

THE BOLICK REPORT



CHILE September 2017

Barb just walked in on cloud nine from a meeting. She met with Dr. Carolina Hidalgo, a professor of educational psychology at the local university, who earned her Ph.D. at the University of Illinois. Carolina asked Barb to speak in her class about how the Girls' Clubs are using the discoveries of Positive Psychology to complement the biblical resources she uses to create this program of mentoring and spiritual/character formation for girls.

Barb and Carolina met in a triathlon training program at the YMCA. (Yes, Barb is preparing to swim in a lake, but that's another story!) I'm not sure who asked or who invited whom first, but Carolina came on board to help Barb design and carry out the second part of the process program evaluation of the Girls' Clubs.

This is just one indication of the way things are coming together for the development and growth of the Girls' Clubs program. You will recall that Fuller Seminary's Thrive Center for Human Development is partnering with the Girls' Clubs to provide evaluations and advice on measuring its effectiveness. The process program evaluation began a few months ago. This consists of a review of all components of the program, along with observation and interviews of participants. Then, constructive feedback and recommendations are provided.

Since the last feedback session, Barb has focused on fine-tuning the mentor training program by incorporating their

recommendations. Last week, Barb completed another mentor training for a new group of mentors. We anticipate four new clubs being created by the end of this month. New elements of the mentor training include many "how-to's," a review of legal responsibilities, and the development of a new student manual.

This month, the Fuller/Thrive Center trained psychologist from Santiago will interview the girls in the clubs. Dr. Hidalgo will help design and sponsor the second part of the process program evaluation, and help Barb begin to study the progress of the girls on developmental scales.



Since any testing of this nature, according to Chilean laws, must be under the supervision of a university, Dr. Hidalgo is securing the university's sponsorship of this design project.

This all began years ago one evening with Barb sharing the vision and dream with Lee and Lynn Riggs around their kitchen table. Barb then found a fount of wisdom and a path of transformation and spiritual formation in the study of the seven classical virtues, along with the seven deadly sins. She wrote lesson after lesson, prepared activities for the mentors, integrating the virtue tradition with studies in the life of Jesus, until she realized she had a book in process. She also realized that she needed mentoring and guidance herself, for the maturing of this program.

I remember the day she came out of the study, exclaiming, "I found the people who are doing what I've been doing!" That was when she discovered Fuller's Thrive Center, and the field of Positive Psychology, and Positive Youth Development, which seek to help young people become thriving adults. By integrating these tools with our Christian tradition of spiritual formation, we can equip our churches for this good work.

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