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Markarios Ministry Changes Lives

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Lake Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

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Makarios Ministry Changes Lives

During Jhoana Mortera's freshman year of college, she was invited to join a Hispanic ministry at Andrews University called Makarios, the Greek word for blessed. At the time, she didn't have many friends or a sense of community, so she figured, "Why not? I'll give it a try."

She had no idea how much it would transform her college experience. "Being away from home and your home church can be really challenging," she said. "That's why I loved Makarios. It provided a sense of community and purpose."

Makarios is a ministry with about 45 students. Each school year they offer Sabbath school and/or church services once or twice a month to area Hispanic churches, which averages about 8–10 Hispanic churches visited. The ministry is divided into three groups—poetry, music and drama. Each group meets weekly to rehearse and prepare for the church services. It's a significant time commitment. These church visits allow students to promote Andrews and encourage other young people to pursue a Christian college education. It's also an opportunity to make meaningful connections.

"Something I appreciate about this ministry is how it helped me grow my faith and step out of my comfort zone," Jhoana reflected. "I'm not the type of person to preach, but with Makarios, I've done it a couple of times. Using my talents for God and having fun with friends has been unforgettable."

Not only has it been beneficial for Jhoana, but it's also provided opportunities to help others. In 2023, a major hurricane hit Acapulco, Mexico. One of the ministry members has family living there, so they raised money. They partnered with a local church to distribute basic food supplies. They even

went door to door selling cookies and made about \$300 (5,157 pesos).

This past year, Jhoana served as a Makarios vice president. She worked closely with other members, getting better acquainted. One of the highlights for her was to hear how Makarios helped them stay in church. The paths that brought the Makarios team to Andrews vary, but they all represent a journey in faith.

Jhoana, a junior digital communication and marketing major from Mexico, credits Makarios with helping her realize that we all experience similar challenges. "Not only is my Makarios ministry a family, but I also know they will be lifelong friends." ■

▼ Jhoana is pictured second row, third from left, with other members of the Makarios ministry.

Jhoana Mortera with Herald staff.

