



Breaking News from Florida's International Volunteer Agency



**The FAVACA staff wish you all a Happy Holiday
and a joyous New Year.**

**El personal de FAVACA les desea muy Felices Fiestas
y un Próspero Año Nuevo.**

**Manm FAVACA swete ou gen yon Bon Nwèl
epi yon bon Nouvèl Anè.**

December 2008

Emergency Response in the Bahamas

Public Policy Created for Elderly Care in Belize

Hospitality and Tourism in St. Eustatius

Nicaragua Development Mission

Social Networking and YouTube

Individual Giving/Website Project Donation

The Bahamas Responds to Emergencies and Disasters

Hurricane Ike passed through the Bahamas in August 2008 and caused millions of dollars worth of damage to the infrastructure of the islands as well as a great deal of physical damage to the local population. The [National Emergency Medical Service](#), which provides all emergency services in the Bahamas, contacted FAVACA to help train emergency personnel on new techniques to drive emergency vehicles during times of disaster as well as methods to evacuate people from an emergency situation in Grand Bahamas



and New Providence. Former FAVACA Volunteer of the Year Captain Wayne Watts, a captain from [Jacksonville Fire and Rescue](#), agreed to provide the requested training. Watts has provided similar trainings in the past several years but this training expanded on previous trainings by focusing on emergency rescue driving during times of national emergencies. Watts traveled to [Nassau, Bahamas](#) to train 10 emergency service personnel and provided the same training to 15 emergency service personnel in [Freeport, Bahamas](#). Watts traveled to the Bahamas from November 25- December 1, 2008.

Belize Receives Elderly Care Plan

In 2003, Martha Pelaez volunteered with FAVACA in Belize to work with the [National Council on Aging \(NCA\)](#) to develop of 5 year national strategic plan for services provided to a rapidly aging population. The NCA's primary purpose is to advocate for the changes that are necessary in Belizean society that will improve the quality of life for older people now and for future generations. The NCA is in the final year of their 5 year plan and contacted FAVACA to find an expert who could help to evaluate their success in implementing the plan. The volunteer was also requested to work with NCA's staff and board members to develop another [5-10 year strategic national plan on aging](#). 2007 FAVACA [Volunteer of the Year, Martha Pelaez](#) of Miami Florida, agreed to provide the requested training and offer her suggestions in designing and implementing a new strategic plan. Pelaez, the Director of the [Healthy Aging Initiative of the Health Foundation of South Florida](#) and a retired gerontologist with the [Pan American Health Organization](#), traveled to Indian Creek located in the province of [Toledo, Belize](#) November 26-November 29, 2008.



Hospitality Center in St. Eustatius Cooks Up A Training

The [St. Eustatius Tourism Center](#) recently constructed a hospitality school which trains recently graduated high school students to become formalized with the necessary skills to enter into the hospitality industry. The department which focuses on food services at the Tourism Center expressed their need for an updated and improved curriculum. The Tourism Center asked FAVACA to provide an expert in hospitality management and cooking instruction to work with the director of the school as well as with many of the students and professional cooks from local restaurants and hotels. Dr. Joseph West of Hollywood, Florida agreed to volunteer for FAVACA. Dr. West is the



Dean of the [School of Hospitality and Tourism Management at Florida International University](#) and he has made numerous international, national and regional presentations, published a variety of articles in leading industry and academic journals, including three chapters in three hospitality textbooks as well as co-authoring a book on competition and strategy in the hospitality industry. Dr. West traveled to [Oranjestad, St. Eustatius](#) from December 5-13, 2008 to conduct trainings on proper kitchen safety, sanitation, and a variety of cooking skills. A total of 40 students, local chefs, and teachers from the Tourism Center benefited from the training.



FAVACA Staff Explores Professional Exchanges for Nicaraguans

FAVACA was awarded a contract from the State Department to develop an exchange program targeting indigenous and minority populations in Nicaragua. The professional exchange program is designed to capitalize on this emerging tourism sector by educating young entrepreneurs engaged in the industry and other tourism-related businesses and organizations to build their business skills that lead to stronger, more efficient enterprises. Director of Programs Demian Pasquarelli and Program Coordinator Angelina Klouthis traveled to [Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua](#) to meet with Pana-Pana, FAVACA's in-country partner, to discuss the scope of the project and to work on the recruitment of potential participants. Pana-Pana provides micro-loans to small nonprofit organizations in the North Atlantic region. FAVACA also met with the local tourism association, CANTUR, and president Orlando Hislop provided a briefing on tourism concerns for the region. Carlos Aleman Cunningham, President of the North Atlantic Regional Autonomous Court. (Consejo Regional Autonomo del Atlantico Norte) (CRAAN) met with FAVACA to discuss the exchange program and the potential for other development missions in the area. FAVACA staff met with two women's groups, Asociacion of Indigenous women of the Atlantic Coast (AMICA) and MYRAB which focuses on supporting indigenous women especially in the field of obtaining legal assistance. Pasquarelli and Klouthis met with [World Bank](#) representative Richard Anossa. After meeting with Anossa, FAVACA staff members talked with Eric Villalobos, [US SOUTHCOM](#) regional coordinator to discuss the potential for FAVACA to help support US SOUTHCOM projects in the region. Before leaving Nicaragua, a meeting was held with [Ambassador Callahan](#) and Cultural Attaché, Michelle G Los Banos-Jardina as well as a meeting with Steven Fondreist, Chief, Trade and Agribusiness Office for [USAID](#).

FAVACA'S Social Networks

FAVACA invites you to join our social networks on both [Myspace](#) and [Facebook](#). To reach a broader audience and get more people involved, enthusiastic and dedicated about our work, FAVACA has joined several new and exciting social networking sites on the internet. Become our friend, recruit your friends, and show your support for FAVACA.



During the [Florida Haiti Initiative](#) (2006-2007), FAVACA supported Renaissance Films, Inc. to create several Public Service Announcements (PSAs) covering many social problems in Haiti. The PSAs were shown around the country and gained great acclaim from viewers as important issues for Haitians. The PSAs are now available to view on [YouTube](#).



New Donation Options

FAVACA has joined [Firstgiving](#) an online fundraising website. Firstgiving provides an interactive source for all FAVACA friends to raise awareness and funds for our work helping supply volunteer experts to provide training and technical assistance to grassroots groups, organizations, and government ministries



in the Caribbean and Latin America. Sign up for yourself and sign up a friend!

In addition to joining Firstgiving, FAVACA has created a [Project Pipeline](#) section on our website where viewers can learn about projects that FAVACA hopes to support in the near future. Over the years, FAVACA has been approached by numerous in-country partners who have great ideas that just don't quite fit the mold for support of our contracts. FAVACA believes that perhaps with the support of our viewers, enough donations can be found to make these projects come to life. FAVACA urges you to view these projects and contribute what you can to these efforts.

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The Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas (FAVACA) is a non-profit organization established in 1982. FAVACA was founded in the belief that Florida's future is interwoven with that of our Caribbean neighbors. The organization's mission is the improvement of social and economic conditions in the Caribbean and Central America through volunteer service. FAVACA provides technical assistance and training through a diverse combination of federal, private and State of Florida funding sources. To date, more than 1,200 volunteer missions to 29 nations and territories of the region have been completed. A wide variety of training is offered in health and social issues, agriculture, education, environment, disaster mitigation, women's leadership, capacity building and more.

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