



My first stove



An excited homeowner that wanted to see it work even before the clay dried.



Anemia testing at a Health Campaign

When I signed up for this trip I was not sure what to expect or what I wanted to gain. I felt that I was at a place in my life that I needed to move outside my comfort zone and explore some areas of myself that I had not done yet. I needed to get away from the life of “stuff” that I had known, cells phones, cars, computers. When I learned about this trip to Peru, I thought this is perfect for me. As a nursing student, I read about the stove project and wanted to be involved. I understood the complications of respiratory disease and felt that if I could help one family by installing a ceramic stove in there home; it would help to minimize respiratory issues and improve quality of life. What I learned as I did the installation of the stoves, was that we were also saving trees by helping reduce the amount of fuel needed to operate the stoves. We were eliminating work for obtaining the fuel, and as we installed the stoves we would teach the homeowner how to do it, and they would in turn help a neighbor to install their own stove. There was hardly anyway to communicate and that would prove to be a challenge, but sign language and charades with a smiling face go along way. I wanted to change one life on this adventure but it was really a project that changed many lives, including mine. It was an opportunity of a lifetime and I would suggest it too anyone, any age and any situation. With the scholarship through the program and some creative scheduling it was easier to make happen than I thought. So stop making excuses and go somewhere.