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28 July 2014: Journal (El Trafico)

Due to my late arrival to the course, I was only able to sit in on the final discussion stage of the group work. Both the Llano Grande and El Trafico groups made great progress coming up with courses of action for their respective communities. I chose to work with the El Trafico group; Awais, Gibran, Chloe and Tom. The bag project, and a possible continuation of some sort, interested me, and I also thought that their course of action was more flexible to changes, should any have arisen.

I was wary of group discussion since I’m not comfortable speaking with strangers, as well as speaking a language that I don’t have full confidence in. However, the trip from the airport to the hotel was pleasant, and I had a conversation with Evangelina as well as Enrique when I arrived. It appears I’m more comfortable with person-to-person conversation, then with a group setting. However, that is one skill that I would like to develop further through this course. The students and adults were very open with their own lives as well as the projects and communities we’d be working in. When they talked about their own lives I felt less pressure, and it was more like I was an equal with the various members. It was a great first step in developing a personal relationship. I look forward to developing these initial relationships further, especially with the students.

The setting was also great, a large space that could hold a large circle for everyone to meet and have a conversation eye-to-eye, and not having to worry that you were talking to the back of someone’s head. Another point I thought was valuable was that the speakers who described their group’s course of action were students/adults from the university and area, giving the discussion a more legitimate feel, and less like a group of strangers dictating what is expected of the community.
This was my first official day with the “El Trafico” group, and I was initially apprehensive when we met with the women at the kitchen/dining area of Enedina’s. I felt overwhelmed since the other four members of my group; Awais, Gibran, Chloe, and Tom, were aware of the course of action that they expected for the day, as well as knew the university members already. While I had caught the tail end of the discussion the previous day, I still felt awkward since I wasn’t part of the discussion that led to that particular course of action. I was also still getting used to the use of Spanish in the majority of discussions, especially when there was a member translating nearby, I found it hard to focus on one conversation, and they bled together. However, the women and our counterparts from the universities were extremely welcoming and offered to help with translations and were forthcoming with much information regarding themselves and their town. I had a brief discussion on the bus before with Eva, and it reinforced an observation I
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had previously made, I’m comfortable with one-on-one conversation in Spanish, since I feel less pressure to make sure my word usage and tenses are correct, but group discussions still make me nervous. After much discussion, where Awais described the use of plastic bags to make jewelry, the women agreed to participate in a workshop the following day to see how they were made. All the women were interested and there was also a young girl who was very excited. I had a discussion with both Eva and Perla describing the various projects that could be attempted while here, and they both showed enthusiasm to working with the women/community to figure out which projects the community is interested in and what they can keep going once the university students are no longer here. Throughout the day I helped with translations for members of both groups. The residents of the town were very open with their lives and the problems they’ve experienced, from drainage to failure to finish infrastructure, especially on the walkabout. Members of the community came out of their homes to talk about the improvements they’ve made to their properties as well as the shortcomings of their town and their respective lots. I think it helped that we also had members of the community leading the group through some of the streets in El Trafico, some of the women were talking with various neighbors they met along the way, and they could point us to specific areas of problems/concerns. When we met to plan a course of action, everyone had some great ideas, and there was a general consensus that the jewelry workshop could help us open up to the group further, helping them learn a quick skill that is great in the long-run, but that could be the first of many small steps that build off of the plastic bag project. One of those build-off projects was the use of the plastic bottles, mentioned multiple times throughout the day by various members in the community as a problem. Perla and Eva had some strategies that were discussed, the one
that the group has decided to pursue, and see if there is interest from the women and the community, is the use of plastic bottles filled with plaster as a means of paving and edging.

I thought the day went by quickly and was very productive, with events already planned and a basic framework for further work in the community. A valuable point I heard addressed was that the course of action that the group will continue with is dependent on the interest and approval from the community/women’s group, and all the members of the group appear to hold them same mindset.

*Group plenary session discussing the two teams events and group meetings creating action plans for the following days.*
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30 July 2014: Journal (El Trafico)

First plastic jewelry workshop with the women of El Trafico.

The framework plan that the El Trafico team established for the activities for today was pretty well adhered to. Awais led the group in a workshop on creating earrings using wire and plastic bags. The time of the workshop was set for 10:00am, but our team didn’t arrive until around 10:30am. I was worried that there would be impatient women waiting at the kitchen, but there just a few when we arrived. Little by little more women arrived, and by the end, including the workers in the kitchen and the children there were around 20 participants in the workshop. The women who worked in the kitchen jumped from cooking in the kitchen to trying to make earrings in the workshop, and they made sure that they had the skill set down to teach the rest of the kitchen group. Awais led the workshop with Gibran translating the instructions to Spanish for the participants. The remainder of the team ran supplies between the participants and offered what help they could with the steps when the participants had snags in the process.
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My favorite part of the workshop was when the process transitioned from shaping wire to making the plastic into a bead and letting the women get creative with their earring designs. All the women were helping each other and talking amongst themselves, but once they had the chance to paint the newly formed plastic bead and add their own beads the energy in the room rose quickly and it was extremely positive. Everyone was laughing and sharing their supplies, if someone didn’t have beads their neighbors offered their own, nail polish was passed around until everyone had the color they wanted. By the end of the workshop all the women had a pair of earrings that were unique to them, and many were proudly showing them off to the team and Awais. One little girl, no older than five, walked out of the kitchen with her mother’s new earrings hanging from her own pierced ears with a huge smile on her face.

*The first workshop was attended by many women and a wide variety of earrings were produced.*

I interacted minimally with the students from Universidad Albert Einstein during the workshop, but Alberto was an active participant in the earring workshop, working on his own set. The Albert Einstein teams was either participants in the workshop, or were helping around. Uriel actually helped one of the elder community members, Juana Pasquala, make a pair for herself since she expressed concern about being able to complete
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the various tasks. Alberto also helped us on the bus make sure that we had all the terms correct for the materials and processes we’d be using during the workshop. On the trip from Perla’s house to Alberto’s I had a small conversation with Cuauhtémoc, Karina, and Awais. While the conversations were small and dealt with small details about our personal lives I felt closer to Alberto, Cuauhtémoc, and Karina afterwards, and more comfortable speaking with them.

During the team meeting to create a course of action for the following day, the main theme was about using these craft workshops to build towards larger steps. An idea from the previous day regarding the PET bottles evolved from using them as edging filled with plaster, to making earrings with pieces of PET bottles. Another idea is introducing the idea of composting to the women as well as Enedina and her team of kitchen workers. While it could be a larger more long-term goal the women’s group and Enedina’s team could pursue, I worry that it is too large a jump from jewelry making to composting. I don’t want the team to come across as some specialists coming into the community and telling them what’s best for them. Another idea that may be too soon is the possibility of developing a mini-park, formed out of the same techniques to create the humidals Perla showed us. The team will also be asking the women’s group to discuss some of the problems they know of in their community, hopefully creating a larger discussion than can take up the last hour/hour-and-a-half of our time. Tomorrow we will see if the women’s groups is interested in either of the projects we’re going to bring up, and if they have any sense of direction our team can follow.
Today was another productive day with the El Trafico group, at least in the sense of skill development. I’m unsure of how successful the event was for capacity building and relationship development among the participants. Awais was able to continue the jewelry workshop by using the skills learned from the previous day to make bracelets. Our group was more on time today then they were yesterday, and when we arrived most of yesterday’s group had returned as well and were eagerly waiting for the workshop to begin. The energy in the room was very positive and began at a high level; all the women and children were very excited to continue. Before Awais even began the workshop a few of the women were already starting on making their beads for the bracelet. Awais and Gibran led the workshop again, with Chloe, Tom, and I participating with the women. We weren’t dispersed as well as we could have been, and the Universidad Albert Einstein students didn’t participate in this workshop like they did the last one. I sat next to a little girl named Andrea who was eight years old. She told Chloe and I that she had heard about
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te workshop by walking by the Community Kitchen and seeing the sign that had been posted. She had come alone from her home, which wasn’t too far a walk away. She made the majority of her own beads and left with a fully completed bracelet that she was proud of.

Numerous conversations between the women and the professors and students revolved around recycling and reuse of materials.

The conversation during this workshop was just as fluid as the last one, with most of the women talking amongst themselves and helping each other out. Unexpectedly one of our objectives of the workshop, which was to discuss composting, was able to arise more fluidly and spontaneously than from within a formal structure. We had hoped to talk about composting, and a few of the women started having a discussion related to cooking and food portioning, and that led to a discussion about snails and eventually how they could be used in some form of composting. A break in the flow of the workshop I saw was when the Universidad Albert Einstein students invited the women to write down a problem/need of their community and a possible solution on a post-it note and to stick it to a board on the door of the kitchen. While the conversation began again after the suggestion, I thought it was an abrupt halt to the current flow that had been occurring, and a few of the women
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didn’t want to write down their thoughts. Others offered to write their thoughts for them, but it showed that they were much more comfortable talking amongst themselves, then writing and posting their thoughts. Rafael ended the workshop by giving the women some “homework” and suggesting that they reflect on the questions posed at the workshop. I thought it was another abrupt end to the workshop, which felt forced into the moment. The more spontaneous conversations that flowed out of the topics at hand were richer and deeper than the conversation using the post-it notes.

The plan of action for the following day is to try and recreate the space and help facilitate a discussion that will help the team focus on a larger scale project. We also decided who would be going to the Saturday workshop, and despite the initial problems with communication it was eventually ironed out, to a degree. Awais will lead another workshop on jewelry making, while Chloe and I can translate the main portions of the instructions and talk with the women from Llano Grande. Other team members can be spread out among the women helping make the jewelry and making sure there is communication amongst the women from both towns, to help develop more relationships. Perla also suggested that maybe the structure of future conversation could be more structured with members of both teams spread amongst the participants. A final idea, from Eva, was to use the power of images and pictures to show more people, beyond the women’s groups we’re working with, some of the benefits that could come from being more environmentally aware. Using pictures and Photoshop to envision a better community, these images could be place around the town and along the main streets to spread awareness and raise interest.
Today felt like “kiddy day” since the women from El Trafico were busy with a government event. The majority of the participants were children, and Eva used the opportunity to try and educate the children on the dangers of plastic and burning. The children didn’t seem very interested in the classroom-like lecture and the discussion felt forced. The Universidad Albert Einstein students were more active today in the workshop, with Eva leading a discussion and Cuauhtémoc and Karina making various jewelry pieces and interacting with the women and children.
The El Trafico team met at Senora Enedina’s for the weekly Friday meeting of the women’s group. There were a variety of issues discussed from the post-it notes, and three main themes emerged from the discussion; trash dumping, drainage, and delinquency. They discussed each issue, and there were some surprising and frightening instances, with most women having been the victim at some point. The women of El Trafico were interested in meeting with the Llano Grande women, but were unsure of the time commitment due to an event early in the day.

Tomorrow a few of the women from El Trafico will meet at Llano Grande to host a plastic bag workshop. While they will be able to offer the Llano Grande women a new skill there is also the benefit of forming relationships with neighbors and building local capacity for development and improvement. Hopefully the workshop will be a success, and the women can continue to meet and share ideas.
The Saturday event between the women of Llano Grande and El Trafico started off with confusion and some unexpected setbacks. Not all the women from El Trafico were able to go, but four were able to make it, with an interesting point being made by Paola, most of the women from El Trafico aren't aware of this area of town and aren't knowledgeable of the area enough to make the trip alone. This could possibly limit the interactions the women have with each other, but it could also be beneficial for the El Trafico women to broaden their networks. Since the women of Llano Grande were expecting a jewelry/crafts workshop, when the women of El Trafico were late Awais took over and offered a quick workshop on making jewelry. The women of El Trafico arrived at a pretty convenient time actually; Enedina, Hermelinda, Mari, and Paola arrived just as the majority of the Llano Grande women were completing their bracelets and earrings. Since the women of Llano Grande already knew how to knit, the only skill they needed to be taught was the making of the plastic bag thread. Enedina and Paola worked amongst the women and answered any
questions that came up, while Mari and Hermelinda showed off the work they had done previously, and chatted with those nearby.

Two workshops were held for the Llano Grande women, a jewelry workshop and a bag-sewing workshop, both using plastic bags as the main supply.

The energy in the room was positive and many women were able to make contact with Enedina and start a small relationship with the El Trafico women. I also noted that the Universidad Albert Einstein students were active members of both workshops, helping people as well as actively learning the skills being taught, and conversing with the women and children. Afterwards the El Trafico women took a tour of the small park that Llano Grande was able to construct the year previously. They were able to see the various uses of the PET bottles and get ideas for their own park plans. There was sharing of ideas from both groups, and I believe they both benefited from the event. The making of the jewelry and bags helped create a space that allowed the women to spend time together and build relationships.
Today’s meeting with the municipal officials was the main point for the day, for both the Llano Grande and El Trafico teams. However, since the officials were from another department the action plan that we were pursuing could not be continued, since Enedina didn’t want to raise the hope of the community with a plan that cannot be achieved. While the majority of the team was in Mexico City for the weekend, Tom and Vivek pursued the plan and imagery for the park plan. I wasn’t sure how participatory the park proposal would be, especially since the only time we had heard of plans for the ejido land was from the discussion with Senora Enedina. I was also worried about pursuing a project that could be taken up by any design studio, a group of students come into a community and find a place to fix up, and leave the community with some images and plans. I understand that it could be a conversation starter for future community discussion; especially once the ejido land issue has been resolved, but without further community involvement the proposal is
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too much like a design studio. The format of the meeting was awkward for those around the table as well; a select few talking with the officials while the others were seated around them. I think it showed the community supports Enedina and wants el tanque land resolved, but it appeared the majority of the participants were not a part of the discussion and couldn’t even hear what was being discussed. Granted, since the discussion was with officials who have no final say on the land, keeping the talk to a select few could have prevented a longer more laborious conversation. Regardless, involving the others present in some way could have made the meeting less awkward, and more beneficial for all.

Tomorrow's action plan is for a participatory discussion with the community members regarding an emerging theme from the post-it notes; trash burning and dumping. A facilitated discussion that brings up the theme of trash burning with a mapping exercise, both large scale and small scale, to locate points the community believes are trouble spots or examples. The mapping exercises would allow the participants to reflect on what and where they're seeing the problems, as well as give them the chance to verify their thoughts later in the day. From there we can make an action plan that the community can pursue.
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5 August 2014: Journal (El Trafico)

Today we had expected people to show for a conversation related to trash, but unfortunately none showed up, which wasn’t as unexpected because we hadn’t broadcast the meeting and we had also missed Monday due to the meeting with the municipal officials. The plan had been to have a dialogue with the participants related to the problem of trash, a theme that emerged from the post-it notes that we encouraged community members to post on Enedina’s door. We failed to appreciate the presence of community members, and we took for granted that they would be there. Therefore, we decided to advertise the next day’s event through both a bulletin notice and a quick walk through the street. We made a poster to hang on Enedina’s door that advertised the discussion we’d be having the next day, and then we split into two groups and walked the main street. While walking we not only invited them to the following day’s events, but also asked them questions related to trash dumping and burning in their communities. We also gauged the interest of a recreational green space within walking distance, possibly situated near el Tanque. In my opinion there was general interest in the community for a place that could be their recreational space, as was mentioned numerous times there is no place that El Trafico has that it can call its own.

Since we were not able to meet as a team to discuss the action plan for the following day it was my understanding that we would attempt the same action plan, just delayed one day. Therefore, tomorrow we’re hoping for greater community involvement in a discussion. We hope to have the same participatory mapping exercise that will allow us to help formulate a framework plan that the community can work off of.
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The tours of the high school and “model” garden were very enlightening, and the number of plants cultivated as well as the local knowledge that is being passed down surprised me. The way they also try to help each other and their communities out was great to hear about, if one area has the produce but not the market and vice versa, they can use the benefits of both communities to help both win. Hearing Rafael discuss the various maladies that his plants could heal, reminded me of some of the old folk remedies my parents and grandparents use occasionally. It was a pleasant reminder of the local knowledge that is available to someone interested.
Today’s action plan, which was a replication of Tuesday’s action plan, had been to work with the community on mapping out points of interest, as related to trash. However, just as the day before, there were no people at Enedina’s. We waited a bit to see if people would trickle in, like they had done with the workshops, but once it was clear that no one would be showing up we all decided to meet as a team and plan our last day with the community.

For our final day with the community the team has proposed a “demonstration and exhibition” stand of various eco-tecnias. My understanding of the main goal is to have people come by and start a discussion about trash reuse and recycling, while they explore the various objects they can make out of “trash,” like bags, earrings, and knick-knacks for the house. We will be showing off bags and earrings made of plastic and PET, PET bottles turned into piggy banks and plant pots, and possibly using orange peels to make knick-knacks. Since the last few days haven’t had people drop by Senora Enedina’s kitchen, we decided to return to the use of workshops as a way of getting people interested and have them come out. To also get people interested we hope to have music and juice to get people to come by, and spent some time walking down the main street inviting people to the event. One last addition the team plans to complete is the making of a few options for the park development in el Tanque. To leave the community and Enedina with something that they can pursue, the team will be creating a number of hand-drawn plans and images that can start a conversation and build momentum within the community.

The meeting with the municipal department heads went as I had expected. Much like politicians and elected officials elsewhere, their responses were the same mantra of
future progress together, projects in the work, and discussion on what has been accomplished. One aspect of the meeting that did surprise me was the physical setting, it was far more hierarchical than I expected. The room was rigidly hierarchical, with a clear leader and clear separated space for witnesses, and with an angled table that put all the focus on the head of the table. The department heads were cordial and professional and spoke highly of the interest students have in improving their communities. They seemed entrenched in a system of approaching a problem that looked at top-down approaches, versus more fluid and local solutions. They were aware of the problems facing peri-urban communities and seemed genuinely interested in the betterment of communities, but their approaches seemed too rigid.
Today was our final day with the community and the team planned an exhibition and demonstration of eco-tecnias. The number of examples and the types of examples people brought with them to share surprised me. The women who worked at the kitchen had a lot of examples they shared, and there were even a few community members who brought the objects they had made in the last few workshops. There were examples of what you could do with plastic bags, make thread for new bags, tablecloths, hats, and placemats. There were the plastic bag jewelry examples; bracelets, earrings, and necklaces, as well as jewelry made of PET bottles. Perla brought pots made of tires as well as a folding screen with the screen portion made of magazine pages. One of the kitchen workers brought a few vases made of reused glass bottles as well as a PET bottle made into a vase and adorned with snail shells. The variety of objects the community had made was amazing.
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Perla and a few of the other team members at the stand answered the various questions the passer-bys had, as well as explain how all the various objects were made. The crowd that gathered was very interested, and a few expressed a desire to meet Friday with the established women’s group. Most of the participants were women and children who had been passing by to go register their kids for class, and we were fortunate to have a convi stop in front of our stand and drop off a few people. Perla had brought a bucket of oranges to give to the participants, and it offered a chance for her to illustrate another eco-tecnia. If cut in half, eaten, and then turned inside out, one gets the chance to make a cup, or random knick knack. The white fleshy side, that gets turned inside out to act as the outer shell, can be painted and made more durable. At one point everyone in the crowd, children and adults, were munching on an orange.

We had also planned on having a quick mapping exercise with the participants that arrived. A map of El Trafico was displayed on the table, and we asked all those who passed by to comment on where the trash trouble spots were in their neighborhoods and in their community. Women were able to point out where the smell was the worse, where the
barranca was essentially a trash dump, and where the truck routes ran. The exercise started out shaky, in the beginning, when there weren’t many participants at the table, individuals were reluctant to share what they knew. However, once we had a good number of participants; making cups out of PET bottles, learning how to make the thread for bags, talking about the eco-tecnia products, more were comfortable to mention the problem areas in the community.

Since we had decided to set up outside in front of Enedina’s instead of inside we were able to have a presence on the street and peak the curiosity of passer-bys. The colors, food, and music we had playing helped create an inviting atmosphere that helped the team draw people in and keep a few of them engaged throughout the entirety of the event. The kids who came were important to the success of the event; they arrived first and brought their moms with them. Everyone who passed first saw kids showing off their previous projects and then could see the projects that everyone else had made. The kids helped give the event a relaxed and fun atmosphere, especially one small child who dragged everyone around to play with his toy dog.

The event was a success, I think we got the word out to more women about the options available with trash, and we were able to do some quick trash trouble spot mapping. We were also able to create a space where people could connect with others.
“El Trafico” team made up of local community leaders, UT students, and Universidad Albert Einstein professors and students.
Today was the final day of the seminar with a series of small table discussions at the Sustainable Development of the Guadalupe Watershed event. There were a number of themed tables that the participants divided themselves into, with a facilitator from UT or Albert Einstein. Since a few of the Albert Einstein students wouldn’t be able to stay for the full event, and another facilitator was needed, Chloe and I volunteered to facilitate a table together, combining our Spanish skills. Our table was Urbanization and Land Use Conversion.

I was worried, in the beginning of the event, because there were quite a few lectures and some dance breaks, for a few seconds I thought the event design proposed by the Texas group had been completely changed. Once everyone split off I was surprised our table did not have more members, but the action plan that the table came up with was collaborative and touched on a few themes of the other tables, legal framework and fishing & farming economies. One of the requirements of the event was to have a concrete set of actions that
could be pursued. The table decided that tackling the large systemic problems of weak land use laws and failure to adhere to those same laws was too big a scope for the action plan. Instead of relying on the existing municipal power structure, the table decided to find the members of the community that were living off their land, examples being Maria Luisa and Rafael. The table felt that people didn’t value their land enough, and when developers or well-off families came asking for the land to build a large acre dwelling or commercial use, the current residents would sell and move elsewhere. The strategy the table had was to target the areas still on the outskirts, where people most likely made a living off the land, and where they could slow development outside the current limits. It could also help with the municipal goal to limit urbanization to its current extents, and develop within current limits. The ultimate goal of creating a cooperative that illustrated the importance and value of land, and limited the number of tracts of land that get converted, illegally, from small personal lots or green space into commercial development.

Developing the action plan took longer than our table expected, they didn’t want the plan to be too small and superficial in scope, but they also didn’t want it to be too grand to
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achieve. I think the second section, that required the group decide on a series of deadlines and concrete steps, was important because it made the event more reality based, and less academic. Making deadlines helped because often events leave with grand goals that don’t get pursued, and it gives the members a chance to meet again later and discuss the progress that has been made. Since a few of the tables came up with similar action plans there are also options for further collaboration. I was glad there were some similar themes throughout the tables, it offered the chance for collaboration between departments and people, out table’s members were interested in working with members from legal framework and fishing & farming economies. I wasn’t expecting the second session, but I believe it helped make the action plans more concrete.
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Final Reflection (El Trafico)

These last two weeks had many ups and downs, and it was an experience completely different from my previous study abroad experience, as well as my previous projects with communities.

I was anxious in the beginning because I had never worked with a community and not known what the final project, or even the process, would be. My previous experiences with community projects are based on the Design Studio model. The studio researches all aspects of the community; social, cultural, physical, economic, educational, etc, and then comes up with a project amongst themselves that is supposed to benefit the community; new commercial district, new park, renovated infrastructure, etc. I was also not used to being with the community so much, even though in the end it turned out it wasn’t as long as we wanted.

Since I wasn’t sure initially what the final outcome of the seminar would lead to I wasn’t sure how the various workshops we held would be beneficial. However, I believe the workshops helped the team build relationships amongst themselves and with the women in the kitchen, as well as internal relationships within the community. When we were all working on jewelry we were all at the same level, and the team members weren’t
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“specialists” coming into lecture the community, they were participants just like the women. The workshops also helped to create a space where everyone could just talk amongst themselves, and some topics came up naturally, which the team was able to expand on and maintain community interest, like composting which came out of a conversation of snails. The final El Trafico event also created a similar space, except outside in view of the community and with a more relaxed and fun atmosphere. Both types of event were successful, and I believe that we helped give the community a direction to continue on with themselves and other neighbor communities.

![Workshop participants](image1.jpg) ![Workshop participants](image2.jpg)

The Saturday event was a great moment during the seminar because the workshop brought two groups of women together, and helped start a relationship between them. Both groups of women were able to learn something possible for their respective communities, as well as take that first step towards greater community relationships. The final seminar event at Albert Einstein was turned out better than I expected, I was glad so many actors in the region were excited to collaborate, and not just talk amongst themselves but develop an action plan for future projects. It was a great way to prepare a course of action that the various entities can pursue amongst themselves.
While there were definite highs and great moments while working there were also a few low points and disheartening moments. The prime examples being the two-three days following the weekend when no one came to Senora Enedina’s for the activities we were planning. We hadn’t advertised anything for the first two days back, but even on the third day back after we’d posted a sign mentioning a conversation about community benefits there was still no one around. While we didn’t have anyone for the activities we had planned, there were a few women and children who asked if we’d be having any more jewelry workshops. In the end we utilized this interest to bring people out.

The team members of El Trafico were a great asset too, both team members and faculty that helped us through everything. They were very knowledgeable, but also open to
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learning new things from the community and amongst themselves. Most of the team members became friends and developed a good relationship with each other; I know I felt close to members of both teams.

My time in Mexico, working for the community and travelling, was amazing. I look forward to continuing the relationships I made there and continuing the work this coming fall.