

CUENCA SOUP KITCHEN FEATURED IN INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE



Give Back to Your Adopted Country

International Living magazine devotes its pages to reviewing overseas living and retirement options, primarily for North Americans.

These pages are sometimes the first step for relocation dreams. Destinations in the various corners of the world are featured in their best light and articles often focus on the the social moments, the relative ease of living, the culture of old cities, the feel of sand between your toes and a cool beverage in your hand.

But Fiona Mitchell, a free-lance writer, *International Living* contributor, and resident of Cuenca, Ecuador, took another

approach. She focused on expat volunteer opportunities.

As Mitchell posits, "volunteering with a local charity in your newly adopted country can be a wonderful way to fill some of [your] time purposefully, and give something back to the place that undoubtedly gives you so much."

The *Cuenca Soup Kitchen* is glad to be featured in this article. We know that supporting local charitable organizations is an excellent way to become a meaningful part of your new world.

Click the button below for the full article.

CSK and WPI: Positive Environmental Impact

The *Cuenca Soup Kitchen* has entered into its fourth project with *Worcester Polytechnic Institute* and four of its students; Lali Berelashvili, Sam Braun, Cal Lebak, and Collette Webster.

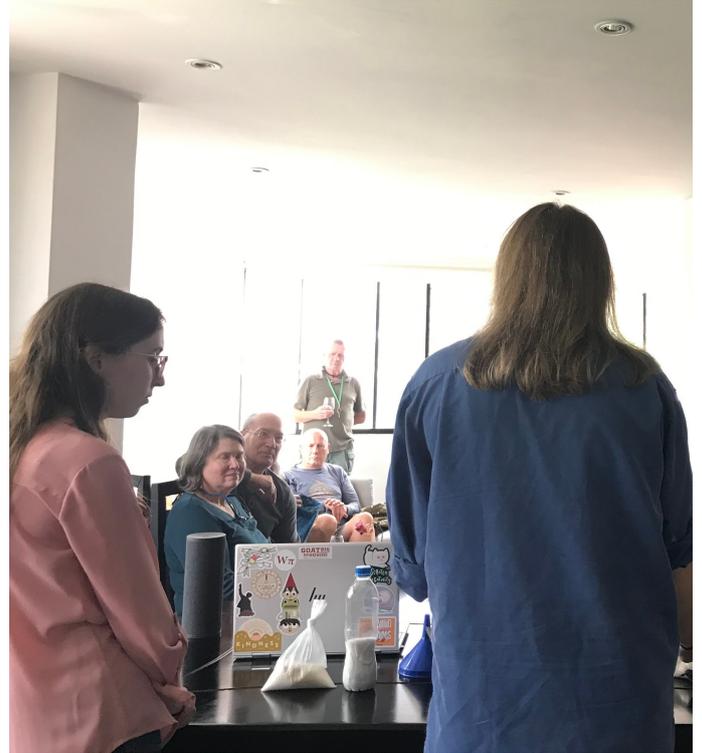
The goal of this project was to create sustainable replacements for CSK's single-use plastics used to package rice, salt, sugar, and produce. It was a challenge to find something that was not only environmentally sustainable but also affordable, financially sustainable, durable, and efficient to use.

The initial idea was to eliminate plastic but Collette remembers the moment they decided to reuse plastic instead, saying "it felt like an even more sustainable idea."

Sam was excited when they discovered that their solutions were not only environmentally sound but also "better for the volunteers and recipients in terms of usability."

"It hit me," said Cal, when fabricating the first prototype bag, "that we were going to be able to...affect people *and* help the environment."

The numbers mattered to Lali. Keeping 18,200 single-use plastic bags out of landfills truly is environmentally impactful. When this number is combined with the dollar savings of approximately \$900 per year (which can be redirected towards supplying three families with food kits for a year), and suddenly significant change is possible.



Webster and Braun present project to CSK

The innovative solutions proposed by this WPI team include a fusing process that gives plastic bags a new life as well as repurposing plastic water bottles for distribution of some kit ingredients.

CSK's commitment to "treading lightly" on the earth also includes:

- reusable/biodegradable diapers/feminine hygiene products
- reusable kit/egg/vegetable distribution containers and bags

For more information on supporting eco-friendly options through CSK, contact info@cuencasoupkitchen.org.

For monetary donations, use the donate button below.

Volunteer Spotlight: Pam Kaperick

The quality that best describes Pam is warmth. She brings kindness and fun to all that she does and this extends to *HeartStrings*, Pam's brainchild and the project she developed and spearheads for CSK.

In her previous life, Pam worked as a senior Fund Analyst at Russell Investments, a job which required an analytical and detailed approach to problems, another quality that Pam brings to her work with CSK.

Pam and her husband Paul, came to Cuenca from the Seattle area. Their love of the outdoors, family in Ecuador, and commitment to travel and adventure are three of the reasons that the Kapericks chose Cuenca.

They are world travelers with visits to: Canada, the Philippines, Europe, and Latin America..."with so much still left to see and do," as Pam says.

In addition to working at CSK, Pam and Paul participate in a Hash Harriers group and hike up the Turi steps on the first Tuesday of each month. To join them, watch for their announcements in GringoPost.

When you bump into them at one of their favorite restaurants around town you will invariably be greeted with a big grin and an invitation to join them. And if you are lucky, very lucky, you will be invited to their home tucked away in the hills south of Cuenca, where they share their lives with their sweet dog, Blanquita, their sometimes mal-intentioned cat, Guapito, and a sky full of hummingbirds.



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Thank you for making all of this possible!

Des Dizney, Bill O'Brien, and Smith
Directors, Cuenca Soup Kitchen



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