

# **Regresa al Sur**



# **Return to the South**

*DESGUA & Canary Institute invite you to join us!*

**Reasons behind the Bike Tour** The bike tour is designed to facilitate networking between grassroots organizations in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama. The tour is a time for people to meet face-to-face, exchange experiences, discuss ideas, and learn from one another. The tour is also designed to raise awareness about issues confronting Central America: migration, return migration, poverty driven violence, public insecurity, accountability, and failures of the neoliberal, capitalist system.

**Return to the South** The bike tour is a symbolic political act of returning to the South. As people in Central America continue to resist U.S. domination, our tour joins that resistance by creating a counter-direction, a return to the South, a rejection of the economic, political, and cultural imperialism of the North. It's a tour of Eduardo Galeano's Upside Down World in order to make help make it Downside Up! Our metaphor embraces the dream and reality of the Bolivarian Revolution, and celebrates the victories of the FMLN and FSLN, while rejecting the Honduran coup. The tour also symbolizes a return migration, a world where people do not have to migrate to have a just future. The hope for networking, exchange of ideas, and solidarity means our tour is a Foro Social on bike.

**Tour Media** Willy Barreno will be making a documentary of the tour. We will run a blog and send out emails in order to keep everyone up-to-date.

**Tour Dates** The tour will start on November 1, 2009 which is the holiday "Todos Santos" or All Saints Day. It is currently anticipated that the tour will take one and a half months to accomplish. The duration of the tour depends on funding and variables with logistics. We anticipate riding buses for portions of the tour, especially if there are security concerns and if we fall behind the schedule. The tour is expected to end around December 15, 2009. The hope for networking, exchange of ideas, and solidarity means our tour is a Foro Social on bike.

**Tour Route** The tour will start in the town Todos Santos Cuchumantanes, the highest village in Guatemala. The route will then follow the Pan-American Highway to Panama city and the Panama Canal, one of the lowest points in Central America. The tour will stop along the route in sponsoring communities for rest, food, solidarity, and meetings. The plan is to follow the Highway, with detours to visit our friends. We will make significant detours for special community visits.

**Participants** Santos Tale Tax, a Quiche speaking indigenous person from Argueta, had the original idea for the bike tour. He is committed to doing the entire trip, and he is now in training. Anyone is invited to participate, even if a short distance. You or someone from your organization can join us for a day, two days, a week, a couple weeks, a month, or for the entire tour. If you are interested in participating, please contact us at [pmandersity@gmail.com](mailto:pmandersity@gmail.com) or [documigrante@gmail.com](mailto:documigrante@gmail.com).

It would help if we knew: how much biking experience you have; your level of Spanish; experience traveling in Central America; motivation; and when and for how long you can participate. Also we'd appreciate knowing how much money you can contribute to your participation; and ability to bring your own bike and equipment. Finally, it would be good to know if your organization can do any fund raising, and if they can help out with distributing information and promotions as we move along.

Right now the Canary Institute and DESGUA are meeting with different groups of young people in Guatemala interested in the tour. These meetings will be opportunities to contribute to the route and design of the tour for those who want to participate. The tour is designed to unite Guatemalans and other Central Americans with their experiences, ideas, ideals and dreams to construct a better world.

**Sponsoring organizations** We are looking for sponsoring organizations. A sponsor would do any combination of support: fund raising; providing equipment, such as bikes; send a member of your organization to participate; and help with promotions. We are currently in the process of assessing the financial resources we will need to complete the tour. Any organization that is interested in becoming a co-sponsor for the tour can contact Willy [documigrante@gmail.com](mailto:documigrante@gmail.com) or Patricia [pmandersity@gmail.com](mailto:pmandersity@gmail.com). We will be keeping co-sponsoring organizations up to date with information as we have it.

Now is the time to turn our eyes to the South. The hour has come to denounce this system in crisis and move in a different direction!

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