

History: The orphanage, located in Sabana Perdida, the largest barrio in Santo Domingo, the capital of the Dominican Republic, currently houses 160 (one hundred and sixty) children from throughout the Dominican Republic. In addition, there are seven hundred students who walk to school from surrounding areas for education to attend high school with a daily occupancy of 1200.

Hogar Escuela Armando Rosenberg, which began in the early eighties as a home/school for orphaned, abandoned children, or children from severe poverty, is now a complex on fifteen acres of property. The complex provides a Christian education, a free, fully staffed medical clinic, a pharmacy, lab, and a dental facility. The new church provides moral and psychological guidance. More than a home, Hogar Escuela Armando Rosenberg has become an oasis of hope in a desert of wretched poverty.

In 1983, a man named Harold S. Wooden (Woody) was offered a free ticket to the Dominican Republic. Woody accepted the gift from his family, who felt it was a much needed and well-earned vacation. A devoted Rotarian, Woody spent time with local Dominican Rotarians, who introduced him to some of the community service activities in progress. It was then that he came across the project that touched his heart, and unbeknownst to him, would take precedence in all that he did thereafter.

He was devastated to see the horrific conditions at the orphanage. The small shacks that some of the children lived in were beyond description. An open-air kitchen with pots burning on firewood, kids sleeping on the ground and young girls unclothed, with no shelter. He brought his story back to New Jersey and asked a local photographer to photograph the deplorable conditions. It became a major World Community Service project in the Caribbean between Rotary District 7640 in New Jersey and District 4060 in the Dominican Republic, that took more than four years to complete.

In 1988, the dormitory was completed. The dedication ceremony took place with the Dominican flag, the Vatican Banner, and the Rotary flag flying proudly. The dormitory was finished. Woody knew we needed to maintain what we gave to them.

In 1989, Orchid Foundation, Inc. was founded to provide ongoing support and assistance to Hogar Escuela Armando Rosenberg. Each year, Rotary District 7640 fills containers with food and helps fill a wish list of items needed at the Orphanage.