

# Getaways With Purpose

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## **The Rainbow Network**

This faith-based organization works to end extreme poverty in Nicaragua through housing, health care, education, micro-finance and sustainable agriculture.

## About the Organization:

Founded in Springfield in 1995 by Keith and Karen Jaspers, The Rainbow Network has been working toward rebuilding the country of Nicaragua for 16 years. The organization, which has an international board of directors, focuses on community development and long-term results. Its goal is to end poverty in Nicaragua by doing things like building housing, creating jobs and providing medical care. Currently the organization feeds between 8,000 and 9,000 children a day, and it provides scholarships for about 900 high school students.



The organization offers three main programs: Tours are educational experiences where people visit and learn about restrained poverty, what it's like to live in Nicaragua and what can be done to help. Traditional mission trips or work trips are hands-on opportunities for churches or community groups to build houses, or for medical doctors to take trips to see patients. And finally, village partnerships make it possible for organizations to underwrite and partner with a community.



The Rainbow Network has more than 50 people on staff in Nicaragua working all year. It has eight physicians on staff who see patients six days a week, 52 weeks a year. And the plan is to keep it up. Robert Carolla, the volunteer executive director of the Rainbow Network, says the organization also offers Nicaraguans a micro-loan program that helps with job opportunities.

### An Insider's View:

Brad Wadle has been on three mission trips with The Rainbow Network in 2006, 2007 and 2010, and he and his wife have sponsored several high school students through The Rainbow Network for the past six years. Wadle's congregation, National Avenue Christian Church, pioneered the village sponsorship program with a partnership with Hilapo Dos. "I decided to travel to Hilapo Dos, our partner village, to meet the people there and to see in what ways our congregation could help in addition to providing financial support," Wadle says.

Wadle speaks of many positive experiences on the trip, including something that happened on his first visit. "We were able to arrange for an operation for a young boy who could not hear," Wadle

says. The operation, which cost less than \$1,000, restored his hearing. "Seeing the joy on his face during my second visit made me realize how life-changing our involvement had been on both sides," Wadle says.

**How to Get Involved:**

Find more information about going on a trip or donating to The Rainbow Network by visiting [rainbownetwork.org](http://rainbownetwork.org) or calling 417-889-8088.