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ERNESTO ARMENTEROS

Ernesto Armenteros (B.Arch.66) says that life has been kind to his family, thanks to God and the education that they received in Canada, at Nova Scotia Technical College, now Dalhousie, and Concordia University.

After graduation Ernie followed the steps of a classmate and worked at John C. Parkin Associates in Toronto. When, after ten years in Canada, he returned to his birthplace, the Dominican Republic, he found a country very changed from the one he had left: one that was to be, again, totally transformed in the following thirty years due to a 300% increase in population and the evolution from an agricultural to a tourist/ industrial service oriented economy.

In his first decade as a professional in the Dominican Republic, Ernie was involved in the foundation of the School of Architecture at Universidad Pedro Henriquez Unreña (UNPHU), where he taught for ten years and in the construction of an oil refinery from which he learned the trade of large project construction. As the building of the refinery concluded, his architecture, engineering and construction firm, Constructora Armenteros S.A. (CASA), was started. Thirty years later it is one of the oldest and largest on the island. Information about it can be found at www.casa.com.do.

When it was time for their children to begin school, Ernie and his wife, Francette, became concerned about the inadequacies of the existing schools and consequently started a primary school, Colegio Babeque, www.babeque.edu.do. The primary

school spawned a secondary school and eventually became their not-for-profit legacy to the society that they feel has been good and generous to them. Colegio Babeque has been in operation more than thirty years and employs 70 teachers for 1000 students.

Nowadays, however, Ernie is probably better known as an entrepreneurial businessperson than an architect or a professor (or, perhaps more recently, as an old fogey with a penchant for sailing). Due to the desire to bring progress to his country he has been involved in the foundation of four banks, an insurance company, and Union de Inversiones, a real estate corporation in Puerto Rico. He also serves as President of another not-for-profit, Fundacion Dominicana de Desarrollo. More important than all of these ventures, however, is a group of enterprises, collectively known as Quisqueyana, which he started with one of his sons two decades ago. This is an international group of corporations that serves immigrants in financial, communication and delivery services. Its Internet address is www.quisqueyana.com.

Quisqueyana is now run by his oldest son, Ernesto Elias, and CASA by his youngest son, Jaime. The school is the responsibility of Francette and their daughter, Raquel. Ernie is more interested in sailing his catamaran along the beautiful coasts of the Dominican Republic and the Virgin Islands, playing golf and spoiling his grandchildren. He has much to be thankful for.



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