

## Yasmin Uddin Finds a Cause in Colombia

The children packed into the tented school did not know what University School senior Yasmin Uddin had planned for her third trip to their flood-devastated community in Colombia, but they were excited to find out. On her prior trip, several grades received textbooks and school supplies thanks to a generous contribution Uddin secured from Friends of Humanity International, Inc. following an initial assessment trip to her ancestral birthplace in South America. This trip, fellow Art Honor Society members helped her create an educational art project inspired by the community's focus on recycling and a University School lesson on the Mexican decorative arts technique repoussé.

"I created this project because the town is very into recycled goods. They also don't have an art program so it was something different for the students," Uddin said. "The town is not industrialized so they do not have AC, hot water, or the hard aluminum that we used for the frames. At first, they did not understand what the squares were."

Uddin traveled with the hand-crafted frames made from aluminum-covered cardboard bases. For the lesson, she drew shapes on the board and then helped the students imprint shapes onto their frames all the while explaining the steps in English to add another layer of educational value. The children added their names and a personal drawing to complete the assignment.

"The teachers were amazed that a kid my age would come and interact with their kids, and the students were surprised that they could take their frames home. They asked, 'This is for me? I can take it for my mom?'"

Uddin was humbled by the students' reactions and also by the care with which her donated supplies had been treated. Teachers accompanied students to retrieve from locked cabinets the supplies needed each day. The teachers also kept some of the shrink-wrapped textbooks in tact to save books for use when the present ones became worn.

"Coming from University School, I can see how our school provides us with so many resources to better our education. In the arts, we have this whole new facility," Uddin said. "USchool gave me so much, which made me want to give back. The kids there do not know what they are missing yet they are happy with what they have. So it was a sad, yet happy moment. And once you build relationships with the kids, you don't want to stop."

Uddin's next goal (in addition to successfully completing her senior year) is to raise the several thousands of dollars needed to finish supplying the school with science and math textbooks. She hopes to purchase the Spanish textbooks for the remaining grades this summer. To help Uddin's Colombian community, please send an email to [uschool@nova.edu](mailto:uschool@nova.edu).



**Colombian School Damaged By Flood in 2011**



**Tented School on Higher Ground**



**Art Honor Society Members Lend Helping Hands**



**Community Protects the Treasure of Supplies, Students Treasure Their New Friend**

