dominate the opponent. Before the original Dream Team was able to conquer every rival, there were years of training, coaching and hard work. In MTI, we focus on the training of our athletes. We are proud to be training 51 exceptional athletes, who will leave their legacy in every heart they reach. We would like to introduce you to four of our stars in MTI. These athletes have worked, struggled, and by the grace of God, proven victorious. Please take some time to read our roster and get to know a few of the starting players on our dream team.

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Jose Ponce

Hometown: Born in Mexico City and currently living in Southern Baja California

Family: Married to Lupita, with no children

How he came to know the Lord: After living for years without the Lord, Jose ended up in a rehabilitation center. By the grace of God, this was a Christian center and it was here where he accepted the Lord as his savior.

History in MTI: In 2004, Jose came to MTI and completed the first level. He is currently in the second level. Lupita, his wife, is also studying in the second level.

Current Ministry: After serving in the rehab center for one year, Jose visited Southern Baja California and saw the need these people had to hear about the Lord. He has now been ministering in this area for 13 years. He visits 260 people who are dispersed among 30 different ranches in the mountains of Southern Baja California. He travels either on mules or by foot. There are many canyons and rough terrain so it takes him between 7 and 12 hours to travel from one ranch to the next. Because this area is so hard to reach, Jose is the first and only missionary from any religion in this area.

Why MTI: After sharing the Gospel for 10 years with no results, Jose realized the need to have a more intimate knowledge of the gospel and how to share it with non-Christians. He also realized the need to follow up and have discipleship courses, but didn't know how to do this. Through meeting a pastor in Ensenada, who is a teacher in MTI, Jose felt the Lord calling him to attend the seminary.



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If any man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me as the scriptures said, 'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.' John 7:38

The Dream Team

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Dreams and plans after MTI: Jose is anxious to return to his home and visit the people he serves. He is planning on starting several studies that teach the Bible from Genesis to Revelation and having studies for married people and youth.

What he would like to say to you: “On behalf of my wife and I, thank you for your support. If it weren’t for your offerings of love we wouldn’t be here. A church where I come from can’t afford to send a missionary to come study in MTI, so I give thanks to God for everyone who has given and prayed for me to be here. It is because of you that I am here!”

Irene Gomez

Hometown: Tecuala, Nayarit

Family: Married with 3 children

How she came to know the Lord:

15 years ago, in the small town of Milpas Viejas, near Tecuala, Irene’s mother was invited to church. The following Sunday Irene, her mother and her brothers and sisters went to church for the first time. There the Lord reached her, and her life has never been the same.



History in MTI: At the age of 18, Irene came to the first level of MTI. The very next year, she came to the second level. She now comes with her husband, Pedro and her three kids to study in the third level. Pedro has already completed all three levels of MTI, so he watches the kids while Irene is in class.

Current Ministry: Irene’s primary job is to be a mother to their three children, ages 8, 6 and 3. However, whenever possible, she goes with her husband, who is a missionary church planter, to surrounding communities. For years, the community that her husband traveled to was a 10 hour walk high up in the mountains, so she stayed at home with the kids. However, currently the Lord has called them to minister to a community named Duranguito in the state of Sinaloa, which is accessible by car, so she now accompanies her husband with their children to this church plant.

What has impacted her about MTI: The classes on leadership have been a favorite of Irene’s. She has enjoyed learning how to be a good leader and how to give an example through her life to those people around her.

Dreams and plans after MTI: When asked what her dreams and plans are Irene responded, “Wow, there are so many.” One of her biggest dreams is to continue to minister to the people in Duranguito, focusing on small groups with women and sharing what she has learned in MTI.

What she would like to say to you: “Thank you so much for all that you have given so that we can come and prepare ourselves to share with others what God has done in a way that the people can understand. Because of this, we are able to serve the Lord better.”

Andres Salas

Hometown: Arrayan, Nayarit

Family: Andres is single

How he came to know the Lord:

In the year 2000, a missionary named Pedro began visiting Andres’ family at their ranch high up in the mountains (this is the same Pedro who is married to Irene...Wow!!). For the first two years, Andres wanted nothing to do with Pedro and the God he spoke of. Finally, Andres and one of his brothers became fed up with Pedro’s monthly visits and made a plan to wait for Pedro on the only road to their ranch and kill him. On December 6, 2002, the day Pedro was supposed to make one of his visits, Andres and his brother waited and waited, but Pedro never came. Finally, they gave up and returned to their ranch only to find that Pedro was already there. Somehow Pedro had walked past them, but they didn’t see him! The very next day, Pedro invited Andres and his family to climb a mountain with him. Andres sat on that mountain-top, about 50 meters away from the rest of his family, and felt something he had never felt before—the presence of the Lord. Weeping, he walked over to Pedro and accepted the Lord as his savior.



History in MTI: In 2003, six months after Andres gave his life to the Lord, he attended the first year of MTI. Andres is now studying in the second year.

Current Ministry: For the last three years, Andres has been a pastor of his local church in Arrayan. He also walks for hours to share the good news with surrounding ranches in the mountains of Nayarit.

Why MTI: On that mountain top, Andres felt the Lord calling him to prepare his heart and learn more about the Lord. He has come for his second year at MTI to continue preparing himself.

What has impacted him about MTI: Andres has been impacted by the diversity of people that are studying at MTI and how the professors strive to carefully teach each person on an individual basis. Andres is also learning to go deep into the Scriptures.

Dreams and plans after MTI: Andres would like to take what he is learning and teach other people so that they can feel the presence of the Lord, just as he did. He would also like to do an evangelistic event at a nearby ranch that has very traditional beliefs to show them the love of their Creator.

What he would like to say to you: “Thank you for this opportunity to come and be here in Agua Viva. I know that I wouldn’t be here if it were up to me to pay my whole tuition. It has been a huge blessing for me to study. It will also be a huge blessing in the lives of the people that I will be able to go and teach because I am better prepared to teach them.”

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2007 Agua Viva Missions Trip Report

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Rogelio Avila

Hometown: Santa Catarina, Nayarit

Family: Married with 2 children

How he came to know the Lord:

When Rogelio's six-year-old son was very ill and none of the local witch doctors could heal him, he took his son to the hospital in the nearest city. Sadly, his son died in that hospital, but it was there that Rogelio met a Christian for the very first time. When he returned to Santa Catarina, Rogelio's older son also became deathly ill. When the witch doctors could, once again, do nothing to heal Rogelio's son, he desperately turned to the only place he could think to go...he called upon the Christian he had met in the city. When the Christian explained to Rogelio that his God could work miracles and Rogelio only needed to go to Him in prayer, he did just that. By the grace of God, his son was miraculously healed and Rogelio became the very first person in his tribe, the Huicholes, to surrender his life to the Lord.



History in MTI: Rogelio is the very first person from the Huichol tribe to attend MTI and this is his first year.

Current Ministry: Five years ago, Rogelio and a small group of Huicholes who are Christian were beaten and thrown in jail and threatened with their lives if they didn't leave their village. They settled in a small town nearby and established a church. Rogelio is currently assuming the role as pastor, although he humbly calls himself one of the church leaders.

Why MTI: Rogelio has the desire to know the Word of God better and to share what he is learning with other Huicholes.

What has impacted him about MTI:

Rogelio has learned how to teach and how to Biblically structure a church. Rogelio says, "Before I thought that just the pastor was the minister, but now I know that we, as Christians, are all ministers."

Dreams and plans for when he leaves MTI:

Rogelio would like to restructure his church according to a Biblical model.

What he would like to say to you:

"Thank you for supporting the school (MTI) in different areas, such as providing the means for food and housing. I'm not sure how you're supporting, with prayer or finances, but either way, I am very grateful."



These are just a few of the incredible people God has placed on our roster. On December 1 the students will graduate and return home. It is there, in their villages, their churches, their homes where the real game will be played. We know that with God as Coach, our team is guaranteed the victory. Nonetheless, the game still must be played and it must be played tough. As their biggest fans, we, at Agua Viva, will continue to cheer for our athletes through prayer, and we ask you to join us. Please pray with us for these passionate athletes, our heroes of the faith. The game is on, the stakes are high, the opponent is strong, but our Lord is stronger... Victory is ours!!!

by Becky Heinrichs

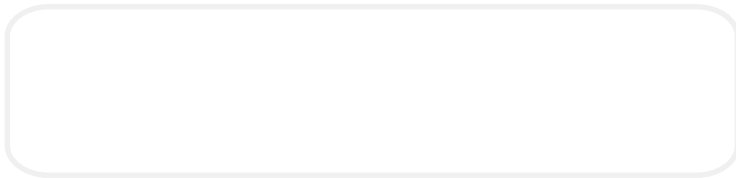
Please Join Us in Prayer

A few months ago, a good friend told me a story about his two year-old son accidentally overdosing on heart medicine. Immediately, his parents took him to the hospital to have his stomach pumped. After pumping his stomach and attaching the monitoring equipment, the doctor looked at my friend and said, "There is no cure and we will know if we got him in time by around 2:00 in the morning. If we didn't, his heart will slow down too much and he will stop breathing." A little before 2:00, the boy's mother became too nervous and left the room. The father, holding the boy as he slept, was praying. At 2:00 exactly, the monitors went flat and the boy stopped breathing...In desperation, the father said, "Lord, he is not my son, he is yours." Immediately, the boy took a big breath, and the monitors showed that everything was back to normal. The son began to breathe regularly and was soon sleeping peacefully. The father

thanked Jesus for returning his son to his care. Now, more than 20 years later, the son is serving in youth ministry—all because of Jesus' grace and mercy.

Through this testimony God has spoken to me about this ministry—that this ministry is not mine or yours, it is His. He has the power to make this ministry thrive and grow or to make it pass away. He allows us the opportunity to serve and to enjoy what He has given us, just like my friend has now enjoyed the life of his son for more than 20 years. Yet, at anytime we must know that He has **all** of the glory and **all** of the rights. He simply invites us to participate in His work. Please join us in investing in reaching Mexico for Christ through prayer, praise, and action.

by Brent Searway



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Get to Know . . . Melissa Stocking

One of my favorite games to play when getting to know people is “Two truths and a lie.” So since you are getting to know me, why don’t we play? It’s easy: I give you three statements about me, two of which are true and one of which is not, and you have to guess which is the lie. Ready...here goes:

1. I have lived in seven countries.
2. I majored in French and History at Westmont College.
3. I am not very excited about working at Agua Viva Ministries.

That was pretty easy, and hopefully you can tell which is the lie. It is true that I have lived in seven countries—my dad works for the U.S. State Department, which moved our family all over the world (USA, Senegal, Algeria, Portugal, Brazil). And while at Westmont College (I graduated in 2006) I did a semester in France. I came with Westmont’s annual Potter’s Clay missions trip to Ensenada, clueless that one day I would be working here (after all, I was majoring in French and History, not exactly the career path for missions in Mexico). Which brings me to #3 and the seventh country I’ve lived in: Mexico.



And if you guessed that #3 was the lie, you were correct. I am **very excited** to be working at Agua Viva Ministries as the Administrative Director. I arrived in February 2007 and have been busy working in the office, with American groups, going on the staff mission trip, and helping with the various events and activities at Agua Viva.

Well, thank you for taking the time to get to know me a little bit. I am honored to be here in the service of our Lord and to have the support and prayers of so many great people like you!

Editor's Notes

I hope you’ve enjoyed reading about some of my heroes. Yes, they are heroes of the faith, but they are my personal heroes as well. Knowing their lives and their struggles has helped me put some of my struggles into perspective. I may miss my family, I may miss my Starbucks, but my life is not being threatened. What these students joyfully endure for the sake of the gospel is incredible. They have so impacted my life and encouraged me and I hope they have impacted yours as well.

What we have going on:

- ✓ MTI graduation on December 1
- ✓ Several amazing American groups coming on short-term mission trips
- ✓ Mexican camping groups every weekend

Thank you so much for your prayer and financial support. All of this is possible because of you!!!

Editor: Becky Heinrichs
Layout: Scott Acock