



## EMPLEANDO FUTUROS' STAR EMPLOYEE

Alejandro Chirinos' story begins with a sign at his community health center. One year ago, the 30-year-old came across an advertisement for Empleando Futuros that said, "Get Employment Training." Now, he works as a sales assistant at Punto Farma, one of Honduras' largest pharmacy chains.

Last year, Alejandro was living in Flor de Campo, a high-risk community in Tegucigalpa, Honduras that is largely affected by gang violence, when he saw the ad for Empleando Futuros. He entered the program as an older participant but with the same dreams of changing his life as his peers. During the project's community-based training in Flor de Campo, Alejandro learned life skills and basic labor competencies, as well as participated in cognitive behavioral therapy group sessions. After two months, he transitioned to a vocational center, where he completed training to become a pharmacy sales assistant.

Alejandro had to make many sacrifices to achieve his goal. The training was difficult for him, partly because he had to travel from his community to the center of the city each day to participate. There were days when Alejandro didn't have the money for the bus fares, and other days when he had to miss classes in order to stay home to help his family. However, Alejandro never gave up: "These opportunities only come around once in life, and I was going to waste no time to make the sacrifices I needed to make."

*"My dream is to develop my own business, and support my family and my community. I'm one of the youth who has decided to take advantage of this opportunity and the fruit of this is that now I HAVE A JOB. Thanks USAID."  
— Alejandro Chirinos*



*Alejandro at work.*



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## *Alejandro is now a Sales Assistant at Punto Farma Pharmacy!*

He credits his technical instructor's patience, clear explanations, knowledge of the pharmacy industry and focus on technology and new products for his success in the program.

Through Empleando Futuros' strategic alliance strategy, Alejandro was offered the opportunity to work with Punto Farma. According to the Empleando Futuros job insertion specialist, "Some pharmacies are quite closed in terms of sharing information with us, don't have a lot of staff turnover, and set high requirements for their entry-level jobs, but there are pharmacies [like Punto Farma] that are willing to give opportunities to youth." To date, 33 youth participants in Empleando Futuros have completed practicums as pharmacy sales assistants, and 10 have been hired in different pharmacies across Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula.

Alejandro has been working at Punto Farma for two months, and has successfully completed the trial period stipulated by law in Honduras. He is recognized as a stellar employee, a fast learner and a responsible person. With steady employment, he is able to continue university studies in accounting and finance, which complements his daily cashier responsibilities of running closeouts and managing inventory. Despite holding informal jobs in the past, Punto Farma is Alejandro's first job in the formal employment sector.

"Empleando Futuros is an enrichment opportunity for the labor market and for the youth of Honduras. My dream is to develop my own business, support my family and my community. I'm one of the youth who has decided to take advantage of this opportunity and the fruit of this is that now I HAVE A JOB. Thanks USAID!"



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