



For Immediate Release

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SAINT GEORGE SCHOOL TO HOST READING PROGRAM FOR DOMINICAN CHILDREN

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic – The Saint George School will be hosting a new reading program for Dominican children. The program, in keeping with a tradition in the cigar industry called *el lector de tabaquería*, is a collaboration of the Dominican Republic Sports & Education Academy (DRSEA) and Children International that sends people out into Dominican communities to read aloud to children.

The program will be held March 13, 2009, at 3 p.m. at the Saint George School, Calle Porfirio Herrera #6 casi Esq. Ave. Abraham Lincoln, Ensanche Piantini, Santo Domingo. Children ages 6 to 10 are being invited to participate.

In both Cuba and the Dominican Republic, the cigar industry, even today, has long employed a reader to entertain the cigar rollers while rolling and cutting the leaves. The *lector* reads aloud from newspapers and novels to help while away the hours. The readings came to be regarded as a social and cultural right, and spurred many cigar rollers to learn to read, and also to social activism.

The Dominican Republic Sports & Education Academy is a project designed to provide young, gifted student athletes the opportunity to become well-rounded individuals, preparing them for college scholarships in the United States. The reading program will help to “brand” the DRSEA in the Dominican Republic as it prepares to open its doors as early as 2010, and help create a feeder system for the school.

Established in 1936, Children International is a nonprofit organization with its headquarters in Kansas City, Missouri. Children International’s programs benefit over 300,000 poor children and their families in 11 countries around the world, including Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Mexico, the Philippines, Zambia and the United States.

The goal of the Saint George School is to offer its students an innovative, rigorous and challenging education and a sound preparation for a worldwide post-secondary education, as well as to instill a system of values based on community service and intercultural understanding.

The first reading was done last month at the Children International community center in Boca Chica. The program is expected to be held once a month at various sites in the Dominican Republic.