

Cinco años tendiendo puentes “Con mochila al hombro” *Five years building bridges “With backpack on the shoulder”*

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Resumen

Este Proyecto surge como parte de las prioridades del Programa Nacional de Extensión Universitaria, para propiciar el vínculo de la Universidad con la comunidad, se materializa a través de las actividades extensionistas con los estudiantes, contribuyendo a la formación de sujetos participativos en los procesos de transformación. Durante cinco años ha potenciado el trabajo con áreas de resultados claves, patrones de calidad para la acreditación de carreras en la Universidad y la elevación de la calidad del proceso docente, científico, cultural y humanista de estudiantes y profesores en búsqueda de una formación integral del estudiantado.

Palabras clave: Actividades extensionistas; Relaciones Universidad-Comunidad; Proyectos socioculturales; Extensión universitaria

Abstract

This Project arises as part of the priorities of the National University Extension Program, to promote the University's link with the community, it is materialized through extension activities with students, contributing to the training of participatory subjects in the transformation processes. For five years it has promoted work with key results areas, quality standards for the accreditation of careers at the University and the elevation of the quality of the teaching, scientific, cultural and humanistic process of students and professors in search of a comprehensive training of the students.

Keywords: Extension activities; University-Community Relationship; Sociocultural projects; University extension

Introduction

The comprehensive approach to educational, political and ideological work in the University specified in its main Master Strategy, constitutes the expression of the importance attached to the training of a patriotic and revolutionary professional, capable of responding to the demands that the development of our country in the current circumstances with a broad culture propose. Foundations that determine the interest in summarizing in it the best of teaching, research and extension thinking, to make it the most important scientific center in the region. Principles that support the longing of Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz when he expressed: "The University cannot simply be this place where some come together to teach and others to learn" (1986, p.4).

While the comprehensive approach involves all levels, structures and organizational forms of the university, the life project constitutes the realization of the teaching, educational, political and ideological work of the student body. Within it, the extension dimension enhances and enriches cultural training in different ways, by favoring an environment where the student sits and behaves as a university student, with a high level of sensitivity and identity with his Faculty and University, converting it at the same time as an active subject of cultural promotion in the territory, by introducing it as a factor of change in the community and receiving from it the best values that have been preserved and enriched through its own history.

The need to develop, from the University Extension, actions aimed at the professional improvement of university graduates and the general population, in correspondence with the advances in science, technique, art and sport, as well as with the spiritual needs of the society; it constitutes a viable alternative for the permanent education of the community within and outside the walls. Hence the relevance of the projects developed from it.

The existing socio-cultural projects in our university address different perspectives based on the results of the research carried out by their creators; but With Backpack on the Shoulder, it arises from the expectations of the student body in uniting collective efforts from the academic experiences of each member, in order to radiate more effectively towards the faculties, the Municipal University Centers (CUM) and other community settings; the communicative and cultural elements necessary for the extension work. Founded on May 31, 2013; it is represented by students from all races and aims to: strengthen the link between the University of Guantanamo and the intra and extra university community, through the extension activity with university students, in a way that contributes to the training of participatory subjects in their own transformation

processes in an emancipatory sense.

It is proposed:

- Develop the culture of being through the methodological conceptions of Popular Education of the Brazilian Paulo Freire and our Apostle José Martí, for the reinforcement of values, patriotism, honesty, industry, honesty, responsibility, solidarity, and humanism.
- Increase the direct link of the students with the Guantanamo society, its history and culture.
- Strengthen alliances with cultural, academic and research institutions in the province, and relevance in community social work.
- Strengthen through our actions, the fight against corruption and illegalities, and the person responsible for sexual practice.
- Promote artistic, sports and recreational culture in the intra and extra university community of the University of Guantanamo.
- Promote legal, economic and environmental culture in the intra and extra university community.
- Develop actions that contribute to an adequate professional and vocational orientation.
- Stimulate the participation of students in scientific events based on their research lines.
- Preparation and design of educational tools (web platforms, multimedia, videos, spot, repository) with summarized and updated information on the activities carried out by the project.

Development

Socio-cultural projects as managers of university development

Guantanamo University (GU), like all Cuban universities, has the social mission of preserving, developing and promoting culture through its three substantive processes: Teaching (knowing), Research (knowing how to do) and Extension (knowing how to be).

The strategy of the University Extension Directorate (DEU) of the UG, is conceived to fulfill the assigned social mission and face the great challenges that Cuban education imposes, in particular, to achieve what is established in each of the variables and patterns that accredit quality in this type of institution.

To enforce the above, we take as a basis the Guidelines for the Economic and Social Policy of the Party and the Revolution, emphasizing L. 163 which proposes to continue promoting the defense of identity, the

preservation of cultural heritage, the creation artistic and literary and the ability to appreciate art. Promote reading, enrich the cultural life of the population and promote community work as ways to satisfy spiritual needs and strengthen social values.

On the other hand, the PCC conference as a guiding source for systematic, organized, planned work and with its well-defined work objectives distinguishes among them No. 58, which refers to consolidating the cultural policy of the Revolution, defined by Fidel since 1961 in his Words to intellectuals, referred to the democratization of access to culture, the defense of identity and heritage with the active participation of intellectuals, artists and cultural institutions, in a climate of unity and freedom, No. 59, proposing to ensure that cultural projects, aimed at our people, diversify and enrich spiritual life in communities, revitalize the traditions, and reach the most remote places and exclude mercantile or other approaches of a different nature that distort cultural policy, as well as No. 61, where it is necessary to promote on a massive scale, through the integrated work of cultural institutions, media communication, directors of programs, shows, artists and intellectuals, art instructors and promoters, the ability to appreciate artistic and literary and the promotion of ethical and aesthetic values, as well as the eradication of manifestations of junk and bad taste that threaten the dignity of people and the sensitivity of the population.

The University Extension is then called to contribute to this end, in that sense it must go beyond the narrow framework of what is called extracurricular to enter the broad horizon of the word culture. For this, the extension process, in addition to constituting a bastion of political-ideological work, has to become a pole of cultural development, first, from the internal point of view, which means that in its formation, the future professional can consciously appropriate the best values of the territorial, national and international culture; and secondly, based on the above, the action that it has towards the community as an irradiator of culture and that favors the elevation of the level of development in this sphere of influences on the territory.

Extension work must be seen as an integral system where through socio-cultural and educational processes, beneficiaries are involved as investigative protagonists of their own reality and self-managers in the achievement of their dreams, since University Extension as a process Substantive of higher education, it is an expression of the dialectical relationship between the University and Society.

The management of the extension as a university process has to do with the development of each one of the stages and their elements, as well as with the interrelation with the social environment, the tendencies and regularities that are manifested, and the attention to the laws that govern it. From this it follows that, as a process of higher education, its execution and results are generally achieved in the medium and long

term, so it requires a strategic orientation that, ahead of the future, operates as a vehicle for change.

The development from a strategic perspective of the management of the extension, part of the analysis of the reality, of the situation where one acts to know in what to change it and how to do it. Socio-cultural projects such as creators, animators, promoters and managers of the University Extension process starting from the brigades and reviving all the structures until culminating in the processes that offer visibility to the university that are specified in the three substantive areas mentioned above; they are the essential diesel for the development of the extension process, facilitating the integrated management of the training processes in each career, department and academic year, seeking to increase student participation in tasks with social impact.

Contribution of the Project with Backpack to the Shoulder to the integral formation of the university student from Guantanamo

The people of Guantanamo are immersed in transformations in order to guarantee the well-being of its inhabitants and the construction of a prosperous society. An element that involves all sectors. In this process, university students play an important role, so they must continue to be, in our society, the main interpreters of the formation and dissemination of knowledge and culture. A House of Higher Studies is not conceived that does not include among its objectives direct work with the community in which it is located and to which it is destined to serve. In this undeniable effort to contribute to the updating of the country's economic, political and social model, university students and professors must urgently join us, participating from the potential that we acquire in the training process.

Based on the tools provided by Popular Education, we bet that the community is subject to its own transformation processes in an emancipatory sense. From this perspective, the Con Mochila al Hombro project has associated students and teachers around shared transformation interests, where the group is rescued as a philosophy of life and as a methodological device to build organizational and democratic processes. For this, various resources such as art, play, psychodrama and direct contact with practical experiences are deployed. All in order to work with subjectivity in an integral way, incorporating feelings, intuitions, experiences and the body.

Using in our practical and formative actions the methodological paradigm of Popular Education of the Brazilian pedagogue Paulo Freire and of our Apostle José Martí, with its peculiarities for participation, formation in values, management and sociocultural promotion, political and ideological work that promotes thought and an emancipatory pedagogical practice, which bets on education as a tool for cultural transformation and, in this

sense, unveils the role that ideological and cultural mechanisms play in the reproduction of the system of domination, which aims to train critical subjects who lead the changes. they are needed for the emergence of a more just society that promotes harmonious relationships with nature and values such as solidarity, cooperation, humanism, coherence, social justice, among others.

With Backpack to the Shoulder it counts among its coordinators and collaborators graduates in History, Law, Sociology, Sociocultural Studies, Informatics, Social Communication, Accounting and Finance, Foreign Languages and Educational Sciences; many of them members of the Chair of Popular Education of the University Extension Directorate of the University of Guantánamo. What gives beforehand an interdisciplinary character in the collective decisions that are made, conferring a multifaceted vision of the phenomena treated in our social reality.

Developing the intra and extra university community goes beyond improving their material living conditions, it implies growth in people and groups, changes in social relations, appropriation of new capacities, values, attitudes, abilities, self-management of their own development processes, identification of their own needs for change, needs not always experienced or felt but that may emerge as a result of educational actions.

The impacts obtained from the results of the project on the students who pass through it are summarized in:

Teachers:

- Involvement of the project students in the development of tools and materials in digital format that contribute to the development of civic-moral and patriotic values, obtaining the skills they need for their professional profile, including the development of research.
- The achievement by students of the project of examinations to prize, elevation of marks and examinations of dignity is strengthened.
- Incorporation of members of the project to the graduates of: Popular Education, History, Martian Thought and Marxism.
- Members of the project belong to various Honorary Chairs, Martiana Guevariana, Popular Education, Afro-Caribbean Studies, Gender and Seniors.
- For three consecutive years we have contributed the best graduates from the university:2012-2013 Integral course in culture: Yadislay Orphee Faure.

- 2013-2014 General Comprehensive school year: Mailín Laffita Urgellés. Teaching and Research: JuanCarlos Mendosa Pérez and Social Work: Henry Tomas Brown Grandales.
- 2014-2015 Comprehensive General School Year: Erlis Rodríguez Vargas.

Investigative:

- The information collected in the investigations carried out by the students and teachers involved in the project is filed on digital media.
- Conducting three editions of the University Scientific Workshop: Management of impact projectsCultural partner in local development. Space that has constituted a meeting of project managersCultural partner of the Guantanamo territory and of other universities in the country.
- Creation and definition of the research lines of the project members based on the needs of the territory and the profile of their career.
- The project has the Acknowledgments: Alma Mater Award given by the FEU, CITMA recognition for contributions to sociocultural development, Bliss Great recognition given by the José Martí Cultural Society, CDR recognition for the work done in support of the organization and the International Prize for Social Service and University Volunteerism obtained in the city of San Carlos, Sonora, Mexico.

Participation of students and teachers of the project in different scientific events achieving relevant results, among which we can mention:

- Iberoamerican Thought Congress.
- International Scientific Seminar. University and Sustainability.
- University Extension Congresses.
- International Meeting Presence of Paulo Freire.
- ACM-ICPC Caribbean Cup.
- Dr. Ulises Vaquero Vernierin Memoriam National Criminal Law Event.
- Provincial, regional and national Youth Plaza Martiana meetings.
- II National Workshop on Biodiversity and Management of Protected Areas.
- National Event VII Scientific Workshop Going through the paths of history and II Scientific Workshop The 5 heroes and the fight for peace.

- III National Meeting Thinking Higher Education from Popular Education.
- Popular Communication Festival.
- Patriotic Military Internationalist Workshops.
- I Workshop on gender; Realities instead.
- II Workshop against Mind and Body addictions without toxics.
- Annual Scientific Event of the Collective Law Firms.
- I Regional Workshop on Formation of Values.
- XX EPMI Scientific Methodological Workshop of the Eastern Region.
- Scientific Event: Social and Humanistic Sciences in the implementation of the economic and social policy of the party and the revolution. Challenge for Guantanamo society.
- II Provincial Colloquium. Women: Challenges and perspectives in the XXI century.
- XIV Forgers of the Future Exhibition• VII Forum of History of the FEU.
- I Workshop of socialization of experiences from Popular Education.
- History and Archivology Workshop. XXI Years Conserving Historical Memory.
- - XXXIII National Congress and VII International of Social Service and university volunteering.
- I Congress of Extension and university connection and Sixth Festival of Social Projection of the University of El Salvador (Central America).

Extensionist:

- There is a high commitment and identification of the members of the project with it, its University, society and the Revolution.
- Recognition of the University in the communities visited through the spaces for reflection and debate carried out by the project in the different communities of the territory dealing with topics such as: Family vision of Cuban women, Reggaetón as a cultural expression, Guantanamo identity and culture, The Cuban economy, challenges and perspectives, Myths and stereotypes that sustain the culture of domination, Gender and Violence, Citizen responsibility in protecting the environment and Caring for the environment from a legal perspective. The aforementioned shows the integration of students, teachers and residents in

transformation actions.

- Strengthening of the values of solidarity, cooperation, humanism, coherence in the members through all the actions that are carried out to elevate the culture, the knowledge of the Local History and the civic-moral and patriotic values. One element that has contributed to it has been the various excursions and exchanges with inhabitants of communities where historical monuments are located, eg Imías, Manuel Tames, Yateras, Baracoa, San Antonio del Sur and Guantánamo.
- Incidence of the project members in the Basic Secondary Schools and the pre-university students of the territory in order to carry out an adequate professional orientation and vocational training The Open Doors program has also contributed that, from the experiences of university students, students from the Secondary and pre-university students know about the careers studied at the University of Guantanamo and the dimensions they have, as well as appropriating the basic elements that govern university life.
- Linking project members to impact tasks: sanitation of the city, research, reconstruction of the University, collection of raw materials and cleaning in coastal areas of the territory, thus enhancing love for work.
- Recording of the dance group of the project in the Guantanamo peasant program: They are from the hill. Realization of the Equal and Different cultural shows I am what you see and Fears directed and executed by members of the project for the intra and extra university community. The participation of the artists of the project in different activities carried out in communities of the territory.
- Alliance with cultural institutions of the City such as the Group for the Integral Development of the City, the Center for Communication of Culture, The José Martí Cultural Society and the Provincial Historical Archive; where workshops, fixed spaces and the postgraduate degree in Conception and Popular Education Methodology have been held in its spaces, in which the project coordinators were inserted.
- Creation of the visual identifier and the song that identifies the backpackers, which bears the name: With firm steps, both created by students of the project.
- Carrying out the University Crusades of sociocultural impact on local development: University Route: With Backpack to the Shoulder aimed at exchanging experiences and carrying out impact actions in different communities of the province, as well as the socialization of projections aimed at sociocultural support , environmental and economic to the community.

- Recognition of the communities visited, regarding the importance and the work that we all have in the care and protection of the environment, involving its inhabitants in the actions called for by the project for the sanitation and care of the same.
- Participation of a student of the project in the XVIII World Festival of Youth and Students, Ecuador 2013. Yoandris Tamayo Méndez.
- Participation of a professor of the project in the CELAC Summit, Dominican Republic 2017. Xavier Arruega Pinto.
- Prepared a website with updated and summarized information on the activities carried out by the project: mochileros.cug.co.cu and <https://www.facebook.com/conmochilalhombro>
- Participation of a teacher of the project in the XIX World Festival of Youth Students, Russia 2018

Conclusions

With Mochila al Hombro it walks on its own feet, strong dreams have built a project that gives, what to talk to the Guantanamo society and the university community. The goals achieved have not been easy, but that same fact has meant raising the scientific, cultural, sports and human quality of teachers and students. We know that we must expand more, to other communities in our region eager for alternatives that from the universities promote the solution to problems, focusing on the individual as a fundamental agent of change in their reality, and above all, permeating ourselves with the knowledge of all, because in the social inclusion, in true participation, is the change we so desire.

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