

Week 1: Morning Wake Up Call.....COCONUTS!

Greetings from the Dominican Republic.

Our first week working here in this country has been nothing short of an adventure! We have been assigned to the area of La Romana. La Romana is on the coast, west of the capital of the Dominican Republic, Santo Domingo. Only eight months ago, La Romana was opened as the second working area of the DR. We are here with another couple, some of our greatest friends, Sydney and Josh Billings. Together we go out everyday to teach the Dominican people self-reliance skills; especially those pertaining to business.

We are absolutely loving our time here. Everyone is so kind and loving. One of our favorite parts of La Romana is our friend Antonio. He sells fruit from a cart beneath the window of our second-story apartment. Every morning around 5:45 am, we wake up to him chopping coconuts with his machete yelling a few of the only words he knows in English, "ahaha I love my job!" He is the happiest man I think I have ever met.

OPERATION UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

We oversee two OUR rescue homes.

These rescue home are places that hires women who have been rescued from sexual abuse and prostitution. They teach them skills and have them make jewelry which they then sell. They also provide them with educational classes, therapy, and resources so that they can leave and make a life for themselves.

These women are taught technical skills like sewing, cooking, and hairstyling.

Walking into these rescue homes, you might expect somber, quiet, classrooms but instead are greeted with warm smiles, laughter, and hugs. Although their eyes are tired, with more wrinkles than you'd expect for their age – each crease an unwelcome souvenir of past trauma – they light up when you talk with them. These women are perfect examples of not letting their past experiences define their self-worth or future opportunity.

Without programs like these, it is estimated that 80% of rescued women are driven back into prostitution.

MENTORS INTERNATIONAL

Mentors International is focused on finding individuals and helping them establish or grow their own business. This week we have been working on the "finding" part. We have met a couple of very special people who we think have a lot of potential to have a success business.

One young man that we have found, whom we are excited to begin teaching, is

named Jose. Jose is stuck as a wage worker at an empanada stand in a country that's minimum wage equates to only \$150 USD a month. However, being raised on a property with a bunch of fruit trees, he has experience making juices. We are helping him start a business as a juice vendor – selling juices to local colmados (corner stores) and restaurants.

More adventures to come,

McKenna and James

[Dominican Republic – Here We Come!](#)

<https://igga.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/McKenna-OUR-Intro.mp4>

Iron Gate Family!

My name is McKenna Strong. I am the account manager here at Iron Gate Global Advisors as well as a student at Utah State University studying Finance and Economics.

Starting January 15, 2020 my husband, James, and I will be in the Dominican Republic as part of the SEED (Small Enterprise Education and Development) Program hosted by Utah State University. The SEED Program focuses on helping and empowering less fortunate individuals in foreign countries to become more successful and independent by teaching them entrepreneurial skills and business principles.

Please visit <https://huntsman.usu.edu/seed/index> to learn more about SEED.

As SEED interns in the Dominican Republic we will be working with two main partners; Operation Underground Railroad and Mentors International.

Operation Underground Railroad (OUR)

Operation Underground Railroad (OUR) is a non-profit organization dedicated to ending sex trafficking. Their main efforts are based in rescuing individual (mainly women and children) from sex trafficking, slavery and child pornography as well as providing them with a way to recover from such trauma and live fulfilling lives.

We will be volunteering with OUR in multiple aftercare facilities based in the Dominican Republic to help the women and children their learn skills necessary to become self-reliant and independent- a feeling of self-worth they have never experienced before.

Please visit <http://ourrescue.org/> to learn more about ways you can make a difference.

Mentors International

Mentors International is focused on helping families escape poverty by providing mentoring, education, microloans, and training. With their help we will find, mentor and teach individuals who currently own small business or have a business idea that they are qualified to pursue. We will teach them skills such as budgeting, keeping financial records, marketing, and using resources efficiently.

Please visit <https://mentorsinternational.org/> to find out more about Mentors International and the incredible success stories that they have already had through their work.

We hope that you will follow along as we post every week to share our experiences with you!

A huge thanks to Iron Gate Global Advisors who has made this blog possible.

Disclaimer: The identity of many of the people we will be spending our time with is very sensitive. This is because they have all been rescued from dangerous situations and it is important that we keep their identity safe. Therefore, many of the pictures that we share will include blurred faces.

Bear markets and the individual investor

Every year, the market falls at some point. Since World War II, the average yearly fall has been -13.8%. But what if it falls even more? Down 20%?

That, my friends, is known as a Bear Market. In today's podcast we talk all about these ugly Bear Markets.

We discuss what investors can expect, how the individual investor managing their own money typically performs, and exactly how you should prepare. You won't want to miss this one!

Here's to wise investing,

Brian, Brett, Spencer and the Iron Gate Team

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2019 in review, 2020 preview

Once again, the pessimists got it wrong. Despite what was supposed to be a horrible year, the market in 2019 was excellent!

In today's podcast, we review the biggest stories of 2019 and our forecasts (kindof) for 2020, including ONE THING that we strongly believe will happen.

Lastly, we share with you our process and the importance of discipline when managing money, a philosophy of Iron Gate Global that will NEVER change.

Here's to wise investing,

Iron Gate Global

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