

Introducing UUCA Accompanier in Guatemala - Martha Schmitz



Martha began her 6-month tour as UUCA's 15th Accompanier on July 7. After completing a brief orientation and in-country training, she will be assigned to a specific team. She has been in Guatemala since November studying Spanish and is excited to begin her work. PAG is pleased to welcome her to the special group of human rights accompaniers who stand in solidarity with Guatemalans who face intimidation and violence for defending their lives, their communities, and their lands and water.

Martha brings a rich background to her new assignment. She has a B.A. in History and Political Science, w/minor in French from University of Maryland Baltimore County and an M.A. from Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (2013) in Int'l Relations & Economics, with a concentration in Conflict Management. Her professional experience includes being a Program Assistant at the World Bank's Poverty Global Practice; a Community Mediator for Baltimore; a Program Assistant for HasNa Inc. developing programs in Turkey, Armenia and Cyprus; and a Consultant to the U.N. Department of Political Affairs.

When asked about issues that concern her most, Martha says,

"... I am most concerned with U.S. foreign policy and how choices made for expediency or profit stand to damage or destroy the lives of many people around the globe... I find the perverse incentive structure that encourages the U.S. to constantly seek war extremely troubling... I am concerned about the ongoing human rights abuses perpetrated by or with the support of the U.S. government, including support and training of brutal military dictatorships, the continued operation of Guantanamo Bay, extradition policies, and drone strikes. Finally, I am extremely concerned by inequality on the global scale... it is problematic that only a few of the world's richest people have as much wealth as the bottom half of the global population, particularly when so many of those in the bottom half lack access to a way to meet their most basic needs. "