

# Contact

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## EDITORIAL PURPOSE

To support thriving ministries by providing timely, practical information for ministries and individuals.

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Danielle Strickland is living her Unity principles in Mexico.





# CODENI in Guadalajara, Mexico

Danielle Strickland is living her Unity principles in Mexico. CODENI children's rights cooperative, founded in 2004, is directed by Danielle, 1997-1998 YOU President for Unity of Roanoke Valley in Roanoke, Virginia. Here is Danielle's story:

When I was 9 years old, my parents took us on vacation to Cancun. One day they rented a car and took us out of the tourist district. I have a clear memory of children my age, shoeless, dressed in rags, "cleaning" the rental car's windshield with dirty newspapers and asking for change. I had never seen poverty before and was completely moved looking into the eyes of a boy about my age and realizing how different our lives were.

## My Life Changed

It was clearly a life-changing experience for me. From that day forward I became interested in learning Spanish and knew that my calling in life was directly linked to impoverished children in Latin America. Many people praise and admire what I've been doing since I graduated college and moved to Guadalajara in 2002, but that usually makes me chuckle. I consider myself to have one of the most amazing occupations in the world, for truly the more you give, the more you receive, and the gratification I receive from helping street children and their families is much more valuable than any paycheck. My heart has been filled by an illiterate mother hugging me and telling me through tears that I am an angel for giving her son the opportunity to attend school; a little girl having a "light bulb moment" and finally understanding long division at which point she turns to me and says, "It's all thanks to you, because you were the only one patient enough to teach



Danielle Strickland (center) with students



Danielle Strickland (right back row) lives her Unity principles in Mexico

me to subtract and multiply—if it weren't for you, I'd only ever have learned how to add;" and the opportunity to arrange a trip for indigenous migrants to return to their village for the first time in ten years and see them reunited with family.

What I do day-to-day is no more impressive than other *Contact* magazine readers. The difference is the opportunities which come into my life. I have been blessed with the opportunity to live in Guadalajara, learn Spanish, and develop relationships with genuinely needy and gracious families. I simply give what I can, try to teach by example, and follow my calling in life to spread the abundance of God's good to those less fortunate.

## CODENI

To learn more about CODENI see [www.CODENI.org.mx](http://www.CODENI.org.mx) or AHALA (American Hands Aiding Latin American Youth) at [www.AHALA.org](http://www.AHALA.org) or contact Danielle Strickland at [dmstrick@cox.net](mailto:dmstrick@cox.net).

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