Global Ministries: What’s Peru Got to do With You?

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Over 270 organizations, in 70 different countries, partner with UCC/DOC Global Ministries. Each has its own story to tell – amazing stories of witness and tears, sweat, and hope.

While each has its merits, the Association Promoting Education and Conservation in Amazonia (APECA), operating in Peru, has become the most recent partner, growing out of the heart and vision of one UCC member hailing from the Southern California and Nevada Conference.

Gina Low, from Woodland Hills UCC, visited the Loreto region of Amazonia 20 years ago, observing that native people were in need of access to basic vital medicines. Since there are no roads in the rainforest, she designed a boat that could travel to remote villages and offer essential medical supplies and treatments. She partnered with a villager, Pablo Guerra, APECA’s current program director, and Peruvian officials to create what is now a comprehensive operation to teach and promote health and well-being for local people and the rainforest we all share.

Amazonia is a world resource. It is rich in biodiversity and has been called the “lungs” of the planet as its trees produce vital oxygen and store carbon emissions. Human settlement has led to considerable deforestation. Meanwhile, waters have been polluted by oil extraction and industrial activities.

Often church members wonder: “Why should we be concerned with global missions when there are so many needs to address close to home?” Those of us who breathe and depend on automobiles are directly connected to what occurs in Amazonia. We are affecting the health of the rainforest and its people.

APECA teaches children and trains leaders in sustainability and restoration of the trees. A healthy forest isn’t possible without healthy people as well. APECA provides and trains local health care providers.

You can learn more and support our planet’s rainforest by going to apecaperu.org or by coming along on a mission trip. Imagine sleeping protected in a tree while listening to the sounds of the jungle at night. Experience how we are connected to people living far from southern California.

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