

NICA NADS

THE 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

NOVEMBER 2020

HOW TO
SUCCEED AGAINST
ALL ODDS

*the real leaders of
tomorrow*

FIRST
GENERATION

The truth behind their success

USD \$3.00



ISSUE NO 12

FROM THE START

THE RISE OF THE FIRST GENERATION

A Nica Nadadores Instagram post on December 31, 2019 read "The decade is over. In 2014, Nica Nadadores was born. That idea turned into a team. That team became a family. Those boys and girls turned into men and women... and those men and women will become the leaders of tomorrow.

Exactly what our mission set out to accomplish.

We are hungry for what 2020 will bring. Happy New Year to all and my the 20's be as great as the teens!"

No one would have thought that the beginning of the new decade would have brought misery and grief all over the world. But having faced insurmountable obstacles before, we refused to let a pandemic faze us. Sure, **we sacrificed swimmer exchange opportunities, faced funding challenges, and implemented protocols to keep our community safe.**

The trajectory of our goals changed, but the core objective remained fixed: **improve our kids' lives.**

In this edition of our Annual Report, you will read about six special individuals who reached the pinnacle of their young lives by graduating high school in 2020. An accomplishment that begs the question: **Where would they be without the Nica Nadadores program?** We will highlight these six leaders and ask them each that question.

The scholarship program has now come full circle. We can now count on a handful of emerging young women and men transitioning into university study every year. This group of six is a guiding light to every class that follows - **they paved the way and dedicated themselves to being better every day so that the next generation of Nica Nadadores student-athletes would have the opportunity to be even stronger.**



A close-up photograph of a swimmer's face as they break the surface of the water. The swimmer is wearing a red swim cap with a white Nike swoosh and black goggles with pink straps. Their mouth is open, showing determination or exertion. The water is splashing around their head.

SOLVING EDUCATIONAL INEQUITY

LEADERS OF TOMORROW

You may be one of many readers of this report that don't personally struggle with lack of access to quality education for yourself or your family. But as a supporter of Nica Nadadores you've probably thought about what it would be like for this problem to be your own. The essence of what we have set out to accomplish at Nica Nadadores is to help solve a problem that many do not consider their own. In our community of Chiquilistagua, quality education is typically the make-or-break factor in having a chance at upward mobility.

If our mindset and culture at Nica Nadadores could be described in one phrase, it might be: "Why not me?" We encourage aspiration and ambition – pursuing a vision of education, fulfillment, and character. We challenge our student-athletes to set their sights high and accomplish something special. Why not them?

Donor support has resulted in transformational growth —both for our kids and our program. 2020 was a culmination of many things that we have worked toward for years. To see our first cohort of student-athletes graduate from high school with the full force of the Nica Nadadores experience behind them was an incredible feeling. In the following pages, you'll read more about this special class we are so proud of.



ROMMEL ROMERO

When it comes to having a vision, Rommel Romero defines our core value of dreaming big. Rommel graduated from Nicaraguan Christian Academy's Nejapa campus with honors for Academic Excellence. In February 2021 he will continue his passion for mechanics and technology. Rommel will study at INATEC - the national institute of technology here in Managua.

"Without Nica Nadadores I would probably try to make money to help my family as a taxi driver or fixing tires. Neither of my parents are educated but my dad works on trucks. I love mechanics, but being able to take my passion one step further by studying it in university will allow me to work at reputable auto shops. I love the idea of hands on learning."

SWIMMER | ELIEZER PICHARDO

Eliezer has one of the most outgoing personalities you would ever meet - a friendly and sympathetic soul. He knows his strengths, he is a people person. It's no wonder why he will study Business Administration at UNICIT starting in February 2021. Eliezer wants nothing more than to succeed for his family.

"My dad passed away when I was young and my mom and older brother raised me. I've always tried to treat people with the same generosity I've been treated with. That's why with a degree in Business Administration I hope to become a Manager someday. I want to help improve a store or business all while being able to interact with people who believe in my leadership."





KEVIN PEREZ

When Kevin started out with Nica Nadadores in 2014 he was in 5th grade at the Chiquilistagua Public School. Today, he's earned himself a scholarship to study Systems Engineering at Universidad Americana (UAM) one of the best universities in Central America. Kevin has incredible skill as an athlete, but it was his work ethic in the classroom that took him beyond all expectations.

"I am the first high school graduate in my family. My dad just learned to read a few years ago, only so he could read my report cards. I definitely would not have advanced far in high school without Nica Nadadores. Many of my cousins stop attending school so they can earn money working as day laborers. I'm prepared for the education I have in front of me. I know it will be tough but it's what will make me a better man."

Sarai was never expecting to become a swimmer, or an athlete of any kind for that matter! Sarai is artistic and thinks outside of the box. However, she embraced team atmosphere and took advantage of feeling part of something greater. With her future still undecided, it's a given that Sarai will succeed at whatever she attempts.

"Nica Nadadores is incredibly difficult. Practicing, school, team commitments, and more make you seem overwhelmed at times. But when I look back at the end of a season I realize how much I learned because of this program. I still do not know what I will do now that I've graduated high school. I like graphic design and I also want to become fluent in English, but my mom is a single mother and I have two younger sisters so I know I need to help out in some way."



Maverick is the oldest child in his family and feels a big responsibility to contribute. Maverick graduated with honors for Academic Excellence in December 2020 and earned a scholarship at Universidad Americana (UAM) to study Business and International Relations. Maverick is an impressive young man who has been the heart and soul of our team since the start. He lives a stone's throw away from the pool and Nica Nadadores was weaved into the fabric of his upbringing.

MAVERICK GUADAMUZ

"Kids my age who live in the same barrio as me don't go to UAM. That's a school for the upper class. It will feel surreal showing up on the public bus while my new classmates drive themselves in nice trucks. But that's part of what motivates me. Because I know I am more prepared and more willing to work than they are. It's a dream come true to think after university I will be recognized as an equal to those who grew up with more privilege."





JOSE MANUEL MEDRANO

Josue Manuel Medrano will be one of the last students in Nica Nadadores to graduate from the public school. He started in Nica Nadadores during his second year of high school, so the transition to a private school would have been disruptive. Regardless, he will pursue a university degree in 2021. Jose Manuel is incredible in his role as a student coach for our youngest swimmers. He leads swim classes for boys and girls under the age of six, and is leaning toward becoming a teacher.

"When secondary school started there were three 7th grade sections with about 35 kids in each section. When I graduated in December of 2020 there were a total of 29 graduates. Without Nica Nadadores and their encouragement to continue striving for success I would have been one of the 76 kids who dropped out. Although I'm not a fast swimmer, I love competing and I cannot imagine the next years of my life without going to the pool after school."



| EXITING THE POOL



Now you can see why we're so proud. With the support of the Nica Nadadores family these six have willed their way to this major life milestone. And let's not forget that their journey is really just beginning—the Nica Nadadores spirit will continue to guide them in their next endeavors.

A new group of promising young girls and boys will dive in starting in February 2021. The path ahead of them is well lit, thanks to the six trailblazing students you just read about. We'll also celebrate our first university graduates in 2021 when Gerald, Paola, and Dania receive their diplomas. What will the future hold for them? We're not sure, but we're confident they're in the fast lane to a fulfilling future.

Our donors are the unsung heroes behind all of these great results. We can't thank you enough for the funding, advocacy, and support that makes Nica Nadadores what it is.

Thank you for reading, and as always thank you for following our program.



THE LANE TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE
www.nicanadadores.org