

Amigo Contigo: A Tandem Program Integrating Cuencanos and North American Expatriates

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Abstract

Between 2010 and 2016, approximately 4,500 North Americans relocated to Cuenca, Ecuador (*CuencaHighLife*, 2017). Expatriates and Cuencanos experience social separation due to cultural and language barriers. Our goal is to design a program that pairs Cuencanos and expatriates in an attempt to integrate the communities. We used a human-centered design approach and conducted interviews, surveys, social mapping, and a pilot test. We produced a guidebook for a tandem program for the Dirección de las Relaciones Externas which includes methods of advertising, pairing participants, organizing orientation, conducting monthly meetings, and getting feedback.

Abstracto

Entre 2010 y 2016, aproximadamente 4.500 expatriados norteamericanos se reubicaron en Cuenca, Ecuador (*CuencaHighLife*, 2017). Los expatriados y cuencanos experimentan la separación social debido a barreras de culturales y idioma. El objetivo de nuestro proyecto es diseñar un programa de tándem factible y sostenible que integre a los Cuencanos y expatriados en un intento de unificar estos grupos. Para crear un programa basado en las necesidades de la comunidad, usando el 'human centered design,' realizamos entrevistas, encuestas, mapas sociales y una prueba piloto. Creamos una guía para el programa de tándem de la Dirección de Relaciones Externas que muestra formas exitosas de publicitar, emparejar participantes, organizar la orientación, realizar reuniones mensuales y recibir realimentación.

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Executive Summary

Between 2010 and 2016, approximately 4,500 North American expatriates moved to Cuenca, Ecuador (*CuencaHighLife*, 2017). North American move to Ecuador because of the lower cost of living compared to the United States, a reliable healthcare system, a diverse climate, and a rich culture. One of the main problems that North Americans face when moving to Ecuador is the language barrier. In total, 92% of United States expatriates move to a country that does not speak their native language, furthermore, only 69% of that group learns the official language of their new resident country (The Expat Insider, 2015). This language barrier creates problems in everyday life for expatriates and locals. In many cases, North American immigrants do not realize the repercussions of their actions and how they affect Ecuador's economy and culture.

To tackle these cultural and language issues, we studied Expat Insider's research of the current ways in which expatriates successfully integrate into local communities (Figure 1). This research shows that the workplace is the number one way that expatriates connect with locals and other immigrants (The Expat Insider, 2015). However, a significant number of the expatriates moving to Cuenca are retirees. Therefore, they do not have the opportunity to meet others in the workplace. The second most common way expatriates integrate into their new country's culture is through friends of friends. This suggests that to integrate the Cuencanos and expatriates, we need to create a social network between the two groups.

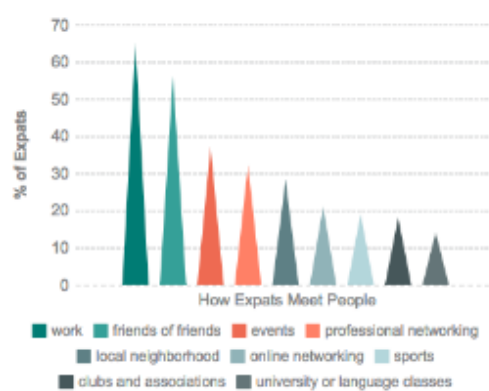


Figure 1: A summary of how expatriates meet new people after moving abroad.

Project Goals and Objectives

We assisted the Dirección de las Relaciones Externas (DRE) in their goal of combating the social gap between the Cuencanos and expatriates by creating a social program to help integrate the two communities. The goal of our project is to design a sustainable and feasible tandem program that aids in the integration of the North American expatriates and Cuencanos through social activities and events. We achieved this goal through five main objectives, which include identifying the interests of the two communities, establishing potential program locations, determining effective advertising methods, conducting a pilot test, and analyzing the program's sustainability.

Case Studies

In order to understand how to create a well-structured design that can overcome social divisions, we researched programs such as the “International Family Link” and “GoConnect” developed by the University of Nottingham and University of Hull respectively. These studies give examples of programs designed towards integrating two communities. The “International Family Link” program matches international students with host families (Spencer-Oatey et al., 2014). In “GoConnect,” the administrators arrange and manage approximately 35 events each year with the goal of networking, cultural exchange, and learning opportunities (Spencer-Oatey et al., 2014). Both of these programs aim to integrate international students with the locals, similar to our efforts of integrating the expatriates with the Cuencanos.

Methods

We used human-centered design to create a program that best suits the desires and needs of the community (Human Centered Design Toolkit, 2012). Human-centered design focuses on acknowledging the community’s desires and employing a feasible and sustainable design (Human Centered Design Toolkit, 2012).

The methods we used to create a sustainable design include a survey, social map, interviews, and pilot test. We used the survey to determine the common interests between the North Americans and Cuencanos. We mapped the most popular locations to identify common areas in which Cuencanos and North American expatriates frequently visit. In order to gain multiple perspectives on how to integrate the Cuencanos and North Americans, we conducted expert interviews. We selected the interviewees because they have expert knowledge and personal experience with the current separation between the two communities. We conducted the interviews with government officials from the Municipality, public figures, University of Cuenca professors, and North American expatriates.

Finally, we organized a small scale design of the tandem program to evaluate the process, determine if the program is feasible and to find areas of improvement. We used information gathered from surveys and interviews to create the pilot test which focused on three tandem pairs. The pilot test consisted of a short orientation and various activities that pairs could do. This method produced qualitative results which aided in the creation of the tandem program design.

Results & Analysis

We designed a feasible and sustainable tandem program, called Amigo Contigo, by using the information we received from interviews, surveys, and the pilot test. We determined popular restaurants, coffee shops, shopping locations, grocery stores, and places to be active among the expatriate and Cuencano communities. These results helped us create an application for the pilot test and a booklet of suggested activities for participants of the program.

We used information gathered in the pilot test to make improvements to our design. Carlos Torres, a Cuencano pilot test participant, stated that the orientation “*estuvo muy bonita la*

reunión de hoy, organizada y bien ejecutada” (was very nice, organized, and well executed).

However, an expatriate participant, Bartley D’Alfonso, suggested having orientation in a more private location than a public restaurant. Overall we discovered that pairing participants based on language level works well.

Eugenia Washima, a Cuencana pilot test participant, mentioned that the Venn diagrams we gave to each pair helped in driving the conversation with her tandem.



Figure 2 and 4: Participants meeting each other for the first time at orientation (left) and playing a game to find their tandem pair (right).

In order to promote the program, we determined the most effective way of advertising to older Cuencanos is through the radio, newspaper, and *boca a boca* (word of mouth). On the other hand, expatriates receive the majority of their information online through websites such as Facebook, *CuencaHighLife*, and GringoPost.

For the program to be sustainable, it will need a manager and a central office. Many of the popular locations identified are in *El Centro*, making it a feasible location for a central office. The manager can either be someone from the DRE office or it can be outsourced to someone outside of the DRE. The manager can also use students from local universities as volunteers to help run the orientation and daily work of the tandem program. Therefore, we created a job description to allow the DRE to propose the program in detail to potential managers. We determined it is important to have a manager who is invested in the issue and has connections with Cuencanos and expatriates.

Moving Forward

We created a guidebook for the tandem program entitled “*Amigo Contigo: Una guía para crear un programa de tándem entre cuencanos y expatriados.*” It contains detailed steps for the program’s success as seen in its table of contents in Figure 6. This guide outlines the marketing strategies, application process, pairing process, program orientation, monthly meetings, and methods to analyze the program’s success. We outline our proposed marketing strategies to both Cuencanos and expatriates. We include what the application process entails in order to make the pairing process efficient. The application gathers information pertaining to the participant’s language level, interests, and identification. The participants will provide references and a copy of their passport to allow for a security check. We outline how the administration should pair participants based on what the participant believes is most important regarding their language level, and common interests. It also includes a step by step guide on how to run an orientation for the program and how to set rules and expectations. We give an idea of what monthly meetings with participants entails. Lastly, we provide ways for the administration to analyze the program’s successes and failures to allow for future improvements.



Figure 6: Cover and table of contents to the guidebook for “Amigo Contigo”



Figure 7: Cover and table of contents to the activities booklet for “Amigo Contigo”

The guidebook is accompanied by an activities booklet which includes possible activities and promotions for the participants to partake in, as seen in Figure 7. The booklet highlights common locations and activities that North Americans and Cuencanos both enjoy in order to help the tandem pairs determine activities to do throughout the program. There are also promotions for various restaurants in and around *El Centro* in order to incentivize the pairs to spend time together. Each pair will get a membership card to verify that they are part of the tandem program. They can bring the card to the participating restaurants in order to receive the promotion. We advise that the manager of the program uses this booklet in order to encourage the pairs to spend time together.

Resumen ejecutivo

Entre 2010 y 2016, aproximadamente 4.500 norteamericanos se reubicaron a Cuenca, Ecuador (CuencaHighLife, 2017). Los norteamericanos se reubicaron a Ecuador porque el costo de vida es más bajo en comparación a los Estados Unidos y otras razones como un sistema de salud confiable y un clima diverso y rico. Uno de los principales problemas que los norteamericanos experimentan cuando se van a Ecuador es la barrera del idioma. En total, 92% de los expatriados en los Estados Unidos se reubicaron a un país que no habla su idioma nativo, y solo 69% de ese grupo aprende el idioma oficial de su nuevo país de residencia (The Expat Insider, 2015). Esta barrera del idioma crea problemas en la vida diaria de los expatriados y los locales. En muchos casos, los inmigrantes de América del Norte no se entienden las repercusiones de sus acciones y cómo afectan la economía y la cultura de Ecuador, así como también crean estereotipos.

Para abordar estos problemas culturales y de lenguaje, estudiamos la investigación de Expat Insider sobre las maneras actuales en cómo los expatriados se integran con éxito en las comunidades locales (Figura 1). Esta investigación muestra que el lugar de trabajo es la principal forma en la cual los expatriados se conectan con los locales y otros inmigrantes (The Expat Insider, 2015). Sin embargo, un número significativo de expatriados que se reubicaron a Cuenca son jubilados, así no tienen la oportunidad de conocer a otras personas en el lugar de trabajo. La segunda manera más común en la cual los expatriados se integran a la cultura de su nuevo país es a través de amigos de amigos. Esto sugiere que para integrar Cuencanos y expatriados, necesitamos crear una conexión social entre los grupos.

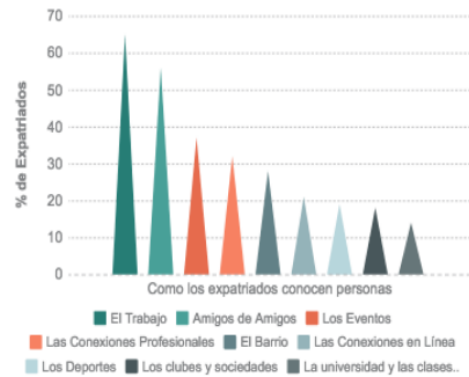


Figura 1: Un resumen de cómo expatriados conocen personas nuevas después de reubicarse a otro país

Las metas y los objetivos del proyecto

Ayudamos la Dirección de las Relaciones Externas (DRE) en su objetivo de combatir la brecha social entre los cuencanos y los norteamericanos con nuestro proyecto. La meta de nuestro proyecto es diseñar un programa en tándem sostenible y factible que ayude con la integración de los norteamericanos y Cuencanos a través de eventos sociales. Realizamos este objetivo a través de cinco objetivos, que incluyen identificar los intereses de las dos comunidades, establecer lugares potenciales para el programa, determinar métodos efectivos de publicidad, realizar una prueba piloto y analizar la sostenibilidad del proyecto.

Estudios de caso

Para entender cómo crear un diseño bien estructurado que puede superar las divisiones sociales, hemos investigado programas como el "International Family Link" y "GoConnect" desarrollado por la Universidad de Nottingham y la Universidad de Hull, respectivamente. Estos estudios nos dan ejemplos de programas diseñados para integrar los dos comunidades. El programa "International Family Link" empareja estudiantes internacionales con familias locales (Spencer-Oatey et al., 2014, p.34). En "GoConnect", los administradores organizan y administran aproximadamente 35 eventos cada año con el objetivo de crear conexiones, intercambio cultural y oportunidades de aprender (Spencer-Oatey et al., 2014). Ambos programas tienen el objetivo de integrar los estudiantes internacionales con los estudiantes locales, cual es similar a nuestro objetivo de integrar a los expatriados con los Cuencanos.

Métodos

Utilizamos "human-centered design" para crear un programa que se adapta mejor a los deseos y necesidades de la comunidad (Human Centered Design Toolkit, 2012). Human-centered design se centra en reconocer los deseos de la comunidad y en emplear un diseño viable y sostenible (Human Centered Design Toolkit, 2012). Los métodos que utilizamos son una encuesta, un mapa social, entrevistas y una prueba piloto.

Usamos la encuesta para determinar los intereses comunes entre los norteamericanos y los cuencanos. Marcamos los lugares más populares para identificar las áreas comunes donde los cuencanos y los expatriados norteamericanos visitaban frecuentemente.

Para obtener múltiples perspectivas de cómo integrar los cuencanos y los norteamericanos, realizamos entrevistas expertas con los cuencanos y los norteamericanos. Elegimos las personas que necesitamos entrevistar porque tienen conocimiento experto y experiencia personal con la separación entre Cuencanos y expatriados. Hicimos las entrevistas con oficiales del gobierno del Municipio, figuras públicas, profesores de la Universidad de Cuenca y expatriados norteamericanos.

Finalmente, realizamos una prueba piloto para evaluar el proceso del programa de tándem, para ver si el programa es factible y para encontrar áreas de mejorar. Usamos la información que recibimos en encuestas y entrevistas para crear un diseño a pequeña escala del programa de tándem y usamos tres pares de tándem. La prueba piloto tuvo una orientación breve y varias actividades que los pares se pueden hacer. Este método produjo resultados cualitativos que ayudaron en la creación del diseño del programa de tándem.

Resultados y análisis

Diseñamos un programa de tándem sostenible por utilizando la información que recibimos de las entrevistas, las encuestas y la prueba piloto. Determinamos restaurantes populares, cafés, tiendas, y lugares donde se puede estar activo entre las comunidades de expatriados y Cuencanos. Estos resultados nos ayudaron crear una aplicación para la prueba

piloto y un folleto de actividades que sugiere actividades que los participantes pueden hacer en el programa.

Usamos la información que obtenemos de la prueba piloto, podemos hacer mejoras a nuestro diseño. Carlos Santiago Torres Inga, participante de la prueba piloto, dijo que la orientación "fue muy buena reunión de hoy, organizada y bien ejecutada". Sin embargo, un otro participante, Bartley D'Alfonso, sugirió tener orientación en un lugar más privado que un restaurante público. En general, descubrimos que emparejar participantes basado en el nivel de idioma funciona bien. Eugenia Washima, una participante de la prueba piloto de Cuenca, mencionó que los diagramas de Venn que le dimos a cada pareja ayudaron a crear conversación con su tándem.



Figura 2 y 4: Participantes se reúnan por primera vez en orientación (izquierda) y jugando un juego para encontrar su pareja tándem (derecha).

Para promover el programa, determinamos que la forma más efectiva de hacer publicidad para Cuencanos es a través de la radio, el periódico y el boca a boca. Por otra parte, los expatriados reciben la mayoría de su información en línea a través de sitios de la red como Facebook, CuencaHighLife y GringoPost.

Para el programa sea sostenible, el programa necesitará un administrador y una oficina central. Muchos de los lugares populares identificados son en el Centro, lo hacen parecer un lugar ideal para una oficina central. El administrador puede ser alguien de la oficina de DRE, o puede ser subcontratado a alguien fuera del DRE. El administrador también puede utilizar a los estudiantes de la universidad como voluntarios para ayudar con la orientación y el trabajo diario del programa de tándem, cómo responder al correos electrónicos de los participantes. Creamos una descripción del trabajo, para que el DRE puede hablar del programa en detalle con un administrador potencial. Determinamos que lo es importante tener un administrador que tiene los contactos y conexiones fuertes con ambos Cuencanos y expatriados. Creemos que personas como los profesores de la Universidad de Cuenca o Dr. Lee Dubs pueden administrar el programa.

Para el futuro

Creamos una guía de programas para el programa en tándem titulado "Amigo Contigo". La guía muestra las etapas necesario para organizar el programa, cual se puede ver en la Figura 6. Esta guía describe las estrategias de anuncios, proceso de solicitud, proceso de emparejamiento, orientación del programa, reuniones mensuales y métodos para analizar el éxito del programa. Mostramos nuestras estrategias de anuncios propuestas para ambos cuencanos y norteamericanos. Incluimos el proceso de aplicación cual es necesario para hacer el proceso de emparejamiento sea eficiente. La aplicación recibirá información sobre el nivel de idioma, intereses e identificación del participante. Los participantes necesitarán dar referencias y una copia de su pasaporte para asegurar que el programa es seguro. Explicamos cómo la

administración debe emparejar los participantes basado en que el participante cree es más importante, este podría estar el nivel de idioma e intereses comunes. También, incluye una guía sobre cómo ejecutar una orientación para el programa y cómo establecer reglas y expectativas para el programa. Damos una idea en como organizar las reuniones mensuales con los participantes. Por último, proporcionamos forma permiten que la administración analice los éxitos del programa y para permitir futuras mejoras.



Figure 6: Portada y tabla de contenidos del folleto de actividades para "Amigo Contigo"



Figure 7: Portada y tabla de contenidos del folleto de actividades para "Amigo Contigo"

La guía está acompañada con un folleto de actividades que incluye posibles actividades y promociones para que los participantes pueden hacer, como se muestra en la Figura 7. El folleto muestra lugares y actividades comunes que ambos los norteamericanos como los cuencanos pueden disfrutar. El folleto ayuda los pares de tándem determinar las actividades hacer juntos. También, hay promociones para varios restaurantes que son en el Centro. El objetivo de los promocionales es incentivar las parejas pasar tiempo juntas. Cada pareja de tándem recibirá una tarjeta de membresía para verificar que sean parte del programa de tándem. Los participantes pueden traer la tarjeta a los restaurantes participantes para recibir la promoción del restaurante. Aconsejamos que el administrador del programa utilice este folleto para fomentar las parejas pasar tiempo con los demás después de su reunión inicial.

Authorship

Nicole Collucci, Emily McGlone, Shealyn Musumeci, and Daniel Ottey all contributed equally to the research of this report. The following is a breakdown of how the team wrote the report for this project.

Nicole Collucci co-designed the Amigo Contigo Gudebook. Ms. Collucci focused on grammar and flow throughout the report. Emily McGlone focused on the references throughout the report. Ms. McGlone also co-designed the Amigo Contigo Guidebook. Shealyn Musumeci was the main contact for outside sources such as pilot test participants and interviewees. Ms. Musumeci designed the Amigo Contigo activities booklet. Daniel Ottey wrote and edited the Spanish version of the executive summary. Mr. Ottey also prepared and led most Spanish interviews.

Nicole Collucci, Emily McGlone, Shealyn Musumeci, and Daniel Ottey each spent an equal amount of time writing and editing the report. Although all authors individually wrote small sections, everyone edited and contributed their ideas to every part of the report; therefore the authors feel comfortable sharing authorship for every section.

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Introduction

According to the United Nations Population Fund (Harrigan & Seo, 2016), 244 million or 3.3 percent of the world's population lives outside of their country of birth. The United Nations believes that migration is important for the advancement of developed and developing countries as it stimulates the economy. However, migration can also cause conflicts and can negatively affect the locals of the country (Harrigan & Seo, 2016).

Ecuador is a popular location for North American expatriates to migrate, with a total of 4,500 North Americans relocating to Cuenca between 2010 and 2016 (*CuencaHighLife*, 2017). According to the Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos, the second highest number of immigrants coming to Ecuador in 2015 was from the United States of America (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y censos, n.d.). Many North Americans migrate to Ecuador because of the healthcare system, which includes quality coverage for a very low cost; the diverse climate of the beaches, mountains, and rainforests; and the diverse culture that includes university settings, happening town centers, and quaint mountain lifestyles (Payne, 2014).

Many expatriates who move to a new country, move with preconceived notions of what is normal based on their homeland experiences. The reality is that the expatriates' new community might not follow the same norms that the expatriates are accustomed to and this can result in stress and confusion (Nolan, 1990). Some expatriates manage this stress by reverting to their own cultural norms instead of embracing the culture of the new country (Nolan, 1990). The lack of attempt to embrace the new culture and people results in the formation of neighborhoods of different cultures existing in one community. The attitudes that some locals have towards immigrants exacerbates these cultural divides. Receiving immigrants who speak a foreign language and come from different social and cultural backgrounds can prompt a growing intolerance in the public's attitude towards immigrants and creates an "us and them" situation (Säävälä, 2008). In 2017, a team of students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute worked with the Dirección de Relaciones Externas and the community of Cuenca to determine the causes of the divide between the Cuenanos and expatriates. Their findings indicate that Cuencanos focus on helping their neighbors and creating harmony throughout the community while North Americans tend to be "individualists," focusing more on their own individual well-being (Claveau et al., 2017).

The language barrier amplifies the effect of the social differences. 92% of United States expatriates move to a country that does not speak their native language (The Expat Insider, 2015). Only 69% of that group learns the official language of their new resident country. About half of the population of expatriates say that they have little to no experience in the language of their new resident country (The Expat Insider, 2015).

The Expat Insider researched the ways in which expatriates overcome barriers such as language. The study shows that work is the number one way that expatriates connect with both locals and other immigrants (The Expat Insider, 2015). However, a significant number of the expatriates moving to Cuenca are retirees, so they may not want to go back into the professional

field. Figure 1 shows that the second most common way expatriates integrate into their new country’s culture is through friends of friends. This suggests that to integrate the Cuencanos and expatriates, we need to create a social network among them.

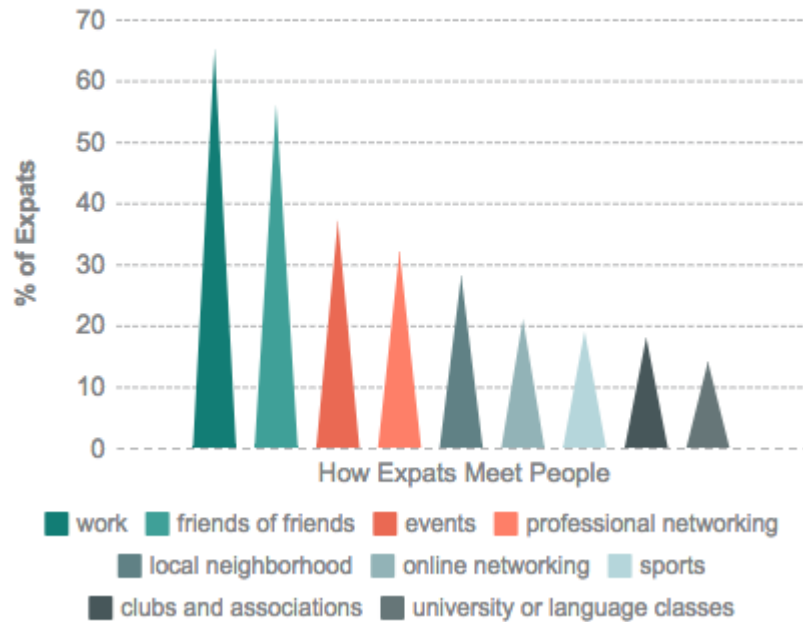


Figure 1: A summary of how expatriates meet new people after moving abroad.

The sponsor of our project, the Dirección de las Relaciones Externas (DRE), is a branch of the mayor's office in Cuenca that deals with the city and the foreign community. The DRE works to combat the social gap between the Cuencanos and expatriates by creating materials to help integrate the communities. The DRE recently started an annual United States International Week to get the North American expatriates more involved in the local Cuencano community through “cultural exchange” (La alcaldía de Cuenca, 2017). This encourages intercultural interactions, but the department aims for more support from the community. We assisted the department by designing a sustainable and feasible tandem program that aids in the integration of the North American expatriates and Cuencanos. We achieved this goal through five main objectives, which include identifying the interests of the two communities, establishing potential program locations, determining effective advertising methods, conducting a pilot test, and analysing the sustainability of the program.

Background

The large influx of immigrants relocating to Cuenca causes issues in the social, language, and economic areas. Research demonstrates that these issues create separation in Cuenca. However, Ecuador is not the only place where these type of social barriers arise. In cases ranging from entire countries to university settings, separation arises because people avoid others with different cultural backgrounds (Malik & Manroop, 2017). To solve this issue, we must work to integrate two separated communities so that people socialize with others from different cultural backgrounds but still maintain their own identities (Malik & Manroop, 2017). Immigration benefits the host country because it allows for cultural diversity, creativity, and economic growth (Putnam, 2009; found in Wong, 2016). We researched case studies of integration programs in other countries in order to understand the most effective ways of implementing and managing an integration program.

Retirees Moving to Ecuador

In the United States, the retirement age was originally classified in the mid-1930s as 65 years old. However, the life expectancy during this time was 58 for men and 62 for women (Social Security, n.d.). Technology has since improved and people have begun living longer. However, the retirement age defined for Social Security purposes has stayed the same. Humans are living longer, so when they retire at 65, the last ten to twenty years of their lives are often stripped of fulfillment and purpose. In this last quarter of retirees' lives, they are pressured to give up their passions that once satisfied through their profession (Inall, 1970). Furthermore, some retirees are expected to live in a financial situation previously designed to support a retiree for only five years. Therefore, retirees lean towards moving abroad because of these inadequate living standards (Payne, 2014).

In some cases, retirees decide to relocate abroad for the lower cost of living to compensate for their poor economic standing. The economic crash in 2008 left some retirees in a financial crisis, which piqued the interest in "geographic arbitrage" (Hayes, 2014). The term "geographic arbitrage" relates to the group of people that work for monetary compensations in developed countries, where wages tend to be higher, and then use that money in countries where there is a lower cost of living. North American retirees move to Ecuador to benefit from the lower costs of goods and services as their money is now worth more (Hayes, 2014).

International Living named Cuenca the most popular retirement destination in 2009 because of the weather, cost of living, and medical care (Payne, 2014). The Expat Insider states that 56% of the immigrants who relocate to Ecuador are originally from the United States (Expat Insider, 2015). Furthermore, the average age of these U.S. expatriates living in Ecuador is 51.9 years old (Expat Insider, 2015). According to Carolina Martinez, Councillor of Cuenca, most of the North Americans in Cuenca are older than 50 years old (personal communication, January 22, 2018). It is important to understand this demographic's motives for relocating in order to provide insight to some of the integration issues that have arisen in Ecuador over the years.

Language Barriers

In Ecuador, the official language is Spanish but many North American expatriates understand little to no Spanish. In fact, only 69% of U.S. expatriates who move to a non-English speaking country take the time to learn the local language (The Expat Insider, 2015). This creates a language barrier between the Cuencanos and some North American expatriates, as many of them are unable to express themselves properly, creating frustrations on both sides. In the United States service sector, immigrants whose first language is not English find difficulties in expressing themselves or understanding what the American servers are saying (Kim and Matilla, 2011). The immigrants blame themselves for the feelings of embarrassment, fear, and anxiety that they experience when unable to comprehend and respond to the server (Kim and Matilla, 2011). This could be similar to what North American immigrants experience when dealing with Cuenca's service providers.

On the other hand, Cuencanos may feel insulted that the North Americans do not know or try to learn the native language of Ecuador. Cuencanos often accuse North Americans of demanding immigrants coming into the United States to speak English, but then refuse to learn the local language of their new home country. For example, Dr. Dubs, a United States expatriate, once encountered a local Cuencano who stated, "these English-speaking hypocrites expect us to change our language just for them." The conflicts that arise over the inability to communicate show that the language barrier is a serious problem concerning the integration of the two communities (Dubs, 2015).

Stereotypes

Stereotypes play a major role in the separation of immigrants from Cuencano society. A common misconception is that North Americans believe they should receive priority because of their wealth (Payne, 2014). These stereotypes lead to a divide between the Cuencanos and expatriates as Cuencanos form negative impressions of expatriates.

Cuencanos mention that expatriates sometimes act entitled. It only takes a few negative interactions to form a bad perception about the whole group of North American immigrants. This leads to some locals using terms such as 'ugly American' to categorize all immigrants coming to Cuenca (Hayes, 2015). Victoria Pollice, an expatriate, described an incident that her neighbor, a manager at a local store, experienced with an expatriate. Pollice explained that the expatriate came in demanding attention because he is a 'gringo.' The expatriate was upset that the store employee did not understand English and demanded that the employee learn English. Pollice explained how this attitude of expatriates creates tension among Cuencanos and expatriates (personal communication, January 26, 2018). The stereotypes resulting from groups of immigrants, who refuse to truly integrate into their new community, exacerbate the divisions within the community.

Cultural Integration

A well-structured program designed towards integrating two communities can overcome social divisions. It is necessary to create multicultural events, such as multi-community meetings, that incorporate the traditions of each community. Also, when planning an event, it is essential to create an environment where both communities feel welcome. The best way to accomplish this is by making sure everyone feels that their involvement is appreciated (Axner, n.d).

Research shows that in cases where language barrier is an issue, it is best to create presentations that are clear and concise with visual aids (Keidan & Amsler, 2009). Also, slang should not be used because it not commonly known by non-native speakers (Stugger, 2014). In California, where there is a growing Latin American population, many of the Latin Americans have difficulty understanding English (Keidan & Amsler, 2009). Keidan and Amsler found that, in the context of Latin Americans in California, using visual aids proves beneficial (Keidan & Amsler, 2009). This allows the Latin Americans, who are not comfortable speaking English, to feel more comfortable participating in community events (Keidan & Amsler, 2009).

Different communities have different expectations of an event. For example, every culture has a different idea of punctuality. In Ecuador, it is customary to arrive at an event later than the set starting time (Wilson, 2003). Therefore, if one group arrives significantly later than the other, it can cause frustrations and make an event less successful. Also, some cultures expect that there will be food provided at community events (Stugger, 2014). Food is a great way to integrate two communities because everyone is able to experience cultural dishes that they may not have tried before (Keidan & Amsler, 2009). These methods for encouraging both locals and expatriates involvement are crucial for planning an event targeted at integrating the two communities.

Approaches to integration

In 2016, Amina Malik and Laxmikant Manroop conducted research in an effort to help companies find better ways to integrate recent immigrants into their work environments (Malik & Manroop, 2017). These immigrants are surrounded by people who think, behave and feel differently, making it difficult for immigrants to participate in social activities (Triandis, 2006, found in Malik & Manroop, 2017). This type of workplace integration poses the same barriers as any socialized integration, with issues of language and cultural barriers, stereotypes, and social exclusion (Boyd and Schellenberg, 2007; Fang and Goldner, 2011, found in Malik & Manroop, 2017).

Malik and Manroop's study evaluates different ways to facilitate integration to improve immigrant's experience in their new environment. They found that the institutionalized method of integration is best for integrating newcomers with the locals. In an institutionalized method, all of the newcomers go through the integration process together. Also, newcomers receive a list of social activities to do and partner with local role models or mentors (Malik & Manroop,

2017). This strategy creates social connections and networks that address the difficult barriers of integration.

The success of the institutionalized approach relies heavily on immigrants' and locals' willingness to participate in provided programs. It also depends on the training level of the program facilitators. The facilitators need to understand the cultural differences and sensitive subjects that they have to deal with. According to Cooper-Thomas, key components of a successful integration program are (Cooper-Thomas *et al.*, 2012; found in Malik & Manroop, 2017):

- befriending (being friendly and helpful toward others in the workplace),
- teaming (being manifestly involved as a member of a team),
- exchanging (trading resources including know-how and social capital with colleagues),
- flattering (acting in ways that allow others to feel good about themselves),
- negotiating (talking about role/job expectations),
- talking (participating in casual conversations),
- socializing (meeting people at social events/forums outside of work),
- networking (creating and building social capital with key players in the organization).

These concepts provide a helpful guide on how to integrate immigrant groups into local settings. These are major themes in ensuring that social connections are made, allowing for the breakdown of barriers and a successful integration.

Integration in Different Settings

Government agencies, universities, and non-profit organizations create programs that help integrate newcomers into their local culture. We can learn from the flaws of failing attempts and take key aspects of the successful programs in guiding us to form a successful integration program.

Difficulties in Denmark

In Denmark, the political culture is commonly seen as modern and liberal. Despite the culture's liberal idealism, the Danish culture often rejects immigrants socially and repeatedly discriminates against these immigrants. For instance, when immigrants seek medical attention, the professionals often blame their medical issues on the fact that they are of another ethnicity (Olwig, 2011).

The tension between the immigrants and Danes leads to the creation of stereotypes against immigrants, making integration into Danish culture very difficult. When integration strategies are implemented, there is often an underlying suggestion that there is something wrong with being an immigrant (Olwig, 2011). In 2003, the Danish government attempted to pass non-discrimination laws but the language used in the acts undermined the immigrants, making their integration even more difficult. The act specified that successful integration requires immigrants

to make an effort towards integrating into Danish society. A points system was enacted in which immigrants had to reach a certain number of points through employment, language skills, economic self-reliance, and participation in society to gain residency status (Gudrun, 2017). If the goal is not met, they would receive less welfare money or face deportation (Gudrun, 2017). The Danish government's approach of forcing the immigrants to integrate by using laws that negatively target the immigrants is not successful.

Host families in Nottingham

A study done by the United Kingdom Council for International and Student Affairs (UKCISA) researched student unions across many different United Kingdom university campuses and how their programs and activities are effective in integrating foreign students into the campus life and community (Spencer-Oatey et al., 2014). One such program is the "International Family Link" program put on by the University of Nottingham. The "International Family Link" program consists of local Nottingham families inviting international students to their home, showing them the local area, and "sharing in common interests/activities" (Spencer-Oatey et al., 2014, p. 34).

The program is "oriented towards 'match-making'", pairing the students with host families in Nottingham. Successful implementation and setup of the program involves the following steps (Spencer-Oatey, et al., 2014):

- asking previous host families if they would be willing to host again,
- advertising to international students (message boards, email, posters),
- advertising to the local community (magazines, local community groups),
- developing a contact database,
- matching students and hosts based on hobbies, interests, and cultures,
- evaluate the results of matches in order to maximize success and minimize "potential anxieties."

After the pairs are made, the university initiates the program with a large event where the participants meet, exchange contact information, and get to know each other. The structure of this the event is meant to be informal and flexible. The program has a growing interest in families who want to host students due to the "establishment of new recruitment pools and the enthusiasm of the parties involved" (Spencer-Oatey et al., 2014, p. 34).

The participants document their positive and negative experiences on a blog. This allows the facilitators to observe how the program affects the students, the activities they partake in, and their opinions of the program. Administrators can easily see how impactful their program is through online feedback from the students. One international student, Doris Richardson, says that the program gives her "a sense of belonging in [her] new community" (Richardson, 2014). Another student, Wei Choo (2016) states:

It struck me that all of us are not that different after all. We may have been brought up in different cultures, speak different languages, and look rather different but we share similar hopes, dreams, dilemmas, and challenges in life (Choo, 2016).

These personal statements prove that the program positively impacts international students.

For further feedback, hosts are asked about their opinions before and after the program. Their answers confirm that the program positively impacts the host families as well. The host families describe benefits such as a feeling pride in their local culture, learning about new topics, and promoting discussions about differences and similarities in lifestyles and customs (Spencer-Oatey et al., 2014).

The biggest adjustment expected for the future of the program is to make the introductory event more structured. This was proposed because having 250 participants all in the same place for an informal and unstructured gathering was not as straightforward as the administration had hoped. Further suggestions for a more successful program include an increased use of social media and broadcasting of success stories (Spencer-Oatey et al., 2014).

Campus involvement at University of Hull

The University of Hull has a program called “GoConnect” used to promote social integration within and beyond the university’s campus. The program started in 2009 and by 2014, has had over 2,000 students enrolled (15% of the student population). Of the students enrolled, 69% are international students. The program’s objectives are to promote and encourage internationalization within the University of Hull and to create a support system for its members (Spencer-Oatey et al., 2014).

“GoConnect” arranges and manages 35 events each year with the goal of providing a mix of networking, cultural exchange, and learning opportunities. Among these are cultural events like the Chinese New Year festival and cultural fairs, which allow international students to show their culture as well as give locals a chance to experience a new culture. Also, they host smaller events such as “The Language Bite Sessions,” which allow students to learn and practice a new language. “GoConnect” events are strongly supported with around 300 participants at each event and have an annual growth rate of 71%. Overall, “GoConnect” addresses both cultural differences and language barriers between the communities (Spencer-Oatey et al., 2014).

Methodology

We used a human-centered design to create a program that best suits the desires and needs of the community (*Human Centered Design Toolkit*, 2012). The first aspect of human-centered design is listening to the community and acknowledging its wants (*Human Centered Design Toolkit*, 2012). Another main considerations in human-centered design are feasibility and sustainability (*Human Centered Design Toolkit*, 2012). We formed our objectives based on the ideals of human-centered design to assure that the community benefits from the project.

Assessing the Interests of Potential Participants

We used an online survey to identify effective marketing tactics as well as common hobbies and interests among the Cuencanos and North Americans (Appendix C). We sent the survey to as many North Americans and Cuencanos as possible. We used Qualtrics research software to develop conditional questions that allowed the participants to rank their interest in different topics.

Sampling strategy

We distributed the survey through online media, posters, and referrals. We targeted each community using different sampling methods. For expatriates, we posted on Facebook groups such as Ecuador Expats, GringoPost, Expats without Agendas, and Young Expats and English Speakers (#YEES) (Appendix A). We also visited local expatriate hotspots with flyers to advertise the survey and to talk to patrons to gauge their interest in the program (Appendix B).

In order to reach the Cuencano community, we distributed the survey through a referral chain. This chain started with Alexandra Shourds, an English professor at the University of Cuenca, who helps organize the university's current tandem program. She sent the link to her current and past English students as well as other professors at the University of Cuenca. This helped gather responses from an older generation as well as university students.

For the distribution of the survey, we used a convenience sampling method. The main drawback of using a non-random sampling method is that there is a higher chance for sample bias. Since we used an online survey, there is a sample bias because only people with computers and those interested accessed the survey.

Establishing shared social locations

We used the survey results and social mapping to determine common areas where both Cuencanos and North American expatriates frequently visit and then plotted these places on a map. Social mapping is a process that allows the researcher to examine the organization of a community by displaying common locations (Bulled and Hersh, 2017). We used this method to identify the local hotspots such as popular restaurants, malls, and cafés. Finding common areas among the two communities helped to establish locations that could be used for our program and

where to suggest a central office. Understanding what areas both communities share allowed us to make the program feasible for the citizens of Cuenca.

Establishing Program Logistics

In order to gain multiple perspectives of an integration program in Cuenca, we conducted expert interviews with Cuencanos and expatriates (Appendix D). They were semi-structured, allowing us to prepare questions but also ask follow up questions when necessary. We selected the interviewees because they have expert knowledge of the social divide, programs that the Municipality currently facilitates, and creating a successful social program.

We began conversations with expatriates at their common hangouts, briefly described our project, and asked what their opinion is of a tandem program. Also, we asked questions to understand their perspectives on what it is like to live in Cuenca and how the program will best attract expatriates.

Most of the Cuencanos we interviewed are government officials. These government officials are the heads of various departments, as well as multiple City Councillors and public figures such as the Queen of Cuenca. These interviews are valuable because they all have experience successfully implementing social programs. In the interviews, we asked about the feasibility and sustainability of a tandem program. We also asked them about the best ways to market to Cuencanos.

We interviewed Yolanda Loja and Ana Loja, professors at the University of Cuenca. They created and currently facilitate the tandem program between University of Cuenca students and students at various universities internationally. This interview focused on the logistics of creating a tandem program. These expert interviews were useful when designing a program that is sustainable, successful, and safe.

We did informal interviews with business owners of the popular locations identified in the social map. The goal of these interviews is to understand whether these companies would be interested in being involved in the program and provide promotions to the participants.

Conducting a Pilot Test

We use the information gathered in surveys and interviews to create a small scale design of the tandem program. The purpose of the pilot test was to observe and solicit feedback from the tandem program, rather than to see if the tandem program is the most effective way to integrate North Americans into the local community.

Pairing Participants

Before the pilot test, each participant completed an online application (Appendix E). We used the information gathered from the applications to pair people together with the same interests and priorities. In the University of Nottingham's "International Family Link" program, the facilitators matched the students and families based on similar hobbies, interests, and cultures

(Spencer-Oatey et al., 2014). This tactic proves to be beneficial for the university and it creates a program that is centered around those involved. Also, we made sure to pair participants with complimentary language levels to minimize the language barrier.

Orientation

The pilot test began with an orientation. This orientation allowed participants to discuss and agree upon the rules and expectations of the pilot test. During the orientation, the tandem pairs met each other for the first time through an icebreaker activity, as seen in Figure 2. The purpose of using this activity was to keep the orientation relaxed and enjoyable. During orientation, we gave the pairs Venn diagrams, shown in Figure 3, showing their similarities and differences so that they can see why they were paired together. Finally, we gave each pair an activity booklet so that they have ideas for possible events to do together.

The pilot test required participants to go to a minimum of two events together over the course of two weeks. The first event was the language exchange at San Sebas Café, which occurred directly after our orientation event. We chose San Sebas Café because they host a language exchange session which allows for a cultural and language exchange. The participants were in charge of planning the second event with their pair.



Figure 2: Participants playing a game to find their tandem pair.

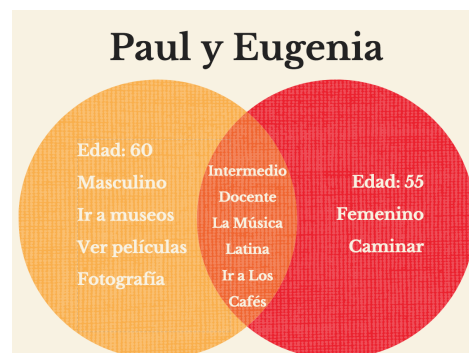


Figure 3. Example of the Venn diagram we gave to participants to help break the ice during their initial interaction

Participant feedback

We asked the pilot test participants to meet with us for an interview or email us a journal entry after they met for a second time with their tandem (Appendix G). This allowed participants to document their opinions, positive and negative, about the program logistics and overall event. In the University of Nottingham's "International Family Link" program, the students journal their experience. In this case, it was a successful way of evaluating the benefits and drawbacks of their program (Spencer-Oatey et al., 2014).

Results and Analysis

Through interviews, surveys, and a pilot test, we collected a wide range of data that targets each of our objectives. We used interviews and surveys to understand the needs of the community, establish ideal program locations, determine the best marketing strategies, and develop the sustainability of the program. We analyzed that data to create a design for the pilot test and final design for our program, Amigo Contigo.

Understanding the Audience

To design a successful program, we need to fully understand of the communities. This includes the issues faced by both the Cuencanos and the expatriates as well as understanding who has the greatest interest in our program. By recognizing these needs, we can target certain individuals, groups of people, and businesses.

The interviews done with the expatriates and the Cuencanos provided insight into the opinions of each community. The North Americans we interviewed, stated that language was the most challenging issue that they had to overcome since moving abroad. The language barrier was often a topic of discussion when interviewing Cuencanos as well. Most of the Cuencano interviewees said that the program would not be successful if the pairs cannot communicate. In addition, multiple government officials of Cuenca stated that older expatriates are not willing to learn the language or integrate into the local culture. We address the language issue in the program design by suggesting events in which all participants are encouraged to practice their language in a fun and entertaining environment.

Interest in the program

The survey we created on Qualtrics gathered a total of 162 responses out of the approximate 580,000 people currently living in Cuenca (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y censos, n.d.). Out of those who responded, 95 were Ecuadorian, 58 were from the United States, and four were from Canada. 50 Cuencanos and 39 North American expatriates left their contact information at the end of the survey. These results show interest in the program, given that 55% of respondents showed further interest. We organized their contact information in a spreadsheet so that the DRE has access to their information for future programs.

Through the interviews with Ana Loja and Yolanda Loja; Santiago Peña, from the Risk Department; and Carolina Martinez, a Councillor of Cuenca, we determined that the target group of Cuencanos are those who have a personal investment in learning English. Ana Loja suggested targeting English professors at the University of Cuenca because they need to practice their English skills. Peña suggested targeting Cuencano first responders. As the head of the Risk Department, Peña has an interest in the efficiency of Cuencano firemen. It is important for first responders to learn basic English because they often encounter expatriates who do not know Spanish in emergency situations. In the past, Peña and the former head of the Risk Department presented the idea that all first responders should be required to learn basic English, however, the

program was never started. As a result of these interviews, we designed a tandem program that targets North American retirees, Cuencano professors, and first responders as they all have an interest in improving their English or Spanish skills.

Discovering Event Locations and Activities

From the survey, we determined popular restaurants, coffee shops, shopping locations, grocery stores, and places to be active among the expatriate and Cuencano community, as seen in Table 1. We placed all of these locations on a map in order to identify common locations among the expatriates and Cuencanos (Appendix I). Most locations that appear on the map are in *El Centro* which makes them convenient locations for program events. These locations will allow participants to feel relaxed and comfortable because they are common and familiar spaces (Spencer-Oatey et al., 2014). The pairs are able to bond with their tandem in a comfortable setting while also enjoying the program's activities.

We also identified popular interests and hobbies among Cuencanos and expatriates through the survey results (Appendix H). These results helped us create an application and activity pamphlet for the pilot test. In the application, we listed the most common interests and hobbies and asked the participants to circle their top three to five activities. We used the common interests and hobbies to create the pairs and as suggested activities in the activities pamphlet (Appendix F).

The popular locations, seen in Table 1, helped to create the activities booklet for the actual tandem program. We approached the companies popular among Cuencanos and expatriates and asked them to provide promotions for the tandem program. The program highly depends on the cooperation of businesses around Cuenca to make the promotion booklet successful.

Table 1: Popular locations among the Cuencano and North American communities

	Restaurants	Coffee Shops	Grocery Stores	Shopping Locations	Places to be Active
Cuencanos	Raymipampa Fogo La Placita Mangiare La Harraduar La Esquina La Fornace Tiestos Tacanijo El Pedregal Azteca Fabianos	MeLatte Cafe del Parque Muccha Museo Café Tutto Freddo Cafe Nucallacta Aroma de Café SuperMaxi San Sebas Bonti Español	SuperMaxi Coral Hipermercados Mercados Fierra Libre Aki	SuperMaxi Mall del Rio El Centro Monay Shopping Feria Libre	Parks Parque de la Madre Paraiso Park Mountains/Hiking Cajas Rivers
Expatriates	Sunrise Cafe Tiestos Fabianos La Cuchara Magica Restaurant el Mercado A Pedir de Boca Anubis	Cafe Nucallacta Goza	SuperMaxi Coral Hipermercados Mercados Fierra Libre 10 de Agosto	El Centro Mall del Rio Coral Centro	Parks Parque de la Madre Paraiso Park Mountains/Hiking Cajas Rivers Bike Routes Tomebamba River El Centro

Spreading the Word

In order to have a successful tandem program, it is necessary to understand the most effective methods of promoting our program to our target audiences. Carolina Martinez suggested that we avoid the current advertisement methods being used by the Municipality because they can be ineffective. This led us to ask all interviewees about most popular ways in which each community learns about events.

Boca a boca (word of mouth)

From our interviews, we realized the need for employing two completely different methods of advertisement, one that targets Cuencanos and one that targets expatriates. In our interview with Martinez and other government officials, we discovered that Cuencanos normally learn of information through the radio, newspaper, and most of all *boca a boca* (word of mouth). On the other hand, expatriates receive the majority of their information online through websites and social media such as Facebook, *CuencaHighLife*, and GringoPost. The results from the Qualtrics survey supported the fact that social media and word of mouth are the most common ways in which people find out about events in Cuenca (Appendix H).

Cynthia Cornejo Reyes mentioned that North Americans do not use the traditional Cuencano newspapers, such as *Qué* and *El Tiempo*, because they are written entirely in Spanish. North Americans often read *CuencaHighLife* and *Cuenca Dispatch* because they are written in

English. According to Reyes, the best way to advertise to both groups is to do so in both languages.

Promotion by a public figure

A respected, public figure endorsing the program can be beneficial. Incorporating a popular public figure into the advertising strategy can legitimize the program and encourage people to participate. An example of a public figure that could be used to promote the program is *La Reina de Cuenca* (The Queen of Cuenca), who is the annual winner of Cuenca's beauty pageant. This strategy will reach both the Cuencanos and expatriates through various social media platforms.

The Queen of Cuenca's job includes attending and supporting public events as well as participating in various social projects in Cuenca. In our interview with the 2017 Queen, Pamela Malo Cordoba, she mentioned that she often attends and promotes some of the large social events in Cuenca. She expressed interest in helping to promote the tandem program as well as other events that the DRE creates. Cuencanos, such as Santiago Peña from the Risk Department, also support this idea of using public figures to promote events.

Pilot Test

From our pilot test, we saw how useful the orientation was, how our pairs interacted, as well as how using an event pamphlet helped to bond pairs together. All but one of our scheduled participants attended the event. We arranged to receive feedback from the pairs two weeks after the initial meeting, after they meet for the second time. Using the information gathered in the pilot test, we can make improvements to our design in a limited amount of time.

Participant Expectations

At the beginning of the orientation, the participants wrote down their expectations for the program, see Figure 4. A common theme that resulted from this exercise was an interest in learning each other's cultures. Participants also mentioned their desire to speak in both English and Spanish throughout the entire program. It is important to recognize that this program needs to be mutually beneficial to each community.

The pilot test helped to highlight the reasons each community is attracted to participating in the program. The North American participants spoke of a strong desire to, not only integrate into Cuencano society but to become Ecuadorian citizens. Some Cuencanos mentioned a strong desire to practice English because it could help to further their academic studies. For instance, Carlos Torres, one of the



Figure 4: Participants engaging in an orientation activity.

Cuencano participants, mentioned his aspiration to pursue a doctorate in the United States. This strong personal investment from all participants played a major role in the success of the pilot test.

Observations

All of the participants came with a positive attitude and looked eager to participate. Before orientation started, all of the participants mingled naturally, however, most of the conversation was in English. This was because the North Americans arrived early and dictated the flow of the conversation. When the Cuencanos arrived they were hesitant to sit down at the table but once they did they seemed comfortable speaking in English. At times, the North Americans switched to Spanish to make the Cuencanos feel more welcomed and involved in the conversation.

Once the pairs were formed, everyone was excited to get to know their tandem. Each pair immediately began to have a conversation. All of the pairs decided to do an activity based on the common interest shown in their Venn diagram that we distributed. We did not observe any awkward pauses or obvious tension between the pairs during the orientation. Two of the three pairs stayed for the language exchange at San Sebas Café and appeared to enjoy the event.

Feedback

A lot of the feedback we received after the pilot test was positive. A summary of the feedback we received can be seen in Table 2. A Cuencano participant, Carlos Torres, stated that the orientation “*estuvo muy bonita la reunión de hoy, organizada y bien ejecutada*” (was very nice, organized, and well executed). In regards to the pairing process, we discovered that pairing participants based on language level worked well. Eugenia Washima (Cuencano) and her tandem pair, Paul Green (expatriate) mentioned that they spoke to each other with no major problems. Both Paul and Eugenia indicated they were intermediate level speakers and alternated between speaking English and Spanish. Eugenia also mentioned that the Venn diagram helped in driving conversation. Both Eugenia and her tandem Paul, are professors and spent time talking about their experiences in their profession. Also, both are interested in Latin and Jazz music, which influenced their decision to attend a concert for their second meeting. Both Eugenia and Paul showed interest in attending more events together and being involved in the tandem program in the future.

Some pilot test participants also mentioned what needs to be improved in the pilot test. Bartley D’Alfonso suggested using a more structured first event because he was confused when orientation turned into the San Sebas Language Exchange. Bartley D’Alfonso and Robert Doty suggested not having the event in a restaurant because it can be distracting. Eugenia and Paul requested that the moderator of the orientation speak slower in both English and Spanish so that everyone is able to follow along even when listening to their non-native language. A common theme among the responses was that the Venn diagram, seen in Figure 3, was helpful but can include more interests and hobbies in order to help promote topics of conversation. Multiple

participants enjoyed the icebreaker activity and wanted more similar activities. Furthermore, multiple participants wanted to follow up meetings which demonstrate the need for monthly meetings that all the tandem pairs can attend.

Table 2: Feedback from the pilot test

	Meeting new people	Communication between Pairs	Venn diagram	Location of Orientation	Explanation of Orientation Activities	Learning New Culture	Ice Breaker Activities	Activities Pamphlet	Follow up Meeting	Suggestions
Expatriates:										
Paul Green							Add more ice breakers to orientation			Make the paperwork at orientation less confusing for Cuencanos
Bartley D'Alfonso			Add more commonalities to Venn diagrams	Quieter location, preferably not restaurant			Add more ice breakers to orientation	Include events where people can have a conversation		
Robert Doty										
Cuencanos:										
Eugenia Washima			Add more commonalities to Venn diagrams		Speak slower in both languages					Give out reading materials before orientation to discuss when people arrive
Carlos Torres										Make the program more accessible to the community

Key	Positive feedback	
	Negative Feedback	
**additional feedback is specified in designated box		

Program Design

From the results of our research, we created an outline for a tandem program that would best fit the community’s needs, seen in Figure 5. We took into consideration the information we received through interviews, surveys, and pilot test. This information includes how we can make the program sustainable, safe, and flexible. We also took into consideration possible partners that can help support the program.

Yolanda and Ana Loja suggested using a screening process to ensure that everyone entering the program has good intentions and feels safe participating in the program. In the interview with Esteban Segurra, head of the Transparency Department, he mentioned that each participant should be required to fill out an application. This application could aid in the pairing and screening process (Appendix E). Segurra believed that using passport



Figure 5: An outline of the steps the manager should take to conduct a successful program.

information and two references could boost the security of the program. Using this system, the manager of the program will be able to screen participants and make sure the program is safe for everyone involved.

Where the program lives

We learned from expert interviews that for the program to be sustainable, it will need a manager and a central office. In the interviews, we asked which groups or individuals would be best suited to manage our tandem program, Amigo Contigo. Although the DRE is the overall sponsor, they may want to outsource a manager for the program because, as a branch of the Municipality, they might not have the manpower to manage it. Many interviewees, such as Cynthia Cornejo Reyes, mentioned the University of Cuenca as a possible manager. The University of Cuenca already has experience managing a tandem program. However, there could be an issue in having the University of Cuenca manage Amigo Contigo, as they may ignore the design we created and instead manage it the same way as the university's current tandem program.

From the social mapping results as well as interviews, *El Centro* is an ideal place for a central office. Therefore, all the participants will have easy access and feel comfortable visiting the office. One possible place would be in the Municipality building, as the DRE is located there. However, there may not be extra space in the building for the office. If the University of Cuenca or another university decides to take a part in managing this program, the office could be on the university's campus.

Observation of the university tandem program

By surveying WPI students who partook in the tandem program at the University of Cuenca, we were able to observe some long-term problems that might arise in our program. Some students stated that difference in language level creates awkward meetings because one person was able to understand both languages while the other was struggling. Other students said they felt uncomfortable meeting with their tandem because they did not have much in common. Many students pointed out that they did not have ideas of things to do together besides getting coffee or food because they could not find any other common interests among them. One student suggested that semi-structured events would encourage pairs to spend time with each other and would give them a designated place to meet. These responses solidify our ideas of pairing people based on both language level and similar interests and hobbies. It also confirms our idea of hosting monthly meetings for pairs to meet, as well as providing a booklet and calendar of possible events.

Conclusion

In Cuenca, there is a growing issue of separation between the expatriates and local Cuencanos. This social division stems from language and social barriers between the two groups as well as negative stereotypes that each group forms of the other. From our analysis of similar problems in other countries, we discovered that having a strong social network, consisting of people from both groups is a beneficial way of integrating the Cuencanos and expatriates. This led to us pursuing the idea of a pairing program to integrate the two communities.

By sending a Qualtrics survey to Cuencanos and expatriates, we collected data that informed us of the common locations, interests, and hobbies between the two communities. Also, from the survey and interviews, we established possible partners for the program, the best way to market the program, and how to keep the program sustainable for the future. In order to test the program design, we conducted a preliminary pilot test with six people at the San Sebas Café. We used our initial design as a model and received positive feedback and suggestions.

We designed the program to include an application and screening process for all participants. We used the information on the application to create pairs and ensure the safety of the participants. Once the manager forms the pairs they go through an orientation where they meet their tandem for the first time. At that orientation, we give the pairs an activity booklet. This activity booklet has a list of suggested events and promotions that the pairs can do together. Throughout the duration of the program, pairs send feedback and updates on their experience.

Moving Forward

We recommend that the DRE creates a program following the outline in the guidebook entitled “*Amigo Contigo: Una guía para crear un programa de tándem entre cuencanos y expatriados*” (Collucci et al., 2018a). This guidebook outlines the marketing strategies, application process, pairing process, program orientation, monthly meetings, and methods to analyze the program’s progress (Figure 6). Also, the guidebook outlines suggested target audiences and detailed marketing strategies to each demographic. Along with the guidebook, we created other deliverables such as a flash drive with important documents, an activities book for the pairs, and membership cards for the participants. The flash drive holds digital copies of all the necessary documents for Amigo Contigo, such as an orientation script, letters to target audiences, and marketing flyers. On the flash drive, there is also a database of both Cuencanos and expatriates who gave us their information in the survey and expressed interested in being a part of Amigo



Figure 6: Cover and table of contents to the guidebook for “Amigo Contigo”



Figure 7: Cover and table of contents to the activities booklet for “Amigo Contigo”

Contigo. The booklet of activities, entitled “*Amigo Contigo: El libro de actividades,*” contains promotional coupons and suggested activities for the participants of the program (Collucci et al., 2018b) (Figure 7). We advise that the manager of the program uses this activities booklet to incentivize the pairs to spend time with each other after their initial meeting. Each tandem pair will receive a membership card to verify that they are a part of the tandem program (Appendix K). They would need to bring the card to the participating restaurants in order to receive the promotions listed in the booklet.

We recommend that the DRE contacts more businesses to add promotions to “*Amigo Contigo: El libro de actividades.*” The businesses currently found in our activities booklet should be confirmed with the company before the book is published. Companies benefit from these promotions because they will attract a new demographic of customers. Also, the Municipality is willing to promote participating restaurants on government websites as partners of Amigo Contigo.

We recommend that the DRE manages the program, however, the manager can also be outsourced to someone outside of the DRE who fits the requirements outlined in the job description, such as Lee Dubs or Ana Loja (Appendix J). Dubs and Loja were highly recommended in interviews or expressed interest in running the program. The manager must be bilingual to communicate with both expatriates and Cuencanos and have experience handling a social program. The manager of the program has to effectively advertise the tandem program and

contact local public figures such as the Queen of Cuenca to assist in promoting the program. Also, we advise that the manager contacts Richard Boroto for help with the logistics because he expressed interest in getting the program started. Cristian Zamora suggested that the manager contacts university students to assist with daily tasks of the tandem program such as answering emails and attending orientation. We summarized these recommendations, along with other deliverables in Table 3.

Table 3: Analysis of deliverables

Deliverable	Method		Result	Limitation
Program manager job description	Interviews	Esteban Segurra	Find a location for a main office in el centro	The available budget to pay the manager or pay for an office is unknown.
		Cristian Zamora	Use volunteers from local universities to assist the manager	
Marketing materials	Interview	Carolina Martinez	Two different forms of advertisement for each community	These advertising methods may not reach all participants interested.
	Survey		Cuencanos: social media and word of mouth North Americans: social media	There was an age bias on the responses from the Cuencanos.
Guidebook	Interview	Ana Loja	Application and safety procedures (p. 7)	The book does not include all details needed for the program.
	Pilot test	Bartley D'Alfonso/Robert Doty	Orientation (p. 10-11)	
		Various Participants	Monthly Meetings (p. 13)	
Activities booklet	Survey		Popular locations of each community	The map is not a complete representation of the entire community's interests
	Social Map		Common places and interests	
Membership cards	Interview	Esteban Segurra	Membership cards to prove pairs are in program and to receive promotions	The cards do not guarantee participation in the program. Businesses might want a more formal way of identifying the program participants.
Database of potential participants	Survey		People who provided their contact information	We were only able to reach a small sample of people during our two month study
	Pilot test		Participants that still want to be involved	
Business connections	Survey		Businesses willing to participate in promotions	Businesses that were not mentioned in the survey were not contacted

We received various recommendations for other ways in which the program can be structured. For example, one of our sponsors, Ana Paulina Crespo, mentioned using community service activities as events for the tandem pairs. She highlighted that expatriates, in particular, can benefit from improving their social image. Also, some Cuencanos suggested that the program be organized around sports. One of the most popular sports in Ecuador is soccer and there are multiple games throughout the year that both Cuencanos and expatriates can attend. For future programs, it would be beneficial to incorporate both sports and community service into the program.

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Appendices

Appendix A Facebook Post

Hi everyone! Myself and three other students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts, USA are developing a project aimed at helping expats and Cuencanos get to know each other, pairing them together based on common interests, language skill levels, etc. so that everyone can learn something new about each other's culture. Please fill out this survey to help us make this program the best it can be! In addition, if this opportunity sounds particularly interesting to you and you would like an interview, please email us at cuencadre@wpi.edu or WhatsApp us at 0961029899 for more information. Please include your contact information and general availability.

SURVEY LINK: http://wpi.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3QoYIKvWP4nTXQF

Appendix B Flyer

 **WPI**  **cuenca**
GAD MUNICIPAL

Cuenca's Dept. of External Relations sponsoring 4 students from Worcester Poltechnic institute

U.S. STUDY: INTEGRATING CUENCA

developing an Expat-Cuencano buddy
program based on shared interests

Email **OR** Take Our QUICK
CUENCADRE@WPI.EDU Survey!
to contribute to our <https://goo.gl/JfVYoD>
study

Appendix C Qualtrics Survey

The Qualtrics survey was offered in both English and Spanish

We are students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts, USA. We are here in Ecuador working with the Dirección de Relaciones Externas in Cuenca in order to develop a tandem, or "buddy," program between the gringos and local cuencanos. The goal of our project is to a developed a program based off of the community's interests. This survey is meant to gauge the overall interest of the community in different activities. Please answer as many questions as you can. All responses are sent anonymously.

1. What is your age?

2. What country are you from?

3. What is your gender?

Male

Female

Prefer not to say

4. a. On a scale from 0-10 (Not at all → Extremely), how interested are you in outdoor activities?

b. Select all of the activities that you are interested in.

Hiking

Biking

Running

Walking

Swimming

Fishing

Fishing

Climbing

Horseback Riding

Water Sports

Dog Walking

Speed Walking

5. a. On a scale from 0-10 (Not at all → Extremely), how interested are you in dining out or the culinary arts?

b. Select all that apply. What restaurants are you interested in?

Cafes

Local Cuisine

Foreign Cuisine

Sit Down Restaurants

Fast Food

Bars

Pastry Shops

Ice Cream

Cooking Classes

At Home Cooking

Other

6. a. On a scale from 0-10 (Not at all → Extremely), how interested are you in the fine arts?

b. Select all that apply. What fine arts are you interested in?

Museums

Arts

History

Theater

Symphonies

Dance

Poetry

Architecture

Literature

Film

Other

7. a. On a scale from 0-10 (Not at all → Extremely), how interested are you in sports?
b. Select all that apply. What music are you interested in?

Soccer	Football	Basketball	Volleyball
Golf	Speed Walking	Tennis	Baseball

8. a. On a scale from 0-10 (Not at all → Extremely), how interested are you in music?
b. Select all that apply. What music are you interested in?

Jazz	Rock	Classical	Country
Pop	Romantic	Salsa	Latin
Folk	Christian	Reggaeton	Other

9. List your 3 favorite restaurants.

10. List your favorite places to get coffee?

11. Where do you get your groceries?

12. Where do you like to go shopping?

13. Where do you like to be active (parks, hiking, trail, gyms, ect)?

14. Where do you find North Americans?

15. Where do you find Cuencanos?

16. How do you hear about local events?

Social Media	Newspaper	Radio	Magazine
Word of Mouth	Flyers	TV Commercials	

17. What makes you want attend an event?

18. If you are willing to be contacted for further questions please leave your name and email or WhatsApp (optional)

Appendix D Expert Interviews

Interview for Government Employees

Nuestro objetivo es conectar los Norteamericanos con los cuencanos por un programa de tandem. En el programa nos emparejaríamos los participantes para usar based on their hobbies, interests, language level, and general demographics. Esperamos diseñar un programa que va a beneficiar los expatriados(norteamericanos) y los cuencanos.

1. Cual es su función en la Municipalidad?
2. ¿Cómo se entera de los eventos públicos en Cuenca?
3. ¿En qué eventos participas?
4. ¿Cuáles cree que son los beneficios de un programa en tándem?
5. ¿Qué cree que alentaría a los cuencanos y a los estadounidenses a participar en un programa como este?
6. ¿Que piensa son los mejores métodos de anuncios a los norteamericanos y los cuencanos?
7. ¿Puede sugerir cosas que podamos incorporar al programa?
8. ¿Conoce algunos grupos (gobierno, privado) que pueden administrar / apoyar el programa?

Yolanda and Ana Loja

We are aiming to connect North American expatriates and local Cuencanos through a tandem program, where we would pair participants based on their hobbies, interests, language level, and general demographics. We are hoping to design a program that will benefit both the expatriates and the Cuencanos, and be able to be continued in years to come.

Questions:

1. What is your role at the University?
2. How long have you been running tandem programs such as the one we are participation in?
3. Can you walk us through the steps in creating the tandem program and what essential aspects we need to establish?
4. How and why did you create the tandem program?
5. How do you get Cuencanos to be involved in the program?
6. What, in your opinion, makes a successful tandem program?

North American expatriates

We are aiming to connect North American expatriates and local Cuencanos through a tandem program, where we would pair participants based on their hobbies, interests, language level, and general demographics. We are hoping to design a program that will benefit both the expatriates and the Cuencanos, and be able to be continued in years to come.

1. Where in the US are you from?
2. Why did you decide to move here?
3. What has been the best thing about living here?
4. How did you learn Spanish and how comfortable are you with the language?
5. How do you hear about events in Cuenca in general?
6. Do you think expats would want to be involved in a tandem program that sets up activities for Cuencanos and expats to get to know each other?
7. Do you know of any other similar programs, either effective or ineffective?
8. Do you know local businesses or stakeholders who may want to assist in the sustainability of a program like this (with the Dirección de Relaciones Externas as an overall sponsor)?

Appendix E Application

The application was sent to expatriates in English, and it was sent to Cuencanos in Spanish

Name _____

Age _____ Country of Origin _____

Email _____ WhatsApp _____

Spanish Level (circle one) Beginner Intermediate Advanced

Current or Past Career _____

Circle your top three to five hobbies/interests:

Casual Walking

Hiking

Biking

Going to Cafes

Cooking

Going out to Eat

Museums

Films

Theater

Soccer

Basketball

Tennis

Jazz

Photography

Animals

Why do you want to be a part of this program?

Rank the importance for matching your tandem

____ Interests

____ Language

____ Age

How much time are you willing to commit to this program/ What is your availability?

How did you find out about this program? _____

Please List 2 References

Name _____

Name _____

Relation _____

Relation _____

Email _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Phone _____

Attach a copy of your passport:

Appendix F Pilot Test Pamphlet

COMER FUERA

HÁBLANOS

AMIGO CONTIGO

UN ESTUDIO DE UN PROGRAMA DE TANDEMS

ESTUDIANTES DE WPI TRABAJANDO CON LA MUNICIPALIDAD

DANOS TU OPINIÓN:
 cuencadre@wpi.edu
 0961029899

MUSEOS:

ARTE MODERNO
 LAS CONCEPTAS
 PUMAPUNGO
 REMIGIO CRESPO
 LAS CULTURAS
 ABORÍGENES

RUTAS DE BICICLETA EN CUENCA

CALENDARIO DE EVENTOS

domingo	lunes	martes	miércoles	jueves	viernes	sábado
				Feria de Cooperación y Comercio 2017 (Cuenca, 17:00h) Clases Simples (Escuela Univeritaria Cuenca) Cuenca, 18:00h, 20:00h Tago de Arte Libre (Plaza de la Madre, 18:00h, 21)	Programa Cultural de Feria de Cooperación y Comercio (Plaza de Cooperación) Cuenca, 18:00h Día Cultural: Anapan 2017 (Cuenca, 18:00h) Concurso Cultural (Plaza de la Madre, 18:00h) Concurso Cuenca (17:00h) 1000/1000 Facebook (almuerzo) Cuenca Clases Simples (Escuela Univeritaria Cuenca) Cuenca, 18:00h Una Boca Para la Salud (Módulo 1) (18:00h)	Feria y Concurso de Artes Tradicionales de Cuenca (Plaza de Cooperación) Cuenca, 18:00h Elección de la Comisión de Control (Plaza de Cooperación) Cuenca, 18:00h Concurso Bases 2018 (Plaza de Cooperación de la Pampa Nueva) (18:00h)
Festivales de Cuenca de Bases (Plaza Nueva, 18:00h)	El Concierto El Hospital (Parque Chiquito, 12:00h) Tago de Arte Libre (Plaza de la Madre, 18:00h, 21)	Tercer Night de Huaylla (18:00h)		Tago de Arte Libre (Plaza de la Madre, 18:00h, 21) Lanzamiento de Bases (18:00h)	Elección (Plaza Nueva, 20:00h)	
	Recorrido por las rutas de la ciudad (18:00h)					

CAMINATA POR EL CAJAS

Appendix G Journal Prompt

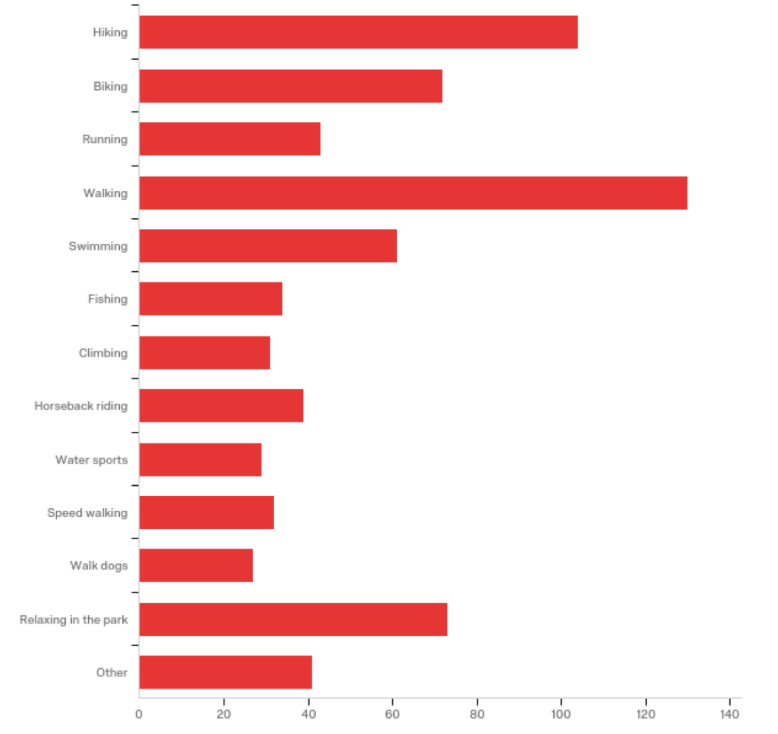
This was sent both in English to the expatriates, and Spanish to the Cuencanos

Feel free to write about anything you have experienced during this activity. If you need ideas about what to write about here are some possible topics:

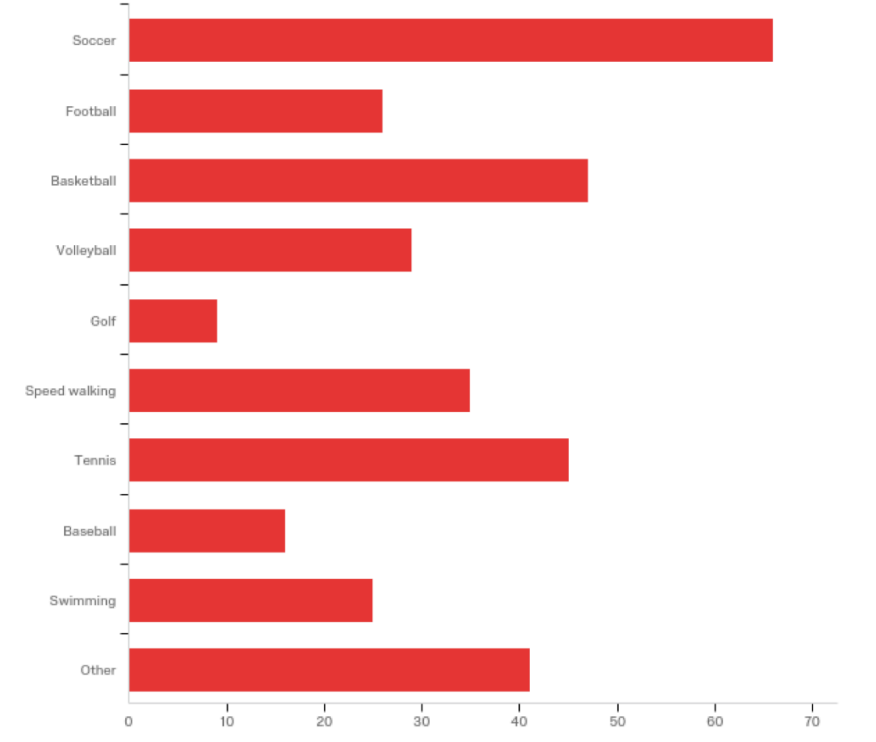
1. What did you enjoy about orientation?
2. How can orientation be improved?
3. Describe how the first interaction/impression went with your tandem.
4. What did you and your tandem do together? Did it go well?
5. How helpful was the activity pamphlet?
6. How helpful were the Venn diagrams?
7. How much of an issue was the language barrier?
8. What subjects did you talk about?
9. How was the interaction different than you expected?
10. Are you going to continue spending time with your tandem?
11. What do you wish would have been done differently?

Appendix H Qualtrics Survey Results

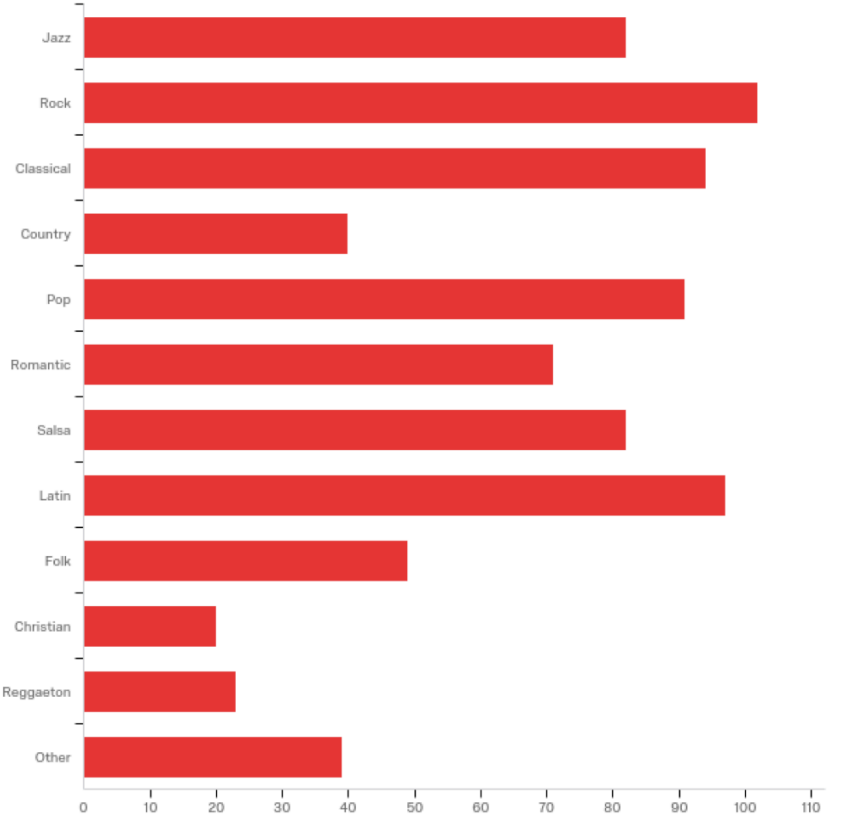
Interests:



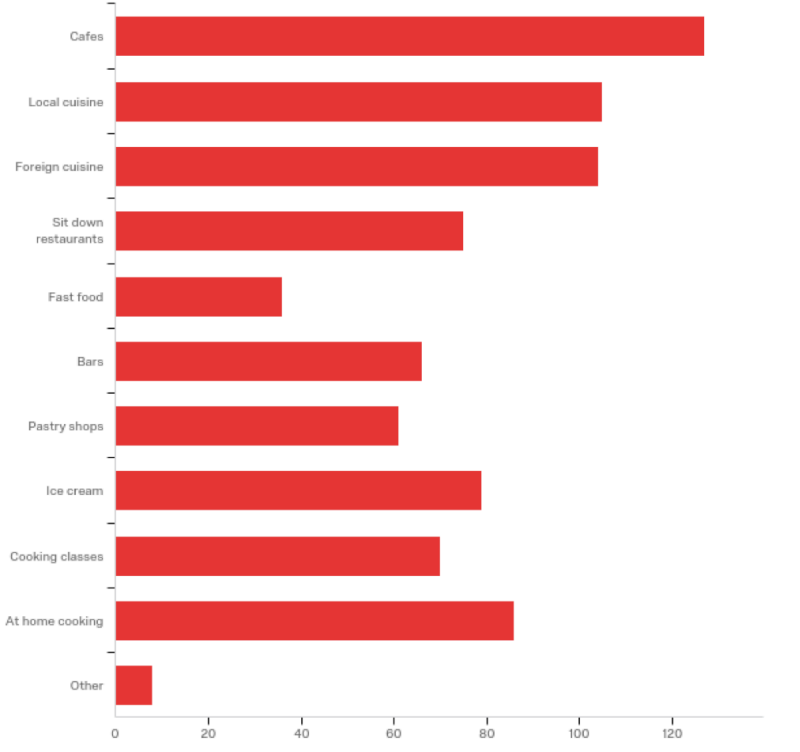
Sports:



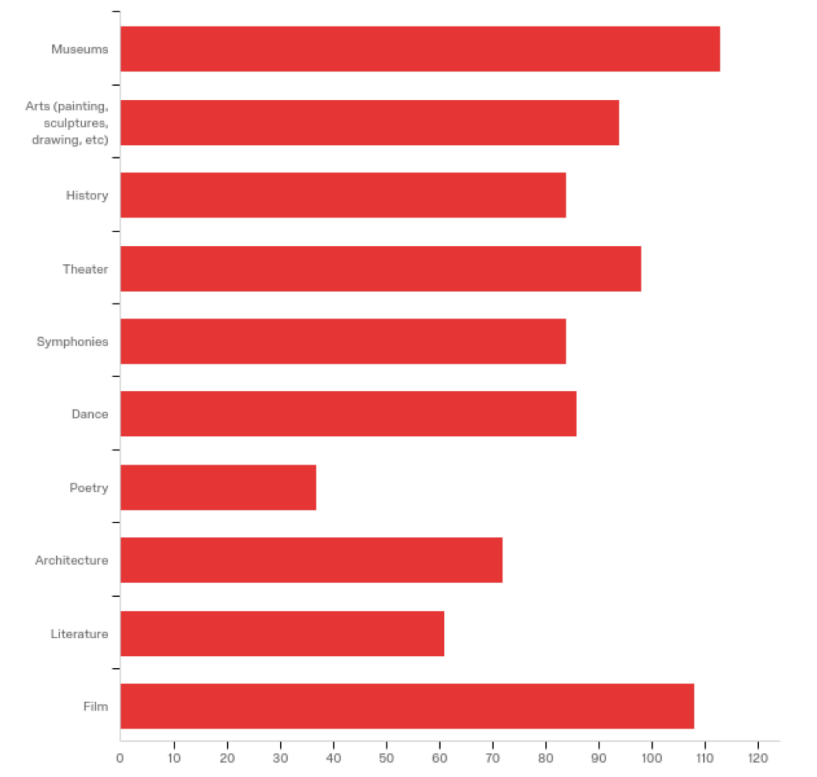
Music:



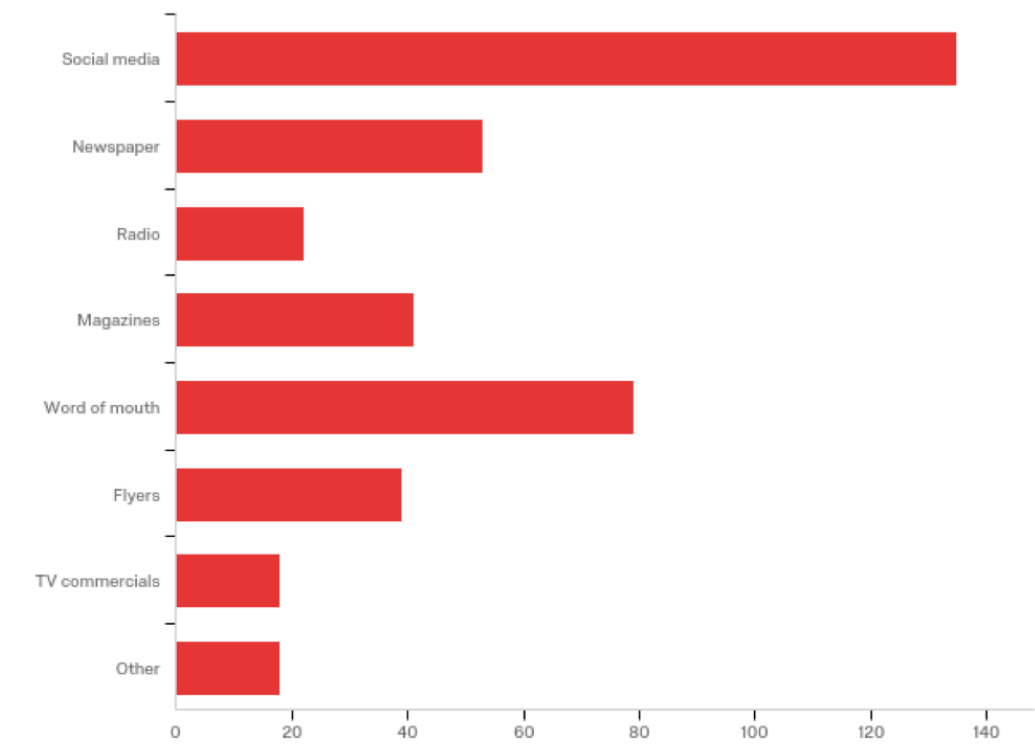
Restaurants:



Fine Arts:



Events



Appendix I Social Map

Common Areas of Interest Among Cuencaños and North American Expatriates



Appendix J Job Description



DIRECCIÓN MUNICIPAL
DE RELACIONES
EXTERNAS



Job Description

Title: Tandem Program Manager

Supervisor/Manager: El Dirrecion de las Relaciones Externas

Location: TBD

Main Responsibilities:

- Time commitment: 10-15 hours a week
- Manage participant database - add new participants, assure everyone in database is an active participant
- Collect applications (online and in person)
- Pair North Americans and Cuencanos based on responses from applications
- Run orientation and monthly meetings
- Manage events
- Update event calendar
- Contact business about events and being a part of the program
 - Renew promotions
- Keep up with the evaluation process
- Manage complications in program

Skills:

- Email
- Organization
- Communication
- Marketing
- Personable
- Microsoft Office and/or Google Drive
- Bilingual (Spanish & English)

Appendix K Membership Card

Front



Back

