From the time I was born to the time I left for college, I lived in the same house my whole life, so it would have been very easy for me to live a sheltered life, unaware of any lifestyle other than my own. However, I was incredibly blessed as a teenager to have family, friends, and a church that supported and encouraged missions. In my teen and young adult years, I was able to go on short-term missions trips to Mexico (twice), Antigua, and Guatemala (four times). My brother was a missionary pilot in Venezuela, and I was able to visit there twice as well. Through all of my experiences I developed a deep love for people from other cultures, particularly those in Central America.

Just about all of my most memorable moments in life took place overseas; they range from the breathtaking (climbing the world’s 3rd largest pyramid in Mexico, and being swept away in the Orinoco River in Venezuela), to the mundane (mixing concrete in Guatemala, and painting fences in Mexico), and they are all cherished. Stop by sometime, and I would love to swap stories with you (ask me about the time I was held hostage in Mexico and didn’t even know it!).

Even though I haven’t been there for more than ten years, I still dream about Guatemala in my sleep, and think about my far-away friends often. I have found that even though my trips were brief, I quickly formed relationships that are so special I could never find the right words to describe them. Also, when I am far from home and unsure of just about everything around, I find that I am drawn closer to God. I hope that you will be drawn closer to God during your time here away from your home, and the relationships you form will one day defy words for you too.