



# The TIBI HERALD



**Editor**  
Steve Austin  
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## THIS ISSUE

*TENTH Graduation!*  
*Largest Incoming Class*  
*Ever*

*“...until we all reach unity  
in the faith and in the  
knowledge of the Son of  
God and become mature,  
attaining to the whole  
measure of the fullness of  
Christ.”*

*Eph. 4:13*

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## “TENTH Graduation!”

On Saturday, July 23, at the Southeast Church of Christ in Houston, TX, TIBI celebrated its 10th graduation, and enjoyed the presence of more than 180 people in 8 sites, including many by video conferencing.



Screen shot during graduation service at Southeast Church of Christ, July 23

Eleven students received their Bachelor of Biblical Studies degree: Carlos Goitia, Manuel Franco, Juan Rosillo, Pedro Saez, and Alex Montero, all from Venezuela; Claudia Sanchez, Colombia; Victor Suarez Landa, Jose de Jesus Rosales Zarco, Mario Salgado Salazar, and Julio Cesar Salazar, all from Mexico; and Eder Vasquez from El Salvador.

At the end of the ceremony Lanny Partain, an elder from the Southeast church and a member of TIBI's board, prayed for and the graduates. I love to see that visual of all the graduates in their churches, surrounded by those who have loved and helped them. It was a night of great blessing.

Seven of these eleven will receive support from a variety of churches to continue working full-time where they are, and the others will be in vocational ministry.

As I thought about these graduates, one aspect that struck me was how much they had overcome in these two years. At least half of them had suffered the Chikunguya and/or Zika fevers—some both! One man had both these fevers, then had to undergo an operation that weakened him for a month.

Several dealt with health problems and care of their parents. One got married. Another had his first child. Most of them had some trouble with internet in Central and South America, especially those from Venezuela. Many faced political and economic troubles in their country, and danger in their neighborhoods. And this is all in addition to the normal stresses of living and going to school!

One man's wife was pregnant with their son when they discovered kidney cancer in her. The pregnancy became a race to see if the child could be born before the cancer got too bad to treat, a balancing act between giving treatment for a healthy pregnancy and treatment to prevent the spread of the cancer. During their pregnancy, their other two children had to go live with their grandparents in another town so that the parents could focus on getting to delivery safely. Finally, the son was born healthy and the mother has now been treated successfully. And now she wants to begin to study full-time with TIBI this August! Pretty astonishing!

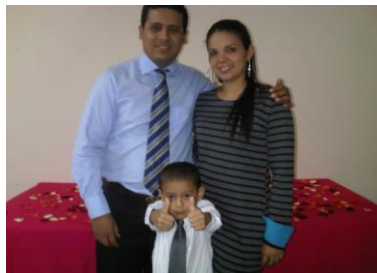
We ask for your prayers for them, that God protect and lead them in their lives and ministries.

### **Largest Incoming Class Ever!**

On August 15, TIBI will welcome its largest incoming class in its 12-year history. In addition to our 9 returning second-year students, we add 12 new full-time scholarship students, and at least 5 more full-time students who will study on their own or be sponsored by other individuals. So that's 26 in all, and that doesn't include other students who take classes part-time, or join our courses from other sites in Latin America. A full fall! It's a wonderful challenge to have. So we'd like to briefly introduce you to these full-time students as they begin in less than two weeks.



*Bernabe and family*



*Jorbert and family*



*Gustavo M. and family*

Bernabe Saravia is from the Centro congregation in Tipitapa, Nicaragua. He's been a Christian for 9 years, and has been married to his wife Rosa for 15 years. They have two children. Jorbert Rivero has been taking classes for several months on his own, but will join us as a scholarship student from the church of Christ in Valera, Venezuela. He and his wife of 10 years, Ana, and their son Diego just welcomed a new daughter this spring. Gustavo Merino, his wife Beatriz of 9 years, and his daughter Dafne live in Quito, Ecuador. He will be doing his ministry work in the San Rafael congregation in Quito.

Carlos Garcia lives and works on Isla Margarita in Venezuela. He's been married to his wife Cruz for three years with no children yet. He graduated with a university degree in chemistry, but wants to work full-time at the church there on Isla Margarita. Gustavo Rojas is single, and has been a Christian for 8 years. He worships and will be working in the Cabudare congregation, near Barquisimeto, Venezuela. Luis Mujica and

his wife Haylet have been faithful members of the Cabudare church. They've been married 9 years and have two children, Eliab and Luisana.



*Carlos and Cruz*



*Gustavo R.*



*Luis M.*

Vircar Mejias and his wife Mildred have been married 10 years. They and their son Jeremias are from the Cabudare congregation, and lead the music ministry there. Roberto Adan and his wife of 10 years, Haira, and their three children (Yisbel, Airimar, Aimar) work with the Los Sauces church in the suburbs of Barquisimeto, and also with a cell church at Calle 25 near there.



*Vircar and family*



*Roberto and family*

Rolando Camacho, wife Arelys, and son Diego are also from Venezuela. They'll be working to establish a new congregation in the area of El Cuji. Maria Jose Mejias comes to us from a relatively new congregation of Jose Gregorio Bastidas in a suburb of Barquisimeto. She and her husband Jonathan have been married two years and active in the church much longer than that.



*Rolando and family*



*Maria and Jonathan*



*David and Fanny*



*Walter and Johanna*

David Marcano and his wife Fanny live in Carupano, Venezuela, and work in the Playa Grande church there. David's father, Santo, has been a successful church planter for many years in Venezuela. Walter Mera and his wife Johanna are from Madrid, Spain, and are recently married. They will focus their ministry work in the Iglesia de Cristo Madrid.



*Enrique and fiancée*



*Yheison*



*Adry*



*Eliana*

We welcome five full-time students this fall who are not TIBI scholarship recipients, but have found other ways to be able to study with us full-time. They include Enrique Vizcaino, and is working in the Catia congregation in Caracas. He is engaged to be married soon. Also, Yheison Parada has been active since he was very young in the congregation of Turen, Venezuela. Yheison is single. Adry Pichardo is the wife of Mario Salgado, who was mentioned above as one of this year's graduates. Adry was the one who gave birth to a baby and fought off cancer at the same time. She wants to study full time now. The fourth is Eliana Torres, the wife of another 2016 TIBI graduate (Alex Montero). She will start full-time and then may need to take less, as she also has three children and Alex's father lives with them also! And the fifth is Julio Cesar Contreras, also from Venezuela, from whom we are still receiving information.

We are pleased and excited about the possibilities with this group, and ask for you to pray for them as they start this important project in their lives and churches.

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