

# Hannah Carnell

Waking up at 9 a.m. to walk up and down the hot beach for nine hours, fully clothed, only to make \$75 a day, doesn't sound like a dream job to everyone. For others, it's their only option.

My family has been to Cabo twice before this trip but this last time we went was truly eye opening. I never realized how grateful I was for a bed, air conditioning, or even just at least three guaranteed meals a day.

One day when we were just relaxing on the beach, a Mexican family set up an umbrella and started sorting these little clay animals into buckets. I watched as each kid took a bucket, walked the beach, and tried to sell these animals for \$1.

"This is what their family income is made of," I thought.

My heart broke knowing that if they didn't sell enough that day then these five kids might not eat that night.

My mom and I walked up to a pharmacy and bought snacks and drinks for them.

After a couple hours, they all made their way back to that blue umbrella to take a break. Knowing very little Spanish, we gave them the bag from the pharmacy along with spanish books we had brought from Michigan. The little kids were beaming, and immediately sat down to read the books. They only had 30 minutes before their mom made them go back out and sell.

The next day as we were sitting on the beach, the family came back. They smiled as they recognized us. After they walked the beach for a few hours, they got another break. This time they were swimming in the ocean fully clothed, laughing, and screaming with joy.

My mom and I went to go swim in the ocean with two large floaties. The kids watched us wondering what we were about to do. Using the



very little spanish I knew, I asked if they wanted to play. We spent the next two hours swimming with them, laughing with them, and teaching them.

"En sus marcas, listos, fuera," they yelled.

I later learned this meant "ready, set, go" and we were racing to the this rope which blocked part of the ocean off. They laughed and laughed when we got there and would ask to do it again.

When they got comfortable with me. They started asking me questions about myself and what Spanish words meant in English. I was excited that a class I dreaded so much finally paid off.

When the kids had to go back to work, I was grateful that I got to experience something so special and learn more about another culture. Seeing how happy the kids even though they had to work in burning temperatures, and were excited over something as small as a floaty made me realize how lucky I am and it really is the little things in life that matter. Reflect on all the small things that you overlooked but have made a difference in your life. Ready, set, go.

