

## Alpha Sigma Final Summer Report

As I alluded to in my mid-summer report, Costa Rica has had a lasting impact on me – furthering me both professionally and personally. My mid-summer report focused primarily on how I spent my time in Costa Rica (i.e. my daily schedule, responsibilities, experiences, etc.), whereas, in this report, I hope to shine light on how I have returned a better healthcare provider, tarheel, and person.

Humility is a characteristic I think all well-rounded, successful individuals possess. Growing up, my father taught my brother and I the importance of various values, humility included. As a result, I have always considered myself to be a fairly humble guy. Not suggesting that I was completely wrong beforehand, but Costa Rica humbled me to a whole new degree. The Costa Ricans I encountered and lived with went every day without luxuries such as air conditioning, hot water, television, Wi-Fi, etc. Homes were much smaller and housed a far greater number of heads. Cars were not a standard but, rather, people utilized public transportation or bicycles. From the healthcare side of things, clinics/hospitals simply did not have what almost all American hospitals have; a clear gap of resources was extremely apparent. Yet, despite these various gaps and supposed “shortcomings” compared to the American lifestyle, Costa Ricans lived a lifestyle that was full of joy and happiness. Even without so much, life was still so full to them; this lesson resonated with me strongly. I believe, oftentimes, complex lessons such as this one are non-transferable through mere text. I could never have learned this lesson without my feet physically walking through Costa Rica, per say. Because of this, I am left extremely grateful for this trip which has helped find the humility I required to be a successful man.

Furthermore, Costa Rica helped reshape and emphasize the importance I place on diversity. I witnessed the humanity that unites us all, another extremely complex, multi-layered value that can be hard to articulate or conveyed when not paired with experience. UNC provided me a glimpse into the value of diversity, for campus is full of individuals from various locations around the world with differing views and lifestyles. I want to note that included in “UNC” is Alpha Sigma, for both are made up of the aforementioned differing individuals, but Costa Rica solidified this lesson even more so. In encountering those of a totally different culture, which encompassed new lifestyles, trends, hobbies, jobs, and food, I was allowed to more wholly grasp and utilize the necessity and importance of an acceptance and understanding of all cultures for all my future endeavors. Being a diversified individual, in my opinion, adds to the said individual in a beneficial manner. Considering multiple perspectives or gazing upon a problem with multiple lenses can allow one to understand or solve complex situations that those with a more narrow-minded view cannot.

Humility and diversity are two values I have elaborated on in this report but by no means are the only two which have seen improvement. I am afraid the length of this report would increase drastically if I elaborated on every which way I have been bettered. I will say, however, that I have returned to the States a man better suited to pursue excellence during my time at this university and onwards. In addition to pursuing this excellence, I believe I can promote it. I hope that with this attitude/mindset, I can be viewed as a leader of sorts within all aspects of my life, inspiring other to seek out a similar betterment. My Costa Rican trip has given me the chance to do such inspiring and, to that, I owe a huge thank you to this scholarship program for allowing students, similar to myself, a chance to develop and progress. Without this scholarship, my summer most certainly would have lacked the important lessons I learned and I am beyond

grateful to have been extended the chance to learn them. As a result, I will be sure to make the scholarship committee proud by showcasing said lessons throughout my remaining time at UNC/Alpha Sigma, career, and life.





