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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Texas Wesleyan students meet physical and emotional needs of
disadvantaged children in Costa Rica during spring break
*Students brought back more than they gave***

FORT WORTH, March 29 – During the week of March 14-22, a group of six Texas Wesleyan University students arrived in San Jose, Costa Rica, to spend spring break on a mission trip. While in Costa Rica, the Wesleyan group worked at Escuela Fernando Centeno Guell with members from the St. Matthew Christian School and Christ United Methodist Church in Fort Worth. At Escuela Fernando Centeno Guell, a special school for 600 children with disabilities, the Texas Wesleyan group participated in light construction and provided comfort and friendship to the children.

“The children we worked with have hearing, sight or motor impairments or a combination of the three. Some of these kids are orphans, some are abandoned, some have single parents, and some are just from poor families,” says Gladys Childs, chaplain at Texas Wesleyan and coordinator for the trip. “I think we let the children, their parents and the school teachers know that someone cares and that people outside of Costa Rica understand that they are in need of help and want to meet their needs. Costa Rica is so poor ... the least we can do is let them

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know that there is someone in the world who does care and is willing to help.”

At the school, the group filled the tangible needs of the children through gifts of clothing, personal hygiene products, coloring books and crayons, as well as meeting emotional needs through quality time spent listening to and talking with them in both English and Spanish.

Jessamine Vermillion, a sophomore at Texas Wesleyan, brought materials for making jewelry and sun-catchers for the children. Using glass beads and colored wires, the Wesleyan students, with the help of the Costa Rican children, made sun-catchers and bracelets for the children and teachers at Escuela Fernando Centeno Guell to keep.

“It just seemed like something fun we could do for the kids,” says Vermillion, who makes and sells jewelry in the Fort Worth area. “There’s a lot of need there ... whether it’s saving the rainforest or helping kids, there’s a lot of need there ... I just wish I could have done more.”

Katie Meek, a senior studying Christian education at Texas Wesleyan, says she’s “been doing missions” since she was 12 and that the trip to Costa Rica not only touched her on a personal level, but also solidified her decision to go into the mission field.

“It’s made me realize that missions is absolutely my calling,” says Meek. “In a way I was jealous of what they don’t have (in Costa Rica) because they were so much more thankful (than people in more affluent cultures). They find joy in the little things ... they have less possessions and a lot more love ... every little thing is just more meaningful in that kind of life.”

The Wesleyan group says the experience was life changing. “I firmly believe that we came away with much more than we were able to give. All of the individuals on the trip mentioned how their perspective on their own lives changed,” says Childs.

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