

Oviedo

Summer 2025



**Indiana University Honors Program in
Foreign Languages**

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Program Dates

Departure from the U.S.: June 11, 2025

Arrival in Oviedo: June 12, 2025

Departure from Madrid: July 15, 2025

Arrival in the U.S.: July 15, 2025

Emergency Contacts in Spain

Emergency (Medical, Fire, or Police Assistance)

112

U.S. Citizen Services

Emergency phone number: (34)-91-587-2200

From the United States, Office of Overseas Citizens Services:

1-888-407-4747

The American Embassy (Houses U.S. Citizen Services)

American Embassy

Calle Serrano 75

28006 Madrid

Email: askacs@state.gov

About Oviedo

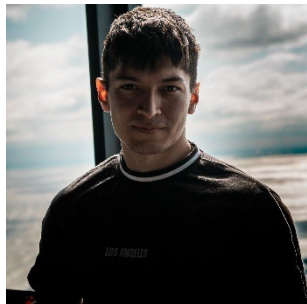
Oviedo, the capital of the northern region of Asturias, is a picturesque and walkable city of about 224,000 residents. Known for its cleanliness, green spaces, and historic charm, the city features Pre-Romanesque churches, sidewalk cafés, medieval architecture, and vibrant plazas.

The Casco Antiguo (historic center) is mostly pedestrian-only and perfect for wandering—where you'll discover cozy parks, cafés, and cultural sites. Bicycles and public transportation are common, and locals are known for being friendly and welcoming.

Oviedo has a rich cultural scene, including opera, street musicians, theaters, and summer festivals. It has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site and was even a candidate for the 2016 European Capital of Culture.

Instructor Team and Onsite Staff

Christopher Brenes, Linguistics and Grammar Instructor. Christopher is from Costa Rica and graduated from the Universidad Nacional. He is currently pursuing his MA in Hispanic Linguistics at Indiana University, where he also teaches Heritage Spanish speakers. His academic interests include pragmatics and phonological perception. In his free time, Christopher enjoys walking, photography, and exploring new places. He's excited to be part of the program this year and looks forward to learning and connecting with others.



James Lang, Culture and Literature Instructor. James is from Indianapolis and teaches Spanish at North Central High School in the same city. During college, he studied at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid through Indiana University. He also worked for two years in Spain as an Auxiliar de Conversación in the regions of Galicia and La Rioja. He completed his Master's in Hispanic Literatures at IU in 2016. In his spare time, James enjoys music, cooking, and riding his bike. He participated in the Oviedo program in the past and is so excited to be back with students this year.



María Montenegro, Community Engagement Instructor. María teaches Spanish at Indiana University Bloomington, where she works with intermediate-level students and helps design courses that focus on real-world communication. She has a Ph.D. in Spanish and specializes in Spanish for health professions. Originally from Venezuela, María is passionate about making language learning meaningful. She's excited to be part of this program and can't wait to explore Spain together!



Mariví Diez Álvarez, Housing Coordinator. Mariví lives in Oviedo. She has been Oviedo's IUHPFL coordinator since 2007. She is a teacher of literature and Tai Chi. She holds a degree in Philosophy and Arts, with two specializations: History and Art. She enjoys traveling and everything related to culture: exhibitions, concerts, dance, theater, etc.



Patricia Pérez Santos, Student Services Coordinator. Patricia has spent almost half her life working with the public in various sectors. The one she is most passionate about is the event industry, in which she has been involved since 2017. She also works as a regional advisor for northern Spain in a medical program at Alfonso X University of Madrid. She currently lives in Asturias and this year will take on the role of coordinator for students coming from Indiana University.

Oviedo 2025 Calendar (tentative)

June-July 2025						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Jun 8	9	10	11 Depart Us	12 Arrive Spain	13 9AM Language Test 4pm Walking Tour 7PM Arrival Orientation/ Reunión Familias	14
15	16 Classes	17 Classes Actividad Escuela Auseva	18 Classes Danza Prima 16:00h	19 Classes	20 Excursion: Covadonga & Cangas De Onis	21
22	23 Classes	24 Classes Museo Bellas Artes Asturias 10:30h	25 Classes Pool 10:00h	26 Classes	27 Classes	28
29	30 Classes	Jul 1 Classes	2 Classes Danza Prima 16:00h	3 Classes Visita Iglesia de Santa María del Naranco en Oviedo	4 Excursion: Gijón	5
6	7 Classes Parlamento De Asturias 10:30h	8 Classes	9 Classes Danza Prima 16:00h	10 Classes	11 Language Test Farewell Show	12
13 Depart For Madrid	14 Madrid	15 Depart For Us	16	17	18	19

A few afternoons a week, we will participate in some sort of sport or physical activity at or near our school. Note: Activities are subject to change (e.g., based on weather, community events, other factors). Flexibility in study abroad is key!

Tentative Daily Schedule – Oviedo 2025

Summer 2025 HPFL Daily Schedule		
Hour	Amount of time	Activity
8:45-9:00		Rollcall
9:00-10:15	75 minutes	Class #1
10:15-10:30	15 minutes	Break & Snack
10:30-11:45	75 minutes	Class #2
11:45-12:00	15 minutes	Announcements/Business
12:00-12:45	45 minutes	FLEX (M: Community Engagement, T: Phone, W: Community Engagement: Th: Phone, F: S & S)
1:00-2:00	60 minutes	Lunch
2:00-4:00	120 minutes	Afternoon Activities (Sports, Magazine, Farewell Show Prep, Community Engagement Activities)
4:00-curfew (site-specific)		Free time (groups of 3)

In Oviedo you will have two daily class sessions, each lasting 75 minutes, covering a rotating combination of *Spanish Grammar and Linguistics*, *Spanish Literature and Culture*, and *Community Engagement*. These sessions take place between **8:45 a.m. and 12:45 p.m.**, with a short break and announcements included. After lunch, you will participate in **afternoon activities from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.** The program’s academic pace is intensive and requires daily focus and participation, but you will also have free time to enjoy with your host family and friends.

Spanish Grammar and Linguistics

Students will review and practice key grammar topics while exploring how Spanish works as a system. Through hands-on activities and discussions, they will learn how different speakers use the language in real-life contexts, and how meaning is shaped by structure, sound, and social use.

Spanish Literature and Culture

As a group, students will explore major authors and literary movements in Spanish literature, from the Golden Age to contemporary voices. Readings will also connect to broader cultural topics such as art, history, daily life, and regional identity—especially in Asturias.

Community Engagement

This module connects classroom learning with real-world experience. Students will participate in local activities, excursions, and collaborative projects that deepen their understanding of Spanish culture and foster meaningful interaction with the host community.

The language of classroom instruction will be Spanish. Emphasis will be placed on discussion and active learning, rather than lecture. The course grade will be based on daily class participation, occasional quizzes and/or presentations, etc.

Course books will be provided during the pre-departure Orientation in Bloomington, held in late April. You are responsible for bringing those textbooks to Oviedo with you. Also, you are expected to bring your own school supplies or buy them in Spain.

Excursions and Important Dates

As part of the instructional program, IUHPFL Oviedo students will participate in several excursions to culturally and historically significant cities and landmarks in Spain. These trips are fully integrated into the curriculum, and participation counts as class attendance.

Excursion Destinations:

- Covadonga and Cangas de Onís
- Gijón
- Segovia + Madrid (overnight)

Important Notes:

- Students must wear their IUHPFL T-shirt on all excursion days.
- During the overnight trip (Madrid), some meals are not covered. Students should bring approximately 20€ per trip to cover out-of-pocket expenses (including water—ice cream optional!).

Excursion Highlights



Covadonga & Cangas de Onís (Asturias)

Our first excursion takes us from the foothills of Asturias to the high altitudes of **Covadonga**, nestled in the **Picos de Europa mountains**.

This area is rich in history and natural beauty, including the stunning **Lakes of Enol** (Los Lagos), glacial lakes surrounded by dramatic mountain landscapes. Covadonga is both a historical and religious site, with over a thousand years of heritage.

Gijon

Our second destination, Gijon, is located along the northern coast of Spain, Gijon is a vibrant coastal city known for its beautiful beaches, maritime culture, and lively atmosphere. Students will enjoy exploring the historic Cimavilla district, walking along the seafront promenade, and learning about the city's deep ties to Asturian heritage and the sea.



Segovia

Famous for its Roman aqueduct, fairytale castle (Alcázar), and Gothic cathedral, Segovia offers a rich glimpse into Spain's architectural and historical past.

This overnight trip combines

sightseeing with a deeper understanding of Spain's central plateau and Castilian culture.

Madrid

The final and longest excursion takes us to Spain's capital, Madrid. As the third-largest city in the European Union, it is home to over three million people and offers a rich mix of history, culture, and modern life. Students will experience Madrid's world-class museums, parks, palaces, cathedrals, and vibrant neighborhoods.



For more information on these sites visit:

Covadonga: https://www.minube.com/que_ver/espana/asturias/covadonga

Gijón: http://minube.com/que_ver/espana/asturias/gijon

Madrid: <https://www.esmadrid.com/>

Travel Information

Climate:

Early summer weather in Oviedo can be unpredictable. Some days may feel cool and rainy—similar to Indiana in mid-April—while others may be warm and humid, like a Midwestern summer. Be prepared for a wide range of temperatures and conditions. If you're imagining Irish weather (green landscapes and frequent rain), you're on the right track—Oviedo and the Asturias region are known for their lush, rainy climate.

What to Pack:

Pack light! Students from past years all agree on this. A small, well-coordinated wardrobe will serve you much better than a bulky suitcase. Most families don't have clothes dryers, so bring clothes that air-dry well. Jeans are as popular in Spain as they are in the U.S. Clothing is expensive in Europe, depending on the store. Please remember that you will bring back more than you take (souvenirs, more clothes, books, etc.)

Pack the following:

- Raincoat, umbrella, and a warm jacket (you can buy a cheap umbrella in Spain)
- One dressy outfit for formal visits or parties
- Comfortable shoes, including sneakers with traction for excursions
- Two sweaters or sweatshirts
- Over-the-counter meds (aspirin, cold meds, allergy meds, vitamins, etc.)
- Prescription medications in their original containers, with a copy of the prescription (in generic terms)
- Extra pair of glasses or contact lenses and a printed prescription
- Contact lens solution
- Travel alarm clock (not on your phone/tablet)

- Backpack for school and trips
- Diary (in Spanish!) and a small address book with emergency contacts
- Photos of your family/home to share with your host family
- Small, thoughtful gift for your host family
- Camera (not on your phone)
- Notebooks or classroom supplies (though you can buy them in Spain)
- Any makeup you want, in travel-friendly sizes

Do NOT bring:

- Smart devices (e.g., iPads, Kindles, smartwatches, etc.) that can connect to Wi-Fi
- Hair appliances (e.g., straighteners or blow dryers)—they won't work well with European voltage and could be damaged

Packing Tips:

- Roll clothes instead of folding to save space
- Plan for one week's worth of clothes, plus 2 extra outfits
- Pack versatile clothing items you can mix and match

Your host family will ensure you can wash your clothes weekly (either by washing them for you or teaching you how to use their machines). Thus, you should only bring a little more than a week's worth of clothes. Think about pieces you can layer and those you can wear in multiple ways.

During the school week, you will bring a packed lunch to school from your host family. Please pack an insulated lunch box and a small ice pack or two that can be refrozen each night to help keep your lunch cool during the morning.

Additionally, you should bring sunscreen with you from the United States. Sunscreen or sunblock is more expensive in other

countries, and sometimes it is difficult to find higher SPFs. Consider bringing insect repellent, a hat, and a reusable water bottle.

If you have any particular makeup, lotion, hygiene, etc. brands that you prefer, you should probably pack those since it can sometimes be difficult to find American brands in other countries. Additionally, if you take medicine (prescription or over the counter), pack enough for the whole program and keep it in its original packaging.

Don't forget to pack a digital camera! You won't be able to use your cell phones to snap photos since they will be locked in a magnetic pouch for most of the trip. You might also want to bring a travel alarm clock and a simple mp3 player (with instrumental or Spanish language music only!), if listening to music is important to you. Do not bring other electronics such as tablets and laptops as you won't be allowed to use them to connect to the internet.

Adapters and Converters:

Another item that you should pack is an adapter (it attaches to an American plug on one side and has the European plugs on the other side) as well as a converter (it converts the European voltage [220 volts] to American voltage [110-120 volts]). You can often buy a device that is both an adaptor and a converter, but it is important to check. If you get just an adapter, you can destroy your electronics.

Currency:

The currency used in Spain—and throughout most of the European Union—is the Euro (€).

- The Euro is divided into 100 cents.
- There are eight coins: €2, €1, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2, and 1 cents. Coins have one common European side and one side that

varies by country, but all coins are accepted across Eurozone countries.

- There are seven banknotes: €500, €200, €100, €50, €20, €10, and €5. These are uniform in design and accepted everywhere.

Important tips:

- Don't carry all your Euros around town! Keep most of your money stored safely at your host home.
- ATM withdrawals with a U.S. card usually carry a 3% fee, so it's best to withdraw larger amounts less frequently to avoid extra charges.
- As of April 2025, the exchange rate is about \$1.11 per €1. Check current rates before traveling.
- While in Oviedo, you'll rarely need more than €20–25 in cash on a daily basis—unless you're going shopping during rebajas (sales)!
- Do NOT withdraw money alone! Only use ATMs when accompanied by your host family, two other students, or an instructor. Oviedo is very safe, but taking simple precautions like this can help avoid any issues.

2025 personal spending money:

These are expected out-of-pocket expenses for students during IUHPFL at Student & Parent's Discretion.

1-2 lunches on overnight excursion	\$25-40
Souvenirs/Gifts for Family & Friends	at least \$60-70
Snacks/Ice Cream	\$3-5 per visit
Optional activities (e.g., movies, pool)	\$10-15 per activity

It is important to have some Euros in cash on hand when you depart from the United States since there is no guarantee that you will be able to get to an ATM immediately when we arrive in

Spain, and we may stop for a snack on the way from the airport to the host city. Sometimes the airport ATM machines run out of Euros due to high travel volume. Additionally, it is important to bring both a Debit card and a Credit card IN THE STUDENT'S NAME. It is best that this credit card is a Visa/Mastercard, which are much more frequently accepted than Discover/American Express in Europe.

Call your bank ahead of time and let them know where, when and how long you are traveling. You don't want them putting a block on your card while you are abroad!

Time:

Oviedo follows Central European Daylight Time (CEDT), which is typically six hours ahead of most of Indiana (Eastern Daylight Time). That means when it's 12:00 p.m. in Indianapolis, it's 6:00 p.m. in Oviedo.

In writing, time in Spain is often expressed using the 24-hour clock (e.g., 20:00 instead of 8:00 p.m.). However, in everyday conversation, most Spaniards use expressions like: "Ocho de la tarde" for 8:00 p.m. "Y cuarto" for :15 (e.g., 10:15 → "diez y cuarto"). "Menos cuarto" for :45 (e.g., 10:45 → "once menos cuarto"). "Y media" for :30 (e.g., 10:30 → "diez y media")

Cultural Etiquette:

Tipping:

Tipping is not expected in the same way as in the U.S. If you choose to leave a tip, 5% is standard. Most people simply round up the total—for example: €7.20 → €7.50 or €8.00 or €7.90 → €9.00

Eating Out:

To find the best value when dining out, ask the server about the “Menú del día”—a daily set menu that usually includes two or three courses at an affordable price. When it’s time to pay, you may be expected to recall what you ate, so try to keep track! Also, bread or rolls are often added to your bill, even if you didn’t order them separately.

In casual restaurants and cafés, cash is the preferred method of payment. It’s common in Spain to pay small bills in cash rather than by card. When dining out with friends, try to coordinate with your group and pay together—servers do not typically split checks.

Keep in mind that if you order water in a restaurant, you’ll usually be served a bottle of water, which you’ll need to pay for. In more formal settings, it’s not typical to ask for a free glass of tap water (“*vaso de agua*”).

Local Transportation:

Public transportation

Many host families live in downtown Oviedo or in nearby areas, and students will use the city’s excellent public transportation system to get to class. Your program fee includes up to 10 bus rides per week. When on the bus: Just before your arrival at your destination, push the button on one of the uprights near the door. If you don’t think you’ll be able to recognize the stop the first few times, the driver will be glad to help. State where you want to get off, and the driver will show you out at the appropriate stop. (“*Necesito bajar en... No sé dónde queda. ¿Usted me podría decir cuándo tengo que bajar?*”). Learn to read bus schedules, they are posted at most stops (*paradas*), with different timetables for weekdays, Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. Like most printed

times in Europe, schedules use the 24-hour clock (13:00 = 1:00 p.m.).

Walking

One of the best ways to enjoy Oviedo is simply by walking! It's a safe and walkable city. Still, for safety reasons, all students must be in groups of three when not with an instructor or their host family. Stroll through the *Casco Antiguo* (old town) and explore its mix of architecture, alleyways, shops, and hidden plazas. Oviedo is also full of parks—great for lunch, studying, or relaxing. Use your street map to discover as much as you can!

Housing

Each student in the program will live with a Spanish host family selected and vetted by our onsite housing coordinator in Oviedo, Mariví. You'll receive your host family's name, address, email, and phone number a few weeks before departure. Once in Oviedo, you'll share breakfast, dinner, and often lunch (typically the biggest meal of the day) with your family, especially on weekends.

Living with a host family is one of the most rewarding parts of the program, but it may also involve adjusting to new routines and cultural differences. Approach this experience with an open mind, curiosity, and respect. Be honest, considerate, and communicate openly. Ask if there are household rules you should follow—such as tidying your room or being on time for meals.

Important: Your evening curfew is 8:00 p.m., which means you must be **with** your host family by that time—not wrapping up plans with friends. You can be either at home or out with your host family after this time. Keep your hosts informed of your daily plans so they're not waiting with a warm meal. Small gestures go a long way—at the end of the program, consider giving them a bunch of flowers as a thank-you. Flowers are affordable in Spain and always appreciated.

You may find yourself adjusting to new norms: how much to eat at meals, how to balance schoolwork with invitations to go on outings, and how to navigate shared spaces like bathrooms. Be mindful of energy usage—electricity is quite expensive in Spain—and expect early mornings, as public schools will still be in session. Also, Spaniards are very particular about not putting shoes or feet on furniture or public seats, so be aware of those cultural habits. Living with a host family is a unique opportunity to experience Spanish daily life firsthand—embrace it fully and respectfully!

Departure Day Travel Plan

Please refer to your email correspondence from the IUHPFL office for details regarding the group flight and be sure to check flight times as departure day approaches, as flight times are subject to change.

Students and instructors will meet at the **American Airlines** counter **3 hours before departure**, check in, and pass through security together. Be sure to keep your passport in an accessible and safe place in your carry-on bag or personal item; do not put your passport in your checked luggage. **Please wear your IUHPFL program shirt.** Parents/guardians must accompany their students to the airport and should stay with the group until they pass through security (e.g., in case of delays and/or to pay for any extra fees associated with additional or overweight baggage).

Additional tips:

- Please review luggage and carry-on restrictions on the airline's official website.
- Bring your passport and keep it in your carry-on bag until after customs in Madrid. Instructors will collect passports after arrival.
- Both students and guardians should have a photocopy of the student's passport. Students should keep a paper copy

of their passport with them at all times throughout the program.

- Each student may bring:
 - One medium or large suitcase (no more than 50 lbs.)
 - One carry-on item
- Luggage must fit on the bus for the six-hour ride from Madrid to Oviedo.
- Wear your IUHPFL t-shirt on the day of departure.
- Pack healthy snacks, any needed medications, and personal entertainment items in your carry-on for the long journey.
- Please bring a student ID.
- Do not forget to pack this handbook and your course materials.
- Please refer to TSA guidelines regarding prohibited items: <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/whatcanibring/all>
- Please refer to TSA guidelines regarding liquids in carry-on luggage: <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/liquids-rule>

In case of an emergency on departure day, call the IUHPFL office at (812) 855-7957.

Once we arrive in Madrid, we'll travel by bus to Oviedo (approx. 6 hours). After arrival, students will go home with their host families and begin settling in. The following day, we'll reunite for group activities and a guided tour of the city. City maps will be distributed during the first week of class.



Communication with your U.S. family

Students will have the opportunity to communicate with their families in the U.S. once or twice a week during their scheduled Internet hour. This communication must be written only—such as through email or chat. Phone calls or video chats are not allowed during the program unless there is an emergency.

Oviedo Blog Information

For the families, we will provide up-to-date information and photos on our blog:

<https://oviedo-2025.blogspot.com/>

Instructor James Lang will keep the blog updated throughout the program. Please note that questions submitted by parents/guardians via the blog will be forwarded to the IUHPFL Office.

Pre-departure Reading and Preparation

Start learning a little more about Spain before you go!

Do you know Spain's form of government? Who the head of state is? What the major religion is? Where is Oviedo located in relation to Madrid, Barcelona, or Seville? Spanish people wouldn't travel to the U.S. without knowing the basics—do the same for them!

Also, be sure to read this pre-departure handbook in its entirety—it contains important practical details about the program.

If you want to start tuning your ear to Spanish, try watching a few Spanish shows before departure. Great options include: *El ministerio del tiempo* (Netflix), *Las chicas del cable* (Netflix), *Cuéntame cómo pasó* (YouTube/other platforms). Don't worry if

you don't catch every word—just enjoy the story and get used to the sound of the language!

Advice from Former Students

Why take it from us? We asked program participants to answer the question “What do you wish you someone had told you before you left for Oviedo?”, and below are their (amazing) answers. We hope they're useful to you as you start to prepare for your own amazing summer with us!

General Tips

- “Research the city a little bit before leaving—there's so much to see and learn. Try everything your host parents make for you—you might be surprised by what you like!” – *Elizabeth*
- “Say yes to things outside your comfort zone. You never want to regret not doing something.” – *Tyler*
- “Learn to love the rain!” – *Sammi*
- “Everyone wants to ask about American politics.” – *Sammi*
- “It's considered odd to ask to pet someone's dog in the street—even though they're everywhere.” – *Sammi*

The Language

- “Everyone is as confused as you are. Don't be afraid of sounding silly—we're all in the same boat!” – *Jack*
- “At first, you might feel like you don't know Spanish at all. But by the end, you'll be speaking with ease and thinking in Spanish without realizing it. Trust the process!” – *Lexi*
- “Just embrace the fact that you don't know everything—none of us did!” – *Ann*

The Experience

- “See as much of the city as possible—before you know it, your time there will be over.” – *Sophie*

- “Be open and enthusiastic. There are experiences in Spain that you just won’t find in Indiana.” – *Eli*
- “Be ready to eat like six people... or find a good ‘host sibling’ to share the food!” – *Robbie*
- “It takes a while to understand the ‘no pasa nada’ attitude, but once you do, everything becomes more enjoyable and less stressful.” – *Molly*
- “There will be days that aren’t great, and that’s okay. Write it down, take time to process it—just don’t let one bad day define your trip.” – *Jayme*

Packing & Clothing

- “I wish I had brought a watch!” – *Lexi*
- “Bring slippers, not just flip-flops—your feet will get cold at night.” – *Molly*
- “Flip-flops for the beach and cozy slippers for indoors are a must.” – *Jack*

The Group

- “You’re about to spend several weeks with some of the coolest people—get to know them as soon as possible (especially during those hours in the airport).” – *Alex*
- “These people will become some of your best friends. You’ll feel like a family by the end.” – *Elizabeth*
- “Your group is full of smart, amazing people. By the end of these weeks, you won’t know how you lived without them. *Disfrútalo!*” – *Erilyn*

Host Family Life

- “Do as much as you can with your host family. Let them know what you’re interested in—they’ll help you experience Oviedo and Asturias in the best way possible.” – *Georgia*
- “Don’t be scared when your host mom keeps feeding you even after you say you’re full!” – *Sammi*

Memory Keeping

- “Keep a journal and write in it every day. A year from now, you’ll love looking back at those little moments—and watching your Spanish improve in writing.” – *Lexi*
- “Bring a small camcorder or camera to vlog or take photos. Capturing those special moments helps you relive them over and over again.” – *Lexi*
- “Journaling is a great way to relax, expand your vocabulary, and create something meaningful to look back on.” – *Erilyn*
- “Take as many photos as possible—even if it feels a bit annoying at the time.” – *Ann*

A Final Word of Encouragement

Remember: we’re ALL in this together. There will be highs and lows—but you’re never alone. Lean on your instructors, your host family, your support group, and each other. We’re a team, and we’re here to learn, grow, and make incredible memories together. ¡Ánimo!