

Mexican Odyssey

The BC work team

kicks off new service program

"The world stands out on either side,
No wider than the heart is wide;
Above the world is stretched the sky, —
No higher than the soul is high..."

"Renescence"

Edna St. Vincent Millay

Brevard College's first "Project Inside-Out" work team returned March 11 from Durango, Mexico, after a week of building on both construction projects and international relations.

Brevard sophomore Ann Whitmire echoed the sentiments of the entire crew when she said, "It was the most incredible experience of my life."

The 12 students accompanied by four faculty-staff adults spent the March 3-11 Spring Break repairing an old school gym, teaching English to Mexican children, and renovating the home of an 89-year-old woman.

They say they learned, among other things, that love is the international

language. According to Hendersonville freshman Penni Todd, "You don't have to be able to speak someone's language to show you love them."

They witnessed a land of contrasts: grinding poverty next to opulent homes, choking air pollution next to the most beautiful courtyard gardens in even the poorest of homes, and the open use and sale of cocaine on the streets in contrast to the sheltered lives of the elementary age schoolchildren they taught.

"You could never learn this from a textbook at college, could you?" said work supervisor Mike Dodson reflectively. Director of Public Information Jock Lauterer agreed. "It was total cultural immersion," he said. "Even those of us who couldn't speak the language came back spouting Spanish."

That was one of the purposes of Project Inside-Out—to give a real education "from inside the classroom to outside to the real world," said Project Coordinator Sybil Dodson.

"Eye! Eye! Boca Raton, Fla., sophomore Jennifer Weils teaches English to a Mexican kindergartener in Durango, Mexico.

The Mexico work trip was but the first of what BC administrators hope to be a broad-based community and international service program aimed at two things: enhancing the total education of Brevard College students and making a difference in this world.

The trip kicked off BC's new service component which will be required of 1990's incoming freshmen class.

As the BC work team departed, they heard President Billy Greer tell them, "you're making history for BC. Someday you'll be able to look back and tell your grandchildren you were the start of all this."

The BC students adopted "Little Grannie," Senora Lucita. Here, Hendersonville freshman Penni Todd combs the 89-year old woman's hair.



(BC photos by Jock Lauterer)