



### *Testimony*

*Kathryn Sullivan*

*VDO Volunteer from England*

*Ecuador, Spring 2006*

*I don't want to bore anyone with a long self-centred testimony. I only want to share some of what I have learnt during my stay here in Ecuador. I really hope that it encourages somebody to come here & experience what it is really like to live & work in a rural Ecuadorian community.*

*In all honesty my initial plan to come to Ecuador was one of the scariest, selfish projects I had ever set my mind on. To begin with the trip was to improve my Spanish & fulfil my university's requirements for my year abroad. However right from the start to my very last day working for "Voluntarios de Occidente" I feel as if I have learnt as much off the children in the schools, the family I stayed in & the organisation than I have taught! In a world completely driven by materialism it is so humbling to see how people in a developing country live. It is an experience that completely changes your outlook on life, makes you question your values & shows up your faults that thrive in a consumerist society.*

*This program shows you exactly how an Ecuadorian community functions. You get away from the glossy attractions aimed at tourists & down to the nitty-gritty details of life helping the future generation forge themselves a brighter future.*

*I would be lying if I said that teaching was easy. Throughout my stay I found it an enjoyable challenge, but that does not mean to say that there weren't days when I wanted to tear my hair out or hide in my sleeping bag in the vain hope that I might have been dreaming. By enrolling in this program you accept the good with the bad. The intelligent*

## Voluntarios de Occidente

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*kids & the unruly kids as both have a future. I can also add that after the first 2 weeks you will be so incredibly thankful that the schools only have half-days!*



*visiting a family*



*weekend in Quilotoa lake*



*in class*



*with children*

*The final point that I want to mention is the fact that it isn't only English or Computing that you are teaching. You bring to these pupils an opportunity that they might not otherwise have to experience or get to know other cultures & ways of life. They all embrace this opportunity (even the unruly ones) & I don't think that anyone should take this away from them.*

*With all this in mind I wish all future volunteers the best of luck, I pray that they remain open to new experiences & that they give as good as they get!*

*God Bless*

*Love Kat xxx*