

Spring 2010



**international**  
International Programs

**BULLETIN**

**YMCA Canada East**

## *Rosibel Martínez*

The President of the Board of Directors of the Honduran YMCA [ACJ], Darwin Alvarez, has written to YMCA Canada East to announce that Señora Rosibel Martínez has been hired as their new National General Secretary. Although new to the YMCA, Ms. Martínez has had extensive experience working with NGOs in Honduras since 2000, and her background and previous work history will be an asset to the Y.



She has training in project management, social and technical programming, and accounting. Previously she had been a Program Manager for the Riecken Foundation, an NGO based in Guatemala and Honduras which establishes community-run lending libraries and free internet access in small communities.

She was also a Technical Director with the Office of Legal Assistance for Women and Children in Honduras and has served in other roles including as President of the Federation for Parents of Children with Disabilities.

The letter from the board also noted that Ms. Martínez has had experience driving a 4 x 4 through all kinds of terrain throughout Honduras; that experience will be useful as she assumes her new duties supervising YMCA programs which are carried out in some very isolated communities in that country.

The position of General Secretary became vacant last summer when Marco Antonio Perez resigned. The Latin American and Caribbean Alliance of YMCAs [LACA] worked with the Board of the Honduras Y to find a suitable replacement.

YMCA Canada East welcomes Ms. Martínez to the Y and wishes well in her new position. We look forward to working with her.

Visit the Honduran YMCA's web site at:  
[www.ymcahonduras.org](http://www.ymcahonduras.org)

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# Testimonies from Honduras

The following testimonies formed part of the 2009 report for the Honduran YMCA's Citizenship Participation Program. This is the program which the YMCAs of Canada East support with assistance from the Canadian International Development Agency.

## Marilian Audely Argueta

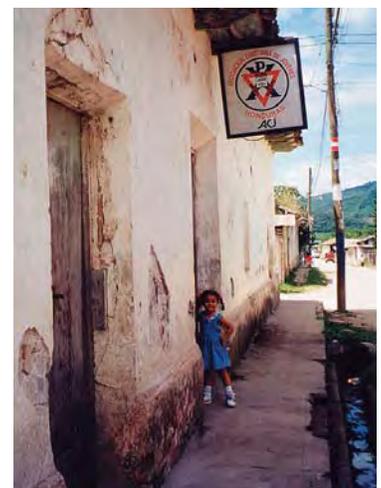


I am from Marcala, in the Department [Province] of La Paz. The Formation Program has helped me a lot because the themes it deals with are so important. It has helped me look at life from a new perspective, to be more critical about problems affecting the nation, my family, and my own life. I have also had the opportunity to socialize with other young people from different regions of the country as well as people from other nations. I am grateful to the ACJ [YMCA] for providing this training.

## Osmel Joel Rodríguez



I am 15 years old and am from the village of Florida near Marcala. The Citizenship Formation Program has helped me a lot in getting to know other young people and it has motivated me to continue in school. I am now in the second year of the common curriculum.



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## ...Testimonies from Honduras



**Sofía Márquez Hernández**

I am the mother of Osmel Joel Rodríguez who is a participant in the Citizenship Formation Program. Since he took part in this training, he has improved his attitude towards school and is now in the second year of the common curriculum. Previously he did not have an interest in studying. I am grateful to the YMCA for this program and for the interest they have shown in the young people of our communities.



**Rigoberto Hernández Villatoro**

I am the current mayor of Marcala in La Paz, Honduras. We are coordinating activities with the ACJ in order to offer the Citizenship Formation Program supported by funding from Canada.

We have a formally signed agreement with the ACJ. This program helps young people become active in the development of their community. We are grateful to the people of Canada for their support and hope that it continues because it is very important for our society to have well trained young people

### The YMCA in Haiti

*[As world focus turns from Haiti to Chile, the YMCA in Haiti continues its efforts to rebuild. This comes from Benni Hodken of the YMCAs of Quebec which work with the Haitian Y.]*

Communication lines were cut when the earthquake hit Haiti; people around the world were desperate for word from family and friends. We at the Y were also trying contact our partners at the YMCA of Haiti and Gwenael Apollon, the Secretary General, knowing that there would have been youth and children at the Y in Port-au-Prince at the time the earthquake struck. On January 13, we received news that Gwenael and his family were fine.

Gwenael described the situation like this: "What has happened here in Haiti is a true tragedy! Indeed, since Tuesday, January 12th, Haitians are living a nightmare. They are lying in the streets because most have suddenly lost everything. The sight of this is hard beyond measure. Many lives are lost and most of the existing infrastructures are gone or need to be destroyed because they are too damaged and have become a danger to the public."

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## ...The YMCA in Haiti

In the following days, as communication was reestablished with Gwenael, we learned that the Y building in Port-au-Prince had collapsed, but the staff and youth leaders were able to get everyone out of the building with only a few scratches. However two people associated with the Y remain missing. Y volunteers and participants have lost their homes and in some cases family members.

The World Alliance of YMCAs has launched an appeal for support for the Haitian people and the YMCA of Haiti. As of February, over \$400,000 has been raised; Canadian YMCAs have contributed over \$50,000. The funds will support the emergency response efforts of the YMCA of Haiti and help with the reconstruction of their Youth Centre in Port-au-Prince.



Since the YMCA office in Port-au-Prince was destroyed, a temporary office space has been rented in Petionville. What materials (files etc) that could be rescued from the rubble will be stored there. The office will be a temporary communications and organizing centre for the YMCA's relief and reconstruction work.

The Y staff and volunteers have shown tremendous strength and courage throughout these tragic times. Despite their personal losses, they have rallied their strength and resources to reach out and give support and hope to the Haitian community.

Donations can be made through [www.canadon.org](http://www.canadon.org) by clicking on "Make a Donation". In the Messages/Instructions field, please write "Aid for the YMCA of Haiti" so that your donation will be used to this end and will also be matched by the federal government.



Supplies sent by Dominican "Y" to their sister "Y" in Haiti



Presidential Palace in Haiti reduced to rubble.