



Team Tobati March Trip Overview

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Overview

About the School

- The Instituto Cultural Reinaldo Macchi (“ICRM”) was founded in 2005 by Maria and Juancarlos Garcia, Tobati natives who both enjoyed successful careers in medicine after immigrating to the United States in 1970
- Situated in an impoverished town in the 3rd poorest country in South America, ICRM was founded with the mission of providing its students the unique opportunity to break the cycle of poverty which has gripped their families for generations
- By selecting the most driven and capable students from the most economically disadvantaged homes in Tobati (families earn ~\$15 / day), ICRM gives its students the chance to pursue their dreams
- The school, which provides students with full scholarships inclusive of two meals a day and all necessary academic supplies, is funded in equal parts by 1) the Garcias’ personal foundation 2) proceeds from the KO March exchange trip, which is led by a KO Spanish teacher and current Team Tobati president, Ronald Garcia, who is the son of the founders
 - ~50% of the money paid by each KO student to attend the trip is used to fund ICRM
- Since its inception, a majority of ICRM graduates have gone on to become the first members of their families to go to college, many of whom are now able to radically improve the quality of life of their families with high-paying white-collar jobs

Trip Profile

Dates

- March 23rd – March 31st (first week of Brentwood spring break)

Cost

- \$3,900 / student
 - Includes everything (airfare, food, accommodation, transportation etc.)

Chaperones

- Taylor Ross
 - Taylor (Brentwood class of '07) spent 3 years after college teaching at ICRM
 - He led the March '23 Brentwood trip, and will be with the group from drop-off to pickup at LAX
- Ben Goldstein
 - Ben (Brentwood class of '17) spent a year after college teaching at ICRM
- Ariel Gonzalez
 - Ariel was part of the first graduating class of the Macchi School and now serves as the school's Vice Principal
 - Ariel, who is fluent in English, Spanish and Guarani (the indigenous language spoken in Tobati) co-led the March '23 trip with Taylor

Safety

- Paraguay received the safest possible travel rating from the US State Department, putting it in the same category with countries like England, France and Denmark
- Maria Garcia, the school's founder, who has practiced as an Oncologist for more than three decades at the University of Notre Dame hospital in South Bend, Indiana will serve as the trip medic
- In addition, the students will never be more than an hour drive from a modern hospital with full healthcare capabilities

Proposed Itinerary Highlights

Brentwood students spend a portion of each day working on a variety of community service tasks, *led by Juniors and Seniors from ICRM*. Tasks include working on the construction of a new classroom and soccer field for the school, cleaning the local park and cultivating the school's garden amongst other activities. The below lays out the high level itinerary for each day:

Day 1

- Welcome / opening assembly
- Kickoff week-long community service projects (building soccer field for the school, building another classroom, cleaning the local park, building a garden near the school etc.)
- Brentwood students help in Middle School English classes at ICRM
- Everyone meets in the sports complex at night for games with the ICRM students

Day 2

- Brentwood visits a Macchi student's house for some traditional food with the family
- Guarani (local indigenous language) lessons from Macchi students
- Iron Chef contest where students pair with an ICRM buddy for a cooking contest, putting their learning from the morning house visit to the test

Day 3

- Pottery making lesson from local artisan
- Hiking the Cerro Arco (famous lookout point)
- Traditional Paraguayan games in Rosado (neighborhood next to school with rich history and cultural significance) with Macchi students, community
- Game night at school

Day 4

- Brentwood and Macchi students visit the American School of Asuncion (considered the top high school in Paraguay) and sit in on classes
- The day ends with a sports tournament and traditional Paraguayan "asado" or barbeque

Day 5

- Brentwood and Macchi students visit local elementary school to play with students and provide supplies
- At night, students gather for "la noche Paraguaya" where Macchi students teach Brentwood about Paraguayan customs

Day 6

- Visit to Ariel's (vice-principal) farm to help in the field and eat traditional Paraguayan lunch
- Visit to leather shop to learn how leather products are made from artisans
- Brentwood and Macchi students wrap up community service projects, and make presentation on progress / findings

Brentwood Students Found the Trip Deeply Impactful

All 6 students who attended the '23 trip plan on attending the '24 trip, and have raved about their experiences



“The trip was undoubtedly the highlight of my 12 years at Brentwood. Making friends with the students, exploring the town and learning about Paraguayan culture were really fun, but more than anything the trip was amazing because I felt like the work I was doing really mattered and was actually making a difference.”

-Tommy Goldstein ('24)

“This is the first time I’ve spent so much time with kids of a completely different background to my own. The trip really showed me how fun, exciting and educational developing those kinds of bonds can be. After doing the trip, community service is definitely going to play a bigger part in my life because it made me realize the actual impact I can have”

-Cooper Hindshaw ('24)

Brentwood Students Found the Trip Deeply Impactful (contd.)

The students involved were moved by their experiences



“The trip was amazing. I experienced so many new things, made great connections, and really felt like I helped make an impact on a community. The trip was extremely eye-opening as it made me think of everything I take for granted in my life that these students might either have to work harder for or not have at all. Overall, it was one of the best trips I’ve ever taken, and I will most definitely be going again this upcoming year.”

-Grant Fisher ('25)



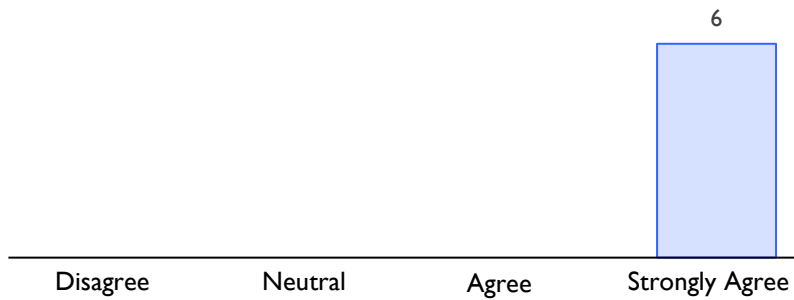
“The trip is truly a once in a lifetime opportunity to immerse in a completely foreign culture and truly see the impact you are making on other people’s lives. I had an awesome time getting to know the kids...overall it was a really eye opening experience.”

-Xander Rosen ('24)

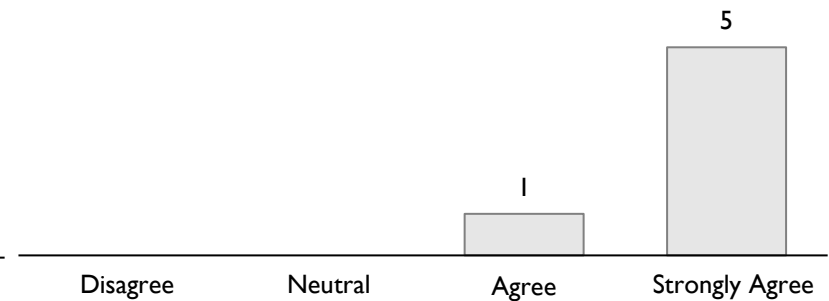
Impact by the Numbers

The following is data from a survey given to the 6 students following their trip

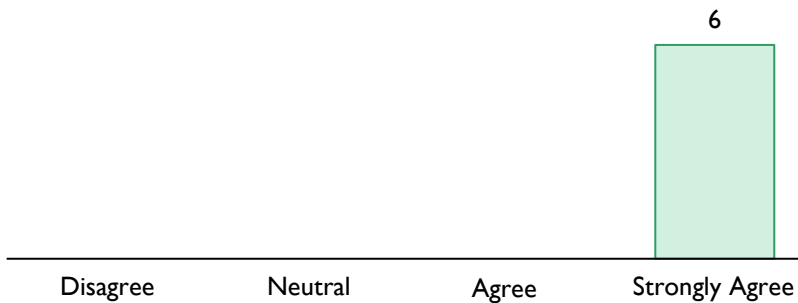
... I plan on attending the next trip



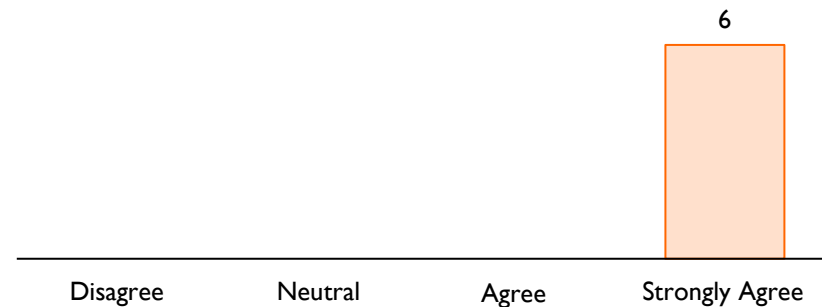
... I am more likely to make service work a major part of my life



... I feel better able to connect with people of different background



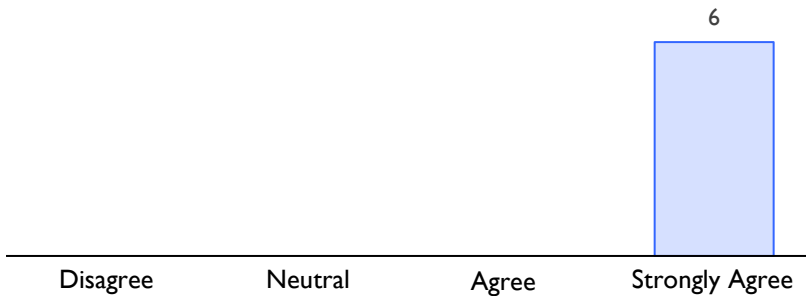
... The trip is one of the highlights of my time at Brentwood



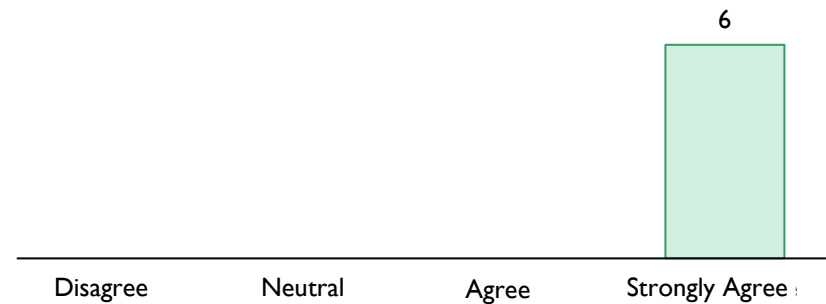
Impact by the Numbers (*contd.*)

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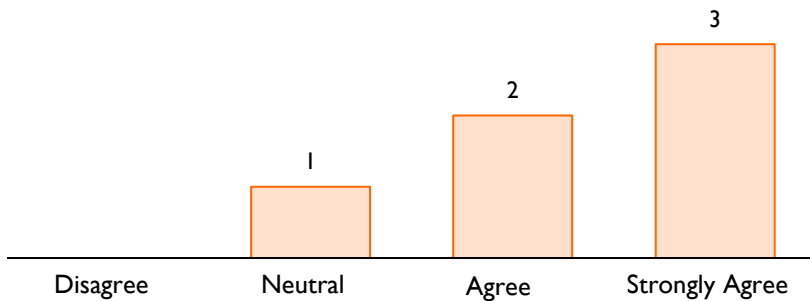
... I felt safe throughout the trip



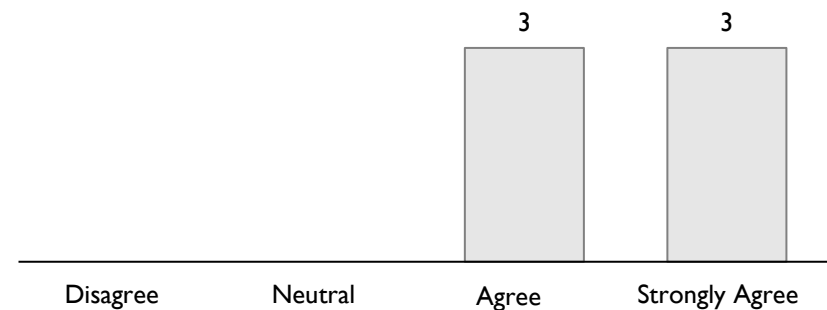
... I feel more confident in my ability to make an impact on others



...I discovered a new passion



... I see myself staying connected to the Macchi School after graduating from Brentwood



The Impact on the Paraguayan Students is Profound



“Our school’s motto is ‘todo es posible’ (anything is possible) and I think the exchange trips with the Americans really help our students believe this. I was once a student at the Macchi school, and interacting with the American students helped me understand that I was given a unique opportunity (going to ICRM) that nobody in my family and even neighborhood had ever had. On top of that, I think making friends with these American students...made me realize we’re a lot more similar than we are different, so I started to think if they can go achieve all these amazing things and go to college and whatever else, so can I.”

-Ariel Gonzalez (Vice Principal, English Teacher)



“The time when the Americans come is my favorite time of the year! It’s so much fun and I love making friends with new people. My English is not very good, but I still feel like I get to know them so well. I never thought I’d have friends from another country.”

-Yliane Cabrera (ICRM ‘24)

“I love when the Americans come. It’s so fun meeting new friends and I love seeing how much they care about helping our community even though it’s so far from where they live. It makes me want to do more to help our community here and also in other places.”

-Enrique Marroquin (ICRM ‘24)

What will students take away?

The trip provides an unforgettably fulfilling and immersive experience that personalizes community service and cultural exploration

1 *A passion for making an impact*

For Brentwood students, this trip *humanizes* the abstract idea of "making an impact," fostering a genuine understanding of how service efforts *tangibly change lives*. Through this experience, they'll cultivate *deep connections* with individuals in underserved communities, inspiring a profound empathy and determination to leverage their education and resources towards creating a meaningful impact. Crucially, the trip imparts a significant lesson: individuals within underserved communities aren't merely recipients of aid but instead *collaborative partners* united by the shared objective of expanding their horizons and enhancing their community's well-being.

2 *Increased belief in their capacity to enact change*

The students will get to see first hand the impact they can have in just a week, inspiring a *newfound belief in their ability to truly make difference*.

3 *Elevated cultural awareness*

High school students, especially many of those who grow up in the bubble that is West Los Angeles, seldom have the opportunity to *truly immerse in another culture*. In doing so, they'll develop the ability to evaluate their own culture and ultimately have a better understanding of the *role culture plays in their own lives*.

4 *Confidence to connect with people of all backgrounds*

They'll gain the confidence and tools necessary to form *deep bonds* with people of *diverse backgrounds*, a skill that is not only extremely difficult to acquire in a classroom, but also *becoming increasingly important* in an ever more integrated and interconnected world.

5 *Greater resilience and gratitude*

ICRM students overcome adversity on a daily basis, whether walking hours to school or working a grueling shift in the brick factory on the weekend, and still come to school each day with a smile on their faces and a *contagious sense of gratitude* for the opportunity they've been given. Spending even just a week in such an *extraordinary community* will leave a *resoundingly positive and lasting* influence on the Brentwood students, as it has for many KO students in the past.