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# COSTA RICA

## COUNTRY INFORMATION

**Capital City:** San José

**Population:** 4,100,000 (Source: Lonely Planet).

**Languages:** Spanish (official), English (other)

**Religion:** 75% Roman Catholic, 14% Protestant

**Currency:** Costa Rican colón (₡)

**Climate:** Tropical; dry season is generally between late December and April; wet season between May and November. Hotter on the coast - temperatures regularly over 30° every day. San Jose's climate is closer to an 'eternal spring' (as the locals call it). The Caribbean coast tends to be wet all year.

**Highlights:** San José – Pacific Beaches – National Parks – Volcanoes – Canopy Walks – Sulphur Springs

Costa Rica has some of Central America's best surfing, white-water rafting and reef diving and is home to 4 million people who embody *pura vida* – the national expression meaning the desire to live a happy, carefree life.

A small nation of mostly coastline, Costa Rica has a unique landscape of rugged highlands, lush rainforests, active volcanoes and black sand beaches. The environmental consciousness of the Costa Rican people has ensured the survival of a stunning diversity of exotic plant and wildlife. IEP offers a wide range of volunteer opportunities so you can make a positive difference to this extraordinary country.

IEP's *Volunteer Costa Rica* program gives you the opportunity to explore and gain insight into Central America while contributing to a worthwhile project and impacting positively on the lives of others. Participants have the support and assistance of OTEC, IEP's partner in Costa Rica and the country's leading student work and travel provider. Home-stay accommodation is organised near the placement.



# PARTICIPANT PROFILE

**NAME:** Simon Cubbo,

**AGE:** 24

**FROM:** Jervis Bay, NSW

## PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

**Life in Costa Rica:** *I was living in Tarcoles - it's a small fishing village, there's not much else to it so it was definitely a culture shock. I did a home-stay; my family was really nice - none of them spoke any English at all. There wasn't much communicating going on – just laughing most of the time. My Dad's Italian so I just spoke with my hands quite a lot! It was pretty hard leaving Costa Rica, they were all crying.*

**Work:** *I'd spend a couple of days a week doing community service work like park maintenance or cleaning the beach. And then there was often construction work to do, like building a new basketball court. That was kind of cool- the whole town pitched in and everyone came out and worked and no-one got paid. I also taught English one day a week in the high school.*

**Program support:** *It was really great - well organised, lots of help in setting it all up. IEP was really helpful and so was OTEC (IEP's partner in Costa Rica). The whole program was pretty laid-back- it's not very stressful!*

## AVAILABLE PROJECTS

### Association for Human Rights

**Location:** 20 minutes from San Jose Downtown.

**Work:** To teach the art through the art of the therapy to orphan, abused children and children in danger.

**Working Hours:** 5 or 6 hours per day, from Monday to Friday.

**Skill requirements:** Only for people that speak, read and write Spanish, fluently.

### Animal Protection Association

**Location:** San Jose Downtown.

**Work:** Paperwork, archiving, fund raising, educating people about animal life and treating animals, eventually taking care of street animals.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 9 to 2.

### Institute at San Carlos

**Location:** Two hours from San Jose Downtown.

**Work:** Administrative assistance, community development, animal protection.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 9 to 2.

### Art Gallery and Cultural Center

**Location:** San Jose Downtown.

**Work:** Help with the databases, order of books, translations, international fund raising and help with new expositions coming.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 9 to 2.

### Biodiversity Park

**Location:** Two hours from San Jose, Puntarenas.

**Work:** Paperwork, archiving, guides the visitors, you can work in the labs with the different species of insects and also you can help in the store.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 9 to 2.

### Botanical Gardens

**Location:** One hour from San Jose.

**Work:** Volunteers assist indoors with paperwork and outdoors assisting the researchers from the University of Costa Rica.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 9 to 2.

**Children's Museum** (built as a monument for hope in the old prison of San Jose: Museum, National Gallery, National Auditorium, and Youth Center).

**Location:** San Jose Downtown.

**Work:** Guiding visitors into the different Museum areas, playing with kids at the end of the visit, eventually helping the Coordinator with other projects and eventually helping the National Gallery Director with some projects

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 8 to 12 (or more depending on needs).

### Children's Hospital

**Location:** San Jose Downtown.

**Work:** Work with kids of all ages and with any kind of diseases, the volunteers need a mandatory medical insurance, besides they have to use a shirt for identify themselves inside the hospital and the people with experience in medical field, have to present a resume and copies of their medical certifications.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 8 to 2 (or more depending on needs).

### Farm at Guanacaste

**Location:** Puntarenas, two hours from San Jose.

**Work:** Cleaning of Trails, Maintenance of Trails, Cleaning and maintenance of Camping site, Helping in Guava plantations, Optional (farming work milking cows), Making local cheese, To learn about the local cook.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Friday, 4 to 5 hours per day.

### Culture House

**Location:** Puntarenas, two hours from San Jose.

**Work:** Paperwork, archiving: exhibitions, guides for the visitors, and help with new expositions coming.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 4 to 5 hours per day.

### Cabo Blanco

**Location:** Pacific Coast, 5 hours from San Jose.

**Work:** Cutting weeds from trials, help repairing signs and public areas, cleaning the beach, guarding the national park.

**Working Hours:** 5 to 6 days a week, 7 hours per day.

### Corcovado


**Location:** Pacific Coast, 7 hours from San Jose.

**Work:** Cutting weeds from trials, help repairing signs and public areas, cleaning the beach, guarding the national park.

**Working Hours:** 5 to 6 days a week, 7 hours per day.

### Cahuita

**Location:** Limon, 4 hours from San Jose.



**Work:** Cutting weeds from trails, help repairing signs and public areas, cleaning the beach, guarding the national park, eventually teaching English to locals.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 9 to 2.

### Courses at University

**Location:** San Jose Downtown.

**Work:** Teaching English for private university.

**Working Hours:** Normally just at nights. Different schedule depending on demand.

### Community of Native Costa Ricans

**Location:** Seven hours from San Jose in South part of the country.

**Work:** Marketing of local arts and crafts, teaching English to locals, including the development of infrastructure, cultivating vegetables and different products, and other different projects of the community.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 9 to 2.

### Ciudad Quesada

**Location:** San Carlos, four hours from San Jose.

**Work:** Several community projects, oriented to community service, international fund raising, marketing of local products, English teaching, and orphanages. The Orphanages have special requirements; you have to go for working with casual clothes and to have an intermediate level of Spanish.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 9 to 2.

### Central Bank Museum

**Location:** San Jose Downtown.

**Work:** Paperwork, archiving: exhibitions, guides the visitors and also you can help in the store.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 4 to 5 hours per day.

### Costa Rican Art Museum

**Location:** San Jose Downtown.

**Work:** Work of registration and cataloguing, works toward to the conservation of antiques, inventory of works, assembly and adaptation of spaces, among others.

**Working Hours:** From Monday to Friday, 5 or 6 hours per day.

### Calderon Guardia Museum

**Location:** San Jose Downtown.

**Work:** Paperwork, archiving: exhibitions, guides the visitors.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 4 to 5 hours per day.

### Escazu

**Location:** 20 minutes from San Jose Downtown.

**Work:** (School and a Nutrition Center) Assisting and teaching English, assisting the Psychologist team, play with the children and supervise them.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 7 to 12.

### Forms and Sounds Museum

**Location:** San Jose Downtown.

**Work:** Paperwork, archiving: exhibitions, guides the visitors, also you can help the children's with physical ailments.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 4 to 5 hours per day.

### Guapiles

**Location:** Hour and half from San Jose, Limon.

**Work:** Assisting and teaching English for local school, high school, nutrition center, Red Cross and you can play with the kids, supervise them, teach them art, help the psychologists team and everyday activities.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 4 to 5 hours per day.

### Heredia School

**Location:** Heredia, 30 minutes from San Jose.

**Work:** Teach English to the kids, help them and assist the teachers.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 9 to 2.

### Horseback Riding Project

**Location:** 4 hours from San Jose.

**Work:** Help with horses, riding horses, cleaning and entertaining them.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 9 to 2 (or more time depending on the needs).

**Skill requirements:** Project for a person 100% used to horses.

### Jaco School

**Location:** Jaco, 2 hours from San Jose.


**Work:** To teach English in the local School and play with kids.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 7 to 12.

### Language Academy

**Location:** 10 minutes from San Jose Downtown.

**Work:** Teaching English for private academy, around \$ 4, 50 to \$ 8 an hour pay (from 8 to 20 hours a week, depending on student demand). Free Spanish courses if needed.



**Working Hours:** Different schedule depending on demand (they are urged for teachers).

### Marine Park

**Location:** Two hours from San Jose.

**Work:** Cleaning fish recipients, cages, guide visitors, help with different projects for a University.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday from 8 to 1 (approx.)

### Monkey Preservation Project

**Location:** Five hours from San Jose.

**Work:** Clean cages, go to the forest and look for food for the monkeys, guide people that visit the area and play with children, and feed other animals in the project.

**Working Hours:** 6 a.m. to 4 – 4:30 p.m. 2 hours lunch.

**Skill requirements:** This project demands a very active people, besides people who can make a hard physical work. (OTEC have to make the arrangements one month before you come to the country).

### National Museum

**Location:** San Jose, Center.

**Work:** Attention to the Public, to make surveys for service's evaluation, to make works of registration of data and paper work.

**Working Hours:** From Monday to Friday, from 8am to 4pm.

### Orphanage in Cartago

**Location:** Cartago, one hour from San Jose.

**Work:** Play with the kids, supervise them, teach them art, help the psychologists team and everyday activities.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 9 to 1.

### Orphanage in San Francisco

**Location:** 20 minutes from San Jose Downtown.

**Work:** Play with the kids, supervise them, teach them art, help the psychologists team and everyday activities.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 9 to 1.

### Orphanage in Coronado

**Location:** 45 minutes from San Jose Downtown.

**Work:** Play with the kids, supervise them, teach them art, help the psychologists team and everyday activities.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 9 to 1.

### San Gabriel

**Location:** One hour from San Jose in the South part of the central valley.

**Work:** Assisting and teaching English for local schools and high school, assisting the local Library.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 8 to 2.

### San Jose Zoo

**Location:** San Jose Downtown.

**Work:** Chopping fruit for animals, preparing food in general, cleaning of cages and eventually assisting the Veterinarians.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 9 to 2.

### Tarcoles

**Location:** One hour and a half from San Jose.

**Work:** Cutting weeds from trails, help repairing signs and public areas, cleaning the beach, helping with a special program of conservation and preservation of scarlet macaws, guarding the National Park (that requires a copy of passport and your international medical insurance), teaching locals English at Primary and High School, helping the crocodile safari and an Elderly House.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 9 to 2.

### Turtle Project

**Location:** There is one project in the province of Guanacaste and another one in the South part of the Country, Golfito.

**Work:** Protection and preservation of marine turtles, besides to help with activities in the community, like teaching English and seminars about environment. The project requires active and enthusiastic people who want to develop their experience about turtles.

**Working Hours:** From July 15<sup>th</sup> to December 15<sup>th</sup>, and the schedule in the day varies in the same way at nights.

### Wild Feline Protection Association

**Location:** Guanacaste.

**Work:** Help heal the animals, feed them, prepare their food, and clean the cages and other needs.

**Working Hours:** Monday to Friday, the schedule needed.

# PERU

## COUNTRY INFORMATION

**Capital:** Lima

**Population:** 28,000,000 (source: Lonely Planet)

**Languages:** Quechua (official), Spanish, (official) Aymara (other)

**Religion:** Over 90% Roman Catholic, small Protestant population

**Currency:** Nuevo Sol (PEN)

**Climate:** Tropical in the east, dry desert in the west; in the highlands there is a wet season (October to April) and a dry season (May to September).

**Highlights:** Lima – Cuzco – Machu Picchu – Huaraz and the Andes – The Inca Trail- The Uros Islands

**Must try:** Deep fried Cuy (Guinea Pig) - specialty of the highland regions of the Andes.

**Festivals:** Colourful celebrations, especially in highland Indian villages. Get involved in the water fights of *Carnaval* (February-March) or the lively dances and parades of the Inca festival of *Inti Raymi* (24 June). Or help the locals celebrate *Peru's Independence* (28 July), *All Souls Day* (2 November) and *Puno Day* (5 November).

How would you like to hear the ancient tongue of Quechua spoken by the highland Indians in the Peruvian Andes? Or have you always wanted to explore the Inca Trail? With IEP's *Volunteer Peru* you can discover the layers of civilisation which have left their mark on this extraordinary country- from the ancient city of Machu Picchu through to the colonial times of the Spanish Conquistadors, right up to the vibrant cities of today. IEP's *Volunteer Peru* is designed to give you the best opportunity for cultural insight and personal growth, while introducing you to the joys of exploring South America.

*Volunteer Peru* is operated in close collaboration with IEP's Peruvian partner INTEJ, which provides local support and organisation of

placements. Volunteers are placed in a range of positions in various locations across Peru. One such is Flores de Villa, a lively community development project located in San Juan de Miraflores on the outskirts of Lima. Most volunteers work at a nearby medical centre on a community health or education project, with the main aim being to improve the general health and well being of local residents through community initiatives and information. Volunteers may be placed as anything from counsellors for homeless adolescents, to working in a soup kitchen or teaching in journalism and radio. General volunteers are needed in local schools and kindergartens and for manual/unskilled work. There is also a high demand for specific qualifications in nursing and IT, although teamwork skills and enthusiasm are just as important as technical skills and experience.

Placements last for one or two months and IEP's participants become part of a colourful community of both Peruvian and international volunteers. Accommodation usually involves staying with a local family, allowing a unique insight into local custom and culture.

## AVAILABLE PROJECTS

### Homeless adolescents

**Location:** Flores de Villa, Lima.

**Description:** Two homes, one for girls and one for boys; adolescents between the ages of 12 and 18.

**Work:** Volunteers will have the role of a general counsellor, helping with homework and teaching skills such as handcrafts and English. Volunteers will live in the same home and help with the daily duties.

**Working Hours:** 14:00 – 19:00

### Medical Centre

**Location:** Flores de Villa, Lima.

**Description:** Open from Monday to Saturday, provides a general medical and dental service to people of the community, and also has a pharmacy.

**Work:** Volunteers will be part of the centre and will help in all the activities. They will help with all the services the centre offers, and if proficient in a high level of Spanish, will be able to prepare orientations on any theme of interest such as Hepatitis B, AIDS, tuberculosis etc.

**Working Hours:** 09:00 - 14:00

### Soup Kitchen

**Location:** Flores de Villa, Lima.

**Description:** Partly government funded, the 'Soup Kitchen' is a place where community members can come and have breakfast and lunch at little cost.

**Work:** Volunteers will help prepare meals involving cooking, washing, and occasionally working as a cashier. Volunteers can also help with nutrition tips and new recipes.

**Working Hours:** 06:00 – 09:00 / 11:00 – 15:00

### PRONOEI (Educational)

**Location:** Flores de Villa, Lima.

**Description:** Non-official educational program for kids under the age of five.

**Work:** Volunteers can assist in teaching English to the children. The teachers are really anxious to learn English themselves, so guidance for the teachers will also be required.

**Working Hours:** 09:00 – 14:00

### CIMA (Street Children)

**Location:** Cieneguilla, Lima.

**Description:** Homes for boys between the ages of eight and eighteen. They have been picked up from the streets, are homeless and almost all have experienced drug problems.

**Work:** Volunteers can teach English or play music, and also teach skills such as handcrafts. They will be able to live in the same home and give guidance as a brother/sister type mentor.

**Working Hours:** 14:00 – 19:00

### Early Learning

**Location:** Villa el Salvador, Lima.

**Description:** Taking care of infants and young children under the age of three while their mothers are working.

**Work:** Volunteers will assist with everyday duties such as teaching, assisting with meals and play time, and taking children to the bathroom.

**Working Hours:** 08:00 - 17:00

### Adult Education

**Location:** Villa el Salvador, Lima.

**Description:** To improve the relationship between mother and child by education and communication.

**Work:** Volunteers will help with mother and child education activities and will also participate in communication games.

**Working Hours:** Wed & Thurs 15:00 – 17:00

### CIJAC Juvenile art and culture centre

**Location:** Villa el Salvador, Lima.

**Description:** Dedicated to delinquent children that may have had problems with drugs or gangs. Through the teaching of art and culture activities, the centre aims to reintegrate the children back into society. This centre is also used for a cultural exchange between young people of different origins or communities.

**Work:** Volunteers can teach skills such as painting, music, photography, dance and drama. They can also talk about their own life experiences in their home countries, with reference to art, culture and customs.

**Working Hours:** (Depends on the activities) 17:00 – 19:00



### School

**Location:** Villa el Salvador, Lima.

**Description:** A well structured school that gets involved with the community through different artistic activities.

**Work:** Volunteers can assist the teachers in any classes they feel comfortable with, such as maths, art, physical education or English. They can also teach their own specialist activities if they would like to.

**Working Hours:** 09:00 – 14:00

### OMAPED (Disabled children)

**Location:** Villa el Salvador, Lima.

**Description:** A centre to help disabled children and occasionally adults with basic communication to reinforce their self-esteem and overcome problems encountered due to their physical disabilities.

**Work:** Volunteers can help with language, physical and physiological therapy.

**Working Hours:** 09:00 - 16:00

### Archaeological Sites

**Location:** Trujillo

**Description:** Different archaeological sites located in La Libertad, a district in north Peru. The area is home to some of the largest clay cities in the world, and 'huacas' pyramids dating back to the Mochica and Chimu pre-Inca period.

**Work:** Volunteers will assist with existing projects and will learn about historical culture, archaeology, conservation and restoration.

### Story telling in the Trujillo Community

**Location:** Trujillo

**Description:** A project to encourage reading among the poorly educated children of the community.

**Work:** Volunteers will read and tell stories, helping children to increase their vocabulary. The idea is to create the need to read and learn.

### Special Needs Children

**Location:** Cusco, Urubamba.

**Description:** Giving assistance to children with mental difficulties through education and guidance, to encourage active membership in the community.

**Work:** Volunteers will assist with everyday duties such as taking children to the bathroom, teaching, and assisting with meals and play time.

### Shelter

**Location:** Cuzco, Limatambo.

**Description:** Orphaned children are supported with education and guidance to help them become successful adults who will contribute positively to society in the future.

**Work:** Volunteers will assist with everyday duties such as teaching, assisting with meals and play time, and taking children to the bathroom.

# CAMBODIA

## COUNTRY INFORMATION



**Capital City:** Phnom Penh

**Population:** 14,000,000 (Source: Lonely Planet)

**Languages:** Khmer (official), English (other), French (other)

**Religion:** Buddhist, Cham Muslim and Roman Catholic

**Currency:** Riel (CR)

**Climate:** Tropical; May to November is the rainy, monsoon season; December to April is the dry season. There is little temperature variation between seasons.

**Highlights:** Phnom Penh - The temples of Angkor including Angkor Wat  
- Ream National Park - Tropical beaches of Sihanoukville

Cambodia, long overshadowed by Thailand and Vietnam, is now becoming increasingly popular as people are drawn to its spectacular geographical features and fascinating history.

IEP's *Volunteer Cambodia* program gives you the unique chance to explore the richness of South East Asian culture by living and working in a country as yet unspoilt by hordes of careless tourists. Volunteers in Cambodia live and work within exploring distance of the breathtaking Angkor Wat, the centre of the ancient Khmer civilization. With three-month placements, you have plenty of time to see the remaining monuments of this turbulent time, and hear all the intriguing stories of bloody battles for kingship.

Volunteers in Cambodia work on a project in or around Siem Reap, a popular town which serves as the gateway for visits to the temples of Angkor. The program includes three days orientation on arrival, and pre-arranged accommodation at a local guesthouse is included as part of placement. Before leaving Australia, you will have the full pre-departure support of IEP, and while in Cambodia you will have the local support of IEP's partner, Interweave.

Placements are influenced by your skills and experience, and range from working in an orphanage, teaching English, supervising children at a local school, working at a wildlife conservation centre, or giving guided tours of a landmine museum. *Volunteer Cambodia* is designed to give you the rare opportunity to immerse yourself in this unique and lively country, while gaining personal satisfaction and valuable life skills.

## AVAILABLE PROJECTS

All projects are based in and around Siem Reap, the gateway for visits to the temples of Angkor just 3km away. This large town is approximately eight hours north of the capital city Phnom Penh.

IEP's Cambodian partner, Interweave, currently works with the following organisations, placing volunteers with them according to the volunteers' skills, education, experience and on their preferences as given in the Interview Report by our overseas partners, as well as according to the needs and requirements of the organisations at the time.

Whilst all current placements can be classed mainly as Education/Teaching English placements teaching time at the various placements can vary from anywhere between 1-6 hours per day. Non-teaching time is normally used for lesson preparation as well as to complete other tasks as required by the organisation (administration, fundraising, marketing, extra-curricular activities etc).

Some organisations require less of their volunteers and some more, some are more relaxed with regards to the commitment they require from volunteers and some very strict – volunteers should therefore be prepared for all situations and not compare their placements with that of other volunteers (or try not to at least!).

At all organisations volunteers normally work Monday – Friday and should expect to work full-time hours, although their actual schedule will be given to them upon arrival. Some organisations schedule teaching time for their volunteers and leave the remaining time largely to the volunteers' own initiative, whilst others assign tasks and projects for them to complete.

Some organisations run classes in the early morning i.e. 6am, 7am (normal working hours in Cambodia are 8am-5pm) or in the evening, so volunteers need to be flexible about this. Volunteers can normally expect to have their weekends free but this is not always the case, so again flexibility is essential.

Transportation to and from the placement might be arranged by the organization, but volunteers are always responsible for the costs. Some organizations are within cycling distance from the accommodation, while others are as far as 15 km out of town.

### **Salariin Kampuchea**

Founded in 2004 by four European girls, the main aim of *Salariin Kampuchea* is to give more Cambodian children and adults the opportunity to study English by providing free classes to those who would otherwise be unable to afford them. This will in turn enable them to find employment as a large majority of jobs in Siem Reap, where the tourism industry is the biggest employer, require a second language to at least intermediate level. The organisation aims to help people improve their lives and that of their families through education, thus enabling them to escape the poverty trap.

The main role of foreign volunteers at *Salariin Kampuchea* is to teach English to the pupils, acting as a Teaching Assistant to the Cambodian teachers. They also help the teachers with lesson preparation and improving their pronunciation and vocabulary.

Volunteers may be assigned to either one of the two schools that *Salariin Kampuchea* runs and their schedule will depend on the needs of the schools and the teachers and may change during their time with the organization. *Salariin Kampuchea* runs classes in the evening (Monday – Friday 4.30pm – 8.30pm) when the children are not at regular school or busy helping at home.


Aside from teaching volunteers will be expected to help with administration tasks in the office and the library. They might be asked to complete a small project which should be based on their own interests and skills. Previous projects include extra help classes for weaker students, a theatre production, sports activity days and sports coaching, music or singing lessons and a tooth brushing project.

A TEFL qualification and teaching experience is preferred but not essential, although volunteers should have previous experience of working with children and previous work abroad and/or travel experience.

Minimum age of volunteers: 21 years old  
Minimum time of volunteering: 12 weeks

### **Life and Hope Association**

*Life & Hope Association* is a non-profit, local NGO (Non-Government Organisation) which was set up in 2005 by the monks of Wat Damnak and friends. Its main objective is to work with and improve the lives of orphans, vulnerable children and disadvantaged people. Their head office and main location is at Wat Damnak (a beautiful pagoda) in Siem Reap centre but they also work with other communities in the surrounding



villages. *Life & Hope Association's* main focus is giving people access to education, so they can improve their current situation and above all, their future. In order to achieve this goal they also work to remove the barriers to education that people often face through addressing their basic needs – food, health services, school materials, clothes and poverty alleviation for the whole family/community.

The role of foreign volunteers at *Life & Hope Association (LHA)* is mainly to teach English to young adults from around Wat Damnak and also maybe to some of the monks living there. This may be as a Teaching Assistant or independently. Classes generally take place in the late afternoon/evenings. There may also be administration and fundraising tasks they will be required to do, as well as helping with or initiating other activities for the children either at Wat Damnak or with the others villages and communities *LHA* works with – sports activities, conversation and/or reading classes, general games, art classes etc.

*Life & Hope Association* frequently undertakes community research projects, e.g. assessing and comparing the levels of poverty in the rural and urban areas, and this is something the volunteers may also be asked to help with.

A TEFL qualification and previous experience of teaching is preferred but not essential.

Minimum age of volunteers: 21 years old  
Minimum time of volunteering: 8 weeks

### ***Krousar Thmey***

Meaning 'New Family' in Khmer, *Krousar Thmey* provides deprived Cambodian children with material, educational and social support. Established in 1991 *Krousar Thmey's* 3 main activities are education and schooling support, child welfare and cultural and artistic development. They were also the first organization in Cambodia to propose education for deaf and blind children and now have 4 schools for the deaf and blind as well as integrated classes at provincial public schools.

*Krousar Thmey* has many centers throughout Cambodia with 5 in Siem Reap, namely 1 School for the Deaf and Blind, 1 Protection Center, 1 Center for Street Children and 2 Family Houses with approximately 12 children in each family.

The main role of foreign volunteers at *Krousar Thmey* is to teach English to the children at the various centers. Normally, at least one class will be

teaching the blind children (focused entirely on conversation and games unless volunteers can read Braille!) and volunteers may also be asked to teach the teachers. As their English programme is in its infancy this may be a fairly challenging placement with few resources. The staff at *Krousar Thmey* however are very welcoming and do all they can to support the volunteers.

During non-teaching time *Krousar Thmey* is happy for volunteers to spend time with the children if and when they wish to do so, for example playing games, sports, reading or arts and crafts classes.

A TEFL qualification and previous experience of teaching and/or working with children is preferred but not essential. Any experience of working with deaf and blind children would be a great advantage.


Minimum age of volunteers: 18 years old  
Minimum time of volunteering: 8 weeks

### ***Remote Area Kids Organisation***

Founded in 2005 this organization works to provide education for children in remote areas who's access to education is limited or who are normally forced to stop their education in order to work and help support their families.

*RAKO* is currently based at a small public school in Kirimanun village located in the rural area of Prasat Bakhong, approximately 15 km from Siem Reap town. They provide education for over 100 children and recently opened a Kindergarten class to ensure children begin learning from an early age. In addition to their normal classes the children at *RAKO's* school receive classes in English and health care. Furthermore the organization strives to provide the children with school materials (bags, books, pencils etc) and to cover medical expenses. They have installed a well at the school, so the children can take a shower and a filter so they can drink clean water. *RAKO* plans to build a library and health care center when their finances allow for it.

The role of foreign volunteers at *RAKO* is varied. Firstly they will be asked to work as a Teaching Assistant to the Cambodian English Teacher, helping him both during the lesson and sometimes with lesson preparation. Outside of teaching hours volunteers might be asked to help in the office with administration tasks which, in addition to lesson planning, may include curriculum planning, setting up computer systems for easy registration of *RAKO's* activities and accounting, and helping in the development of *RAKO's* activities to other locations.



A TEFL qualification and previous experience of teaching is preferred but not essential.

Minimum age of volunteers: 21 years old  
Minimum time of volunteering: 8 weeks

### **The Cambodian Landmine Museum**

*The Cambodian Landmine Museum* educates Cambodians and foreign visitors about landmines in Cambodia. Next to that the organisation adopts handicapped children (landmine victims) and offers them a safe place to rehabilitate and study. In April 2007 the museum moved to a new location at Banteay Srey village, around 25km from Siem Reap town. At the grounds of the newly opened Landmine Museum there's a school where the children can study Khmer, English and Japanese.

The role of foreign volunteers at *The Cambodian Landmine Museum* is varied and depends on the volunteers' skills and qualifications. They might be asked to teach English at the museum's school or start classes in other topics, such as computers, music or art. Volunteers could be asked to assist in research for the museum, help in writing proposals and train the local staff (computer skills, accounting etc.). Further, the volunteers might be asked to help in various community development projects in the surrounding village of Banteay Srey.

For teaching English, a TEFL qualification and previous teaching experience are required! Further experience in working with teenagers and/or physically handicapped children would be a great advantage.

Minimum age of volunteers: 24 years old  
Minimum time of volunteering: 8 weeks

### **Provincial Teacher Training College**

Established in 1980, the *Provincial Teacher Training College* trains future primary school teachers and prepares them to play an active role in reconstructing the country. Their goal is to ensure equal access to quality basic education for all Cambodians.

The PTTC campus in Siem Reap consists of a Laboratory school and the Teacher Training Institute. Extra teaching and learning facilities include a library, computer class and a sports playground. Nowadays basic equipment, an infrastructure for teaching and learning and dormitories for the students are in place. Every day around 480 Cambodians study at PTTC.

The main role of foreign volunteers at the *Provincial Teacher Training College* is to teach English to the students (aged 18-25), the country's future teachers. Volunteers will have their own classes and teach on their own. According to skills and willingness, the volunteer might be asked to teach other topics as well, such as Maths and Geography or to be involved in the college sports programme.

A TEFL qualification and/or previous teaching experience is preferred as the work will ask a lot from the volunteer's ability in lesson planning and teaching.

Minimum age of volunteers: 21 years old  
Minimum time of volunteering: 8 weeks

### **Self Help Community Center (SHCC)**

In December 2007, dedicated teacher Mr. Chourn Sambath, was finally able to officially register his *Self Help Community Center*. Located in Puok District, around 8 km from Siem Reap town, *SHCC* offers educational and vocational opportunities to disadvantaged children and young adults from the surrounding rural villages. The main goal of *SHCC* is to improve the access to and the quality of basic education.

Alongside the necessary Khmer classes, *SHCC* offers students the opportunity to attend English and Spanish language classes, classes in organic farming skills, environmental awareness and other extra-curricular courses.

Foreign volunteers at *SHCC* are asked to teach English to the students, acting as a Teaching Assistant to the Cambodian teacher. Additionally, *SHCC* might ask volunteers to help with their pre-school and sports programme, various administration tasks in the office, developing the library, helping with the gardening (currently *SHCC* teaches the students organic farming skills) and organizing a range of recreational activities.

*SHCC* prefers volunteers with a degree in early childhood development. A TEFL qualification is an advantage, but is not essential.

Minimum age of volunteers: 18 years old  
Minimum time of volunteering: 8 weeks



### **The Green Gecko Project**

The Green Gecko Project is a small organisation that works with the street children of Siem Reap. Their centre is open 6 days a week and is a place where the children can take a shower, wash their hair and brush their teeth, where they can get a hot meal, where they take part in classes or organised activities and most of all, where they can be children for a few hours each day.

The main role of foreign volunteers at The Green Gecko Project is to be there for the children. Whilst volunteers will be expected to help teachers during the English classes, or to teach classes independently, this is by no means their primary task. The centre has a structured programme of classes and activity hours but within this structure there is room (and need) for a lot of initiative, especially with regards to the activities. The children have a lot of energy and so volunteers need to have enough to keep up with, and control them!

The Green Gecko Project advises all volunteers that they should be prepared to do all and any tasks. Volunteers need to have a genuine love of working with children and have plenty of hugs and smiles to give away.

A TEFL qualification and previous experience of teaching and/or working with children is preferred.

Minimum age of volunteers: 21 years old  
Minimum time of volunteering: 8 weeks

### **Helping Hands**

Helping Hands Cambodia is a grass roots aid organization that helps Cambodians living in poverty to be able to help themselves. Set up in 2005 by photographer Deborah Groves, Helping Hands currently focuses on supporting the villagers of Prasat Char, located 18 km from Siem Reap, through 4 different community developing projects; Education, Work for Goods (creating opportunities to earn material goods), Community Income Generating and the Safety Net project (covering specific relief situations).

The role of foreign volunteers at Helping Hands is varied. First of all they will be asked to teach English to the students at the school, acting as a Teaching Assistant to the Cambodian teachers. Additionally volunteers will be asked to help with the existing Helping Hands projects (listed above) and are encouraged to take on individual projects of their own choice with the students.

A TEFL qualification and previous experience of teaching and/or working with young children is preferred, but not essential.

Minimum age of volunteers: 18 years old  
Minimum time of volunteering: 8 weeks

### **Cambodia Dutch Organization**

In 2006 Dutchman Jan Camp, owner of Baca Villa Guest House, decided that he wanted to do more for Cambodians living in the poor villages of Siem Reap province. He started *CDO*, an organization that helps these people by building and improving Cambodian primary schools and offering free English classes. On demand of the villagers also other activities, such as building toilets, installing water filters, supporting HIV-AIDS patients etc. take place.

Since June 2007 *CDO* is active in Poem Chhuk, a stunning and peaceful village located 30 km from Siem Reap town. Here *CDO* is currently renovating and expanding the Cambodian primary school, setting up a separate school for English classes and building a health care center.

The main role of foreign volunteers at *CDO* is to teach English to the pupils, acting as a Teaching Assistant to the Cambodian teacher, helping with lesson preparation and the teaching itself. Next to that the volunteer will be asked to help with a variety of administration tasks, organizing and setting up the separate school for English classes and structuring the English lessons. Other initiatives, such as sports, hygiene lessons, arts classes etc. are highly welcomed.

*CDO's* office is located at Baca Villa Guest House in Siem Reap town, but due to the location of the school, the organisation offers a home stay for volunteers at its *Cambodia-Dutch* volunteers house in Chhuk village.

A TEFL qualification and previous teaching experience as well as experience in working with young children is preferred, but not essential. Volunteers should prepare themselves well for home stay in Cambodia as it's very basic with usually no electricity and/or running water. On the other hand, a home stay in Cambodia is by far the most rewarding experience.

Minimum age of volunteers: 21 years old  
Minimum time of volunteering: 8 weeks

## HOME STAY

The *Volunteer Cambodia* program now offers volunteers the chance to combine a placement at any of the host organizations in Siem Reap with a home stay at a local Cambodian family.

As Siem Reap is rapidly becoming a popular destination in South-East Asia, the guest houses and hotels are packed with backpackers, luxury tourists and everything in between. To get a glimpse of the real Cambodian life and to experience its rich culture and hospitality, home stay is by far the most rewarding experience for volunteers.

Next to that, the money which would otherwise be spent on accommodation costs at a guest house, will now be used to directly support the local family you are living with.

Nevertheless, volunteers should prepare themselves well for home stay in Cambodia as it's very basic with usually no electricity and/or running water. Of course IEP will help you to prepare the best you can, by sending you a profile of the family and the living conditions you can expect, approximately two weeks before your arrival in Cambodia.

## TRAVELLING

A lot of volunteers combine their volunteer time in Cambodia with a bit of travelling around South-East Asia. The beautiful region offers many different cultures and natural diversity and we encourage volunteers to explore. As travelling during the volunteer programme is not possible (organizations depend on your help for the full time of your programme duration), volunteers have to make the choice of travelling either before or after their volunteer time.

Unfortunately, most of the volunteers choose to travel after their volunteer time in Cambodia, while we would like to strongly advise you to **start your time in South-East Asia with exploring the region**. This might sound scary, but you can always hook up with other volunteers and South-East Asia is very safe for travelling on your own (also for women). Besides, you will meet tons of other solo-travellers, especially in Thailand and Vietnam.

Our experience is that volunteers who come straight from their homes into Cambodia, have a hard time getting used to the hot and humid weather, the food, the noise, the people and the cultural differences in everything (communication, (public) behaviour etc.). It's full on in Cambodia! As if that's not enough, the volunteer has to start working for a project, only a few days after arrival.

Volunteers who choose to travel before their volunteer time arrive in Cambodia much more relaxed. They've been exploring the region for a couple of weeks, they are (somewhat) used to the climate, food and culture and they are now ready to start their time as a volunteer and share their skills and knowledge with the local people. They can give themselves 100% to the project. These are, by far, the most valuable volunteers for the host organizations in Cambodia.

# SOUTH AFRICA

## COUNTRY INFORMATION



**Capital City:** Governmental power in South Africa is divided among three capitals: Pretoria (administrative), Bloemfontein (judicial) and Cape Town (legislative).

**Population:** 43,800,000 (Source: Lonely Planet).

**Languages:** Zulu (official), Xhosa (official), Afrikaans (official), English (official), Tswana (official), Sotho, Southern (official), Swati (official), South Ndebele (official)

**Religion:** Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish and traditional religions.

**Currency:** Rand (R)

**Climate:** Climate varies considerably across South Africa; generally temperatures are hot in summer and mild in winter; the Cape peninsula has a Mediterranean climate with four well-defined seasons.

**Highlights:** Table Mountain - Robben Island - The Garden Route - Wine Country - Kruger National Park

South Africa is a land of extremes, boasting dramatically diverse cultures, religions, languages, climate, geography and wildlife. Its pristine beaches, majestic mountains and friendly people make it an obvious tourist destination. IEP offers two programs for Australians interested in spending time in South Africa: Work South Africa and Volunteer South Africa.

## WORK SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa has only recently offered working holiday visas to Australians and they are only available through IEP. *Work South Africa* is open to students or recent graduates (within the last 12 months) and allows you to spend up to a year working and travelling this unique country. Packages include insurance, visa fees, airport transfers, orientation programs and tours, mail holding, and accommodation on arrival. As a *Work South Africa* participant you will also become a member of our partner organisation, SATS, and can take advantage of exclusive employment support.

## PARTICIPANT PROFILE

**NAME:** Jennifer Duncan

**AGE:** 22

**FROM:** Charleville, Queensland – now living in Cooma, NSW

### PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

**Work:** *I gained employment at the Waterfront in Cape Town as a waitress at a restaurant called Cantina Tequila. It turned out to be the best job I've ever had! I lived in a two bedroom apartment in Sea Point with four other people.*

**The opportunity:** *I would definitely go back and do it all again if I was given the chance. I gained an understanding and appreciation for all different types of cultures and I made some life long friends.*

**The country:** *South Africa was absolutely amazing; through my job as a waitress I was able to meet so many different people from different cultures (Afrikaans, Zulu, Xhosa). We were invited to different gatherings and parties that tourists would have missed out on. We even managed to pick up some of the language (the important words of course!)*

## VOLUNTEER SOUTH AFRICA

IEP's *Volunteer South Africa* program allows you a rare insight into the tremendous diversity and resilience of a country moving beyond massive obstacles toward a new and vibrant future. You will develop invaluable skills and improve your self confidence while making a difference in the lives of others.

IEP's *Volunteer South Africa* program consists of a one-week orientation followed by an eight-week placement and three weeks afterwards to travel. Participants are placed in positions in a range of fields including conservation, community development, education, tourism and social work.

IEP's volunteers in South Africa have access to the full support services of SASTS for the duration of their placement. Packages include placement before leaving Australia, orientation and comprehensive tours on arrival, meals and accommodation for the duration of the placement, internet access and mail holding.

## AVAILABLE PROJECTS

Please note that the listed projects are examples of the types of projects available. Volunteers should select categories and not specific projects.

### EDUCATION

These projects close from the first week in December to the third week in January.

### CRECHE/PRE-SCHOOL

Crèches / kindergartens are based in all local communities.

#### Structure and facilities

These vary depending on the location, resources available and level of trained staff at the project. Some projects are very well structured and well managed. In most disadvantaged communities crèches are mainly home-based and started by a local community person with little or no training in early childhood development. At home-based crèches there is a lack of trained staff and resources and facilities are very limited.

#### Babies / toddlers / pre-school kids

The ages of children range from a few month old babies to 6 year olds. Some of the crèches / kindergartens only accommodate kids between the ages of 3-6 years and others have a range of ages.

#### Opening times

Monday to Friday 07:00 – 15:00 (this may vary depending on the specific crèche / kindergarten)

#### Volunteer duties

Duties of volunteers will vary from feeding, playing, and teaching to helping with preparing meals, making educational toys and learning aids. Some activities may involve assisting with cooking and helping out with tidying up. Volunteers need to be flexible and willing to help wherever help is needed. It is also important that they understand the local community situations and the local challenges associated with these types of placements. Volunteers must be able to take initiative in assess the need at the crèche

#### Other skills required

A love for children and lots of patience are very important. In the areas where Xhosa is mostly spoken, the volunteer would need even more patience as most of the children can not speak English. The language barrier is not really a problem as the kids are very eager to learn and one

just needs extra patience with them. A willingness to help in other areas of the project would also add value e.g. upgrades to the facility, finding creative ways to make learning aids/material.

### SIZAMILE – PRE-SCHOOL/CRECHE

**Location:** Kayamandi Township

**Structure/facilities:** Fairly organised. Divided into 3 classes according to age groups of children.

**Staffing:** 6 teachers, 2 in each class

**Number of learners:** 105

**Age groups:** 30 babies, 40 toddlers (3-4yrs), 35 pre-schoolers (5-6yrs)

**Socio-economic status:** Kayamandi is a black informal settlement. People in this township are underprivileged and from disadvantaged backgrounds. Children attending this school are from the area.

**Working hours:** 7am – 2pm

**Duties:** General assistance with the routine of school, such as meals, sleep and play time.

**Transport:** Within walking distance from host family.

**Skill requirements:** Patience, creativity, initiative. A love for babies.

### SIYAKHULA CRECHE

**Location:** Kayamandi Township

**Structure/facilities:** Fairly organised, little resources

**Staffing:** 2 teachers

**Number of learners:** 5

**Age groups:** Infants – 3 years

**Socio-economic status:** Kayamandi is a black informal settlement. People in this township are underprivileged and from previously disadvantaged backgrounds. Children attending this school are from the local area.

**Working hours:** 8pm – 4pm

**Duties:** General assistance with routine of the school, such as meals, sleep and play time. Assisting with care and stimulation of these young children and infants.

**Transport:** Within walking distance from host.

**Skill requirements:** Patience, creativity, initiative and a love for children.

### MASINDE PRE-SCHOOL/CRECHE

**Location:** Kayamandi township

**Structure/facilities:** Fairly organised. Divided into 3 classes according to age groups of children.

**Staffing:** 4 teachers and 1 cook

**Number of learners:** 80 children

**Age groups:** Infants – 5 years

**Socio-economic status:** Kayamandi is a black informal settlement. People in this township are underprivileged and from previously disadvantaged backgrounds. Children attending this school are from the area.

**Working hours:** 8am – 3pm

**Duties:** General assistance with routine of school, such as meals, sleep and play times.

**Transport:** Within walking distance from host.

**Skill requirements:** Patience, creativity, initiative and a love for children.

### SQUAREHILL NURSERY

**Location:** Retreat area

**Structure/facilities:** One class of children. Fairly structured.

**Staffing:** 2 teachers

**Number of learners:** 30

**Age groups:** 18 months – 6 years (mainly 3-6)

**Socio-economic status:** Children from the location community of Retreat. This area is a disadvantaged, coloured area.

**Working hours:** 7:30am – 3pm

**Duties:** Assisting teachers with creative activities, musical development, educational playtime, and story time. Also outdoor activities, toilet and wash routine.

**Transport:** Transported to project by host.

**Skill requirements:** Patience, creativity and a love for children

### PETER PAN DOWN SYNDROM CENTRE

**Location:** Maitland

**Structure/facilities:** The centre pioneered the concept of integration of disabled and non-disabled pre-schoolers. Divided into four classrooms according to age, there is on average five Down syndrome kids integrated per class.

**Staffing:** 11 staff members, local and international

**Number of learners:** 60



**Age groups:** 2-7 years

**Social-economic status:** Maitland is a developed coloured area. Children attending this school are from all areas in the Western Cape.

**Working hours:** 8am – 3:30pm

**Duties:** Consolidation and implementation of educational programmes. Volunteers will work in close cooperation with the class teacher in assisting in creating a stimulating environment for the children.

**Transport:** If not placed with a host that is within walking distance, volunteers will be collected each morning by the school bus.

**Skill requirements:** Patience, creativity, initiative, drive and a love for children.

## BLOUVLEI NURSERY

**Location:** Retreat

**Structure:** Pre-school/nursery school for children from underprivileged surrounding areas. School divided into two classes according to age.

**Staffing:** 2 teachers, cook and caretaker

**Number of learners:** 40-50 children

**Age groups:** 3-6 years

**Socio-economic status:** Children are from the more impoverished surrounding areas.

**Working hours:** 8am – 3pm

**Duties:** General assistance with the routine of the school, such as meals, sleep and play time.

**Transport:** Transport will be provided.

## LIEFDESPOORT

**Location:** Phillippi

**Structure/facilities:** 2 classes divided into crèche and pre-school aged children.

**Staffing:** 2 teachers and 1 cook

**Number of learners:** 50-65 learners

**Socio-economic status:** Phillippi is a farming community. The children that attend Liefdespoort are from the farming community and informal settlements in the surrounding areas.

**Working hours:** 7:30am-4pm

**Duties:** General teacher's assistance. Volunteer needs to assist in daily routine and schedule of the school.

**Transport:** Transport provided.

## PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Primary schools are based in all local communities.

### Structure and facilities

These vary depending on the location, resources available and level of trained staff at the project. Some primary schools are very well structured and well managed by the principal and the governing board. As most schools are based in disadvantaged communities the classes are overcrowded (40+ learners per class) and there is a need for additional teachers and more resources. Some of the other challenges that they are faced with is de-motivated staff. The facilities at the schools are very limited. Some schools offer no or little recreational activities such as sport and art.

### Ages of learners

The ages of primary school learners range from 6 to 13 year olds.

### Opening times

Monday to Friday 08:00 – 14:00 (this may vary depending on the specific school activities and after school programmes)

### Volunteer duties

Duties of volunteers will mainly be assisting a teacher in a specific class. In situations where there are teachers absent, the volunteer will be required to take a class on their own. Depending on the age group that the focusing on, they could add tremendous value if the open-minded, flexible and willing to help where help is needed. Help is needed specifically with teaching in Maths, English, Science and Life Skills. Volunteers with skills in music, art and sports could also contribute greatly to the everyday programme at the schools.

### Other skills and requirements

A basic understanding the structure of local primary schools and the challenges faced within the education system in South Africa. In the areas where Xhosa is mostly spoken (urban townships), the volunteer would need patience as most of the learners cannot speak English that well. The language barrier is not really a problem as the kids are very eager to learn and one just needs extra patience with them. A willingness to help in other areas of the project would also add value e.g. upgrades to the facility, finding creative ways to make learning aids/material and basic administration. Below you will find examples of primary schools in local areas.



## SUNNYSIDE PRIMARY

**Location:** Athlone

**Structure/facilities:** Primary school with classes from Grade 1 to Grade 7. This school is divided into about two classes per grade.

**Staffing:** There are 18 teachers, as well as a physical education and a music teacher.

**Number of students:** 589

**Age groups:** 6-13 years

**Socio-economic status:** The children attending the school are predominantly from coloured homes, with a small percentage of black children as well. These children are from lower to middle class families and informal settlement.

**Working hours:** 7:55am-2:20pm

**Duties:** General teachers' assistance, in areas where the volunteer feels comfortable.

## ST. ANTHONY'S PRIMARY

**Location:** Heathfield

**Structure/facilities:** Catholic Primary school with classes from Grade 1 – Grade 7. Fairly organized and structured. Grades divided into 2-3 classes.

**Staffing:** 20 teachers, in addition there is a music, physical education and art teacher

**Number of learners:** 740

**Age groups:** 5-13 years

**Socio-economic status:** The children attending the school are predominantly from black and coloured homes, from lower to middle class families. Children attend from informal settlements.

**Working hours:** 7:55am – 2pm

**Duties:** General teachers' assistance. Assisting in areas where the volunteer feels comfortable.

**Transport:** Within walking distance

**Skill requirements:** Willingness and patience to work with children. Flexibility in terms of activities and tasks.

## LOTUS RIVER PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Location:** Lotus River

**Structure/facilities:** Primary school with classes from Grade 1 – Grade 7. There are 2 classes per grade.

**Staffing:** Two teachers per grade (thirteen in total), secretary, and physical education teacher.

**Number of learners:** 450 in the school, average of 20-30 per class.

**Age groups:** 6-13 years

**Socio-economic status:** Lotus River is a coloured area in the Cape Flats. People living in this area are not very financially secure.

**Working hours:** 8am-3pm

**Duties:** General teachers' assistance with creative task and daily routine.

**Transport:** Transport provided if not placed with a host family within walking distance.

## IKHAYA PRIMARY

**Location:** Kayamandi Township

**Structure/facilities:** Primary school with classes from Grade 1 – 7. Very overcrowded and understaffed school, with little structure and limited material resources. There are 39 classes.

**Staffing:** There are 39 teachers.

**Number of learners:** 1604 pupils, an average of 50 per class.

**Age groups:** 6-15 years

**Socio-economic status:** Kayamandi is a black informal settlement. People in this township are underprivileged and from previously disadvantaged backgrounds.

**Working hours:** Foundation phase - 8pm-1pm, senior classes – 8am-2pm.

**Duties:** General teachers' assistance. The classes are over crowded so slow learners do not get individual attention and volunteer assistance is needed in this area.

**Transport:** Within walking distance from host.

**Skill requirements:** Patience and creativity. Volunteer will need to use initiative to implement programmes. Many problems in the literacy and numeracy sector and skill in this area is greatly appreciated.



## DIEDERICK MORAVIAN

**Location:** Phillippi

**Structure/facilities:** Very poor and unstructured school. Primary school with grade 0 – 7. There is one class per grade. Very little material resources.

**Staffing:** Ten teachers

**Number of learners:** 300

**Age groups:** 5-14 years

**Socio-economic status:** Phillippi is a farming community. The children that attend Diederick Moravian are from the farming community and informal settlements in the surrounding areas.

**Working hours:** 8am-2.30pm

**Transport:** Transport provided.

**Skill requirement:** Initiative and creativity.

## THOMAS WILSCHUTT JUNIOR

**Location:** Retreat

**Structure/facilities:** School is a very underprivileged school with little resources. The school has classes from Grade R -3. The building is majority prefabricated and a very small part is brick building.

**Staffing:** 14 teachers

**Number of learners:** 500 with an average of 40 per class. There are about 4 classes per grade.

**Age groups:** 9-13 years

**Socio-economic status:** The children attending the school are from poor lower class families. Some live in informal settlements. The school has learners that are from black, coloured and African refugee backgrounds.

**Working hours:** 8am – 2pm

**Duties:** General teacher's assistance

## SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Based in all local communities

### Structure and facilities

These vary depending on the location, resources available and level of trained staff at the project. Some schools are very well structured and well managed by the principal and the governing board. As most schools are based in disadvantaged communities the classes are overcrowded (40+ learners per class) and there is a need for additional teachers and more resources. Some of the other challenges that they are faced with is demotivated staff. The facilities at the schools are very limited. Some schools offer no or little recreational activities such as sport and art.

### Ages of learners

The ages of secondary school learners range from 14 year olds to 18 year olds.

### Opening times

Monday to Friday 08:00 – 15:00 (this may vary depending on the specific school activities and after school programmes)

### Volunteer duties

Duties of volunteers will mainly be assisting a teacher in a specific class. In situations where there are teachers absent, the volunteer will be required to take a class on their own. Depending on the age group that the focusing on, they could add tremendous value if the open-minded, flexible and willing to help where help is needed. Help is needed specifically with teaching in Mathematics, English, Science and Life Skills. Volunteers with skills in music, art and sports could also contribute greatly to the everyday programme at the schools.

### Other skills and requirements

A basic understanding of the structure of schools and the challenges faced within the education system in South Africa. A willingness to help in other areas of the project would also add value e.g. upgrades to the facility, finding creative ways to make learning aids/material and basic administration. Below you will find examples of primary schools in local areas.

## KAYAMANDI HIGH SCHOOL

**Location:** Kayamandi Township

**Structure/facilities:** High School with limited material resources and structure. Classes are divided from grade 8 -12.

There are about 45 classes.

**Staffing:** Approx. 22 teachers

**Number of learners:** Approx. 1300

**Age groups:** 14-18 years

**Socio-economic status:** Kayamandi is a black informal settlement. People in this township are underprivileged and from previously disadvantaged backgrounds. Children attending this school are from the area. The children attending this crèche/pre-school are of the more unfortunate families.

**Working hours:** 8am – 3pm

**Duties:** Assisting teachers in the classroom. Volunteer could also do extra mural activities if he/she has a special skill.

**Transport:** Within walking distance from host family.

**Skill requirements:** Patience, creativity, initiative.

## SIMON ESTES SENIOR SCHOOL

**Location:** Ottery

**Structure/facilities:** Senior school with a focus on children with special musical ability and talent. Grades 8 – 12

**Staffing:** 16 staff members.

**Number of learners:** 400 learners, majority girls. Average class of 40 learners.

**Age groups:** 12-18 years

**Socio-economic status:** Learners from lower to middle class families and backgrounds.

**Working hours:** 8am-2:30pm

**Duties:** General assistance in academic class and music class

**Transport:** Transport will be provided.

**Skill requirements:** Musically and theatrically talented individuals.

## THOMAS WILSCHUTT SENIOR

**Location:** Retreat

**Structure/facilities:** School is a very underprivileged school with little resources. The school has classes from Grade 4 -7

**Number of learners:** 430 with an average of 48 per class

**Age groups:** 9-13 years

**Socio-economic status:** The children attending the school are from poor lower class families. Some live in informal settlements. The school has learners that are from black, coloured and African refugee backgrounds.

**Working hours:** 8:15am-2:30pm

**Duties:** General teacher's assistance

**Transport:** Transport will be provided

**Skill requirements:** Willingness to help and patience.

## SOCIAL WELFARE

Open throughout the year but note that placements during December are limited as orphans are placed with foster parents. Based in most local communities where SASTS host families are located.

### Structure and facilities

These vary depending on the location, resources available and level of trained staff at the project. Some projects are very well structured and well managed. Most projects are government funded/subsidised.

### Categories of placement in social welfare

Orphanages, safe houses for women & kids, homes for physically and mentally challenged children.

### Opening times

Monday to Friday 08:00 – 15:00 and 15:00 – 18:00 (but does vary). Most activities are in the afternoons when the kids return from school.

### Volunteer duties

Duties of volunteers will vary from feeding and clothing younger children to assisting kids struggling at school and entertaining all children. The kids mostly need an ear to listen, a helping hand and warm hugs and affection. At the homes for abused women the volunteer will slot into the programme at the facility and assist with the day to day activities planned. Some activities may involve assisting with cooking and helping out with tidying up, helping with awareness programmes and skills development. Volunteers need to be flexible and willing to help wherever it is needed. It is also important that they understand the local community situations and the local challenges associated with these types of placements. Volunteers must be able to take initiative and think creatively.

### Other skills required

A love for children and lots of patience are very important. A willingness to help in other areas of the project would also add value e.g. upgrades to the facility, finding creative ways to make facility neat and tidy.

## ADOPT-A-CHILD

**Location:** Parkwood

**Structure/facilities:** Based at the Parkwood Primary school in which volunteers will assist in adding and alleviating the social problems of children from deprived backgrounds. The project aims to assist with slow learners and children with domestic problems.

**Staffing:** Mr. and Mrs. Phillips run this project

**Number of learners:** Varies

**Age groups:** Primary school ages, 6-13 years

**Socio-economic status:** The children are all from the underprivileged, suburb of Parkwood and surrounding areas. These children are problematic domestic backgrounds resulting in the need for extra attention. The children focused on by this project are predominantly slow learners.

**Working hours:** 8am-2pm

**Duties:** Assisting in various aspects, such as reading programmes and support system for slow learners.

**Transport:** Transport provided

**Skill requirements:** Patience, initiative and creativity. Remedial educator background would be of great assistance.

## LEILIEBLOEM HOUSE

**Location:** Crawford

**Structure/facilities:** The home is divided into 3 cottages. There are 2 cottages for girls and 1 for boys. The home is very limited in terms of material resources and also assistance in terms of stimulation for the children.

**Staffing:** 10 childcare workers

**Number of children:** 84

**Age groups:** Toddlers-18 years

**Socio-economic status:** The children living in Leliebloem house are not all orphaned. Some come from neglected homes, and are emotionally/physically deprived. Most come from single parents, and unemployment, alcohol & substance abuse is prevalent.

**Working hours:** 1:30pm-6pm

**Duties:** Assisting with and sometimes creating activities and looking after children in the home. You would help with homework and general stimulation.

**Transport:** Transport provided

**Skill requirements:** Creativity, and a love for children

## SALVATION ARMY CAREHAVEN

**Location:** Urban, middle-class residential area.

**Structure/facilities:** Very well structured. Various projects, staff involved at various levels.

**Residents:** Disadvantaged women and children.

**Age groups:** Various

**Socio-economic status:** Underprivileged, disadvantaged communities.

**Working hours:** 8am-5pm, Monday to Friday

**Duties:** Assisting with programmes initiated by the project. These may include awareness, skills development and training. Flexibility is very important as tasks may vary from day-to-day.

**Transport:** If not situated within walking distance of project, transport would be provided. There are instances where volunteers will be accommodated at the project in staff lodging - privacy can be limited, with a high level of interaction with the residents.

**Skill requirements:** Patience, willingness to listen and show compassion. Flexibility in terms of variation of tasks and activities. May assist with admin.

## PLACE OF HOPE

**Location:** Crawford/Athlone

**Structure/facilities:** Place of hope is a home/haven for abused women and their children. The home has sleeping facilities for the residence.

**Staffing:** House mothers, night staff, security, social workers, day care supervisor and management

**Number of residents:** 23 women, 17 children

**Age groups:** Varying

**Socio-economic status of community:** The residences of Place of Hope are from abusive backgrounds. The types of abuse include: physical, mental, emotional and sexual. Some are destitute

**Working hours:** 8:30am-4:30pm or 9am-5pm

**Duties:** Involvement in the various aspects of the home. Assisting in the crèche on the premises as well as getting involved in life skills workshops run by the home.

**Transport:** Transport provided

**Skill requirements:** Initiative, creativity, and dedication.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Open throughout the year but note that placements during December are limited as orphans are placed with foster parents. Things are generally also very quiet over the festive season. Based in some local communities where SASTS host families are located.

### Structure and facilities

These vary depending on the location, resources available and level of trained staff at the project. Some projects are very well structured and well managed, others you will find are less structured and more patience is required as work loads vary from day-to-day. These are mostly funded by fundraising initiatives, donations and membership fees.

### Categories of placement in social welfare

Tourism, women empowerment, job creation initiatives

### Opening times

Monday to Friday 08:00 – 15:00 and 15:00 – 18:00 (this may vary depending on the specific activities planned).

### Volunteer duties

Duties of volunteers will vary depending on what the programme entails while the volunteer is based there. Most activities involve development of people at various levels e.g. skills development, leadership programmes, awareness programmes and community outreaches. Volunteers must be willing to help wherever help is needed. It is also important that they understand the local community situations and the local challenges associated with these types of placements. Volunteers must be able to take initiative and think creatively. Administration work will also form part of the duties of the volunteer.

### Other skills required

A willingness to help in other areas of the project would also add value e.g. upgrades to the facility, finding creative ways to make facility neat and tidy and programmes offered at the facility.

## ENVIRONMENTAL

Open throughout the year but note that placements during December are limited as things are generally also very quiet over the festive season. Please note that these projects do not involve working with animals. Based in specific areas where SASTS host families are located.

### Structure and facilities

These vary depending on the location, resources available. Some projects are very well structured and well managed. Most of these projects are government funded or subsidised through donations and some funding from government. Some projects charge a minimal fee for entrance or for use of facilities.

### Categories of placements in environmental projects

Environmental Awareness Programmes  
South African National Parks  
Environmental Parks & Recreational Facilities

### Opening times

Monday to Sunday 08:00 – 17:00 or as per the programme of the specific project (this may vary depending on the specific activities planned). Weekend work is also required most of the time. Volunteers will however get time off from weekend volunteer work.

### Volunteer duties

Duties of volunteers will include visitor management, outdoor environmental work e.g. clearing paths, removing alien vegetation, bird counting, and facilitating awareness programmes for people of different ages.

### Other skills required

A love for the outdoors. A willingness to get your hands dirty and working in sometimes unpleasant weather conditions. For awareness camps and programmes you must love working with children and be able to work in a team.

## RONDERVLEI NATURE RESERVE

**Location:** Zeekoevlei

**Structure/facilities:** Nature reserve with a large vlei (lake) comprising of a very important wetland for birdlife. There are various flora and fauna in the nature reserve. Hippos are residents of this nature reserve and extensive array of birdlife.

**Staffing:** 6-8 staff members

**Working hours:** 8am-5pm

**Duties:** General duties at the reserve. Maintaining the nursery, planting seedlings, general administration, helping to assist with environment educational programmes for school groups and youth groups visiting the reserve.

**Transport:** Within walking distance

**Skill requirements:** Out door, nature lovers. Volunteers that don't mind getting hands dirty and spending time outdoors.

## ZANDVLEI NATURE RESERVE

**Location:** Close to the suburb of Sleenberg.

**Structure/facilities:** Zandvlei forms one of the rare Cape Flats wetlands, but in addition to this, it's the only estuarine reserve that remains. A haven for an especially rich diversity of plants, marine, birds and animal life.

**Staffing:** 5-6 staff

**Working hours:** 8am-5pm

**Duties:** Volunteer duties are focused in three main areas: Biodiversity, Education and Tourism.

**Transport:** Within walking distance

**Skill requirements:** Out door, nature lovers. Volunteers that don't mind getting hands dirty and spending time outdoors.

## ZEEKOEVLEI ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROJECT - Z.E.E.P

**Location:** Zeekoevlei

**Structure/facilities:** The Z.E.E.P Project is an environmental education project that runs on the premises on the banks of the vlei (lake). The project runs 3 day camps for youth of various backgrounds and schools. These camps incorporate out door activities and bush camps and environmental education for the youth

**Staffing:** 2-4 staff members

**Number of children:** Varying with groups, camp can host 30 people

**Age groups:** Varies – between 10/15 years

**Socio-economic status:** Children attending this camp are from lower to middle class families.

**Working hours:** 9am-5pm but depending on the camp. Volunteers may spend weekends on the campsite with the group.

**Duties:** The main duties on this camp will include school camp assistance, as ZEEP facilitates camps for primary school groups. Maintenance around the camp is also part of the duties for volunteers.

**Transport:** Transport provided.

**Skill requirements:** Love for children and the outdoors.  
Patience and initiative.

## SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

Open throughout the year but note that placements during December are limited as orphans are placed with foster parents. Things are generally also very quiet over the festive season.

Programmes are based in most local communities where SASTS host families are located.

### Structure and facilities

These vary depending on the location, resources available and level of trained staff at the project. Some projects are very well structured and well managed and others you will find lack infrastructure and resources. Most of these projects are funded through subsidies, donations and grants. In some instances fees participants contribute towards general overheads, transportation and facilities.

### Categories of placement in social welfare

Sports coaching at local schools  
Soccer camps

### Opening times

Monday to Friday 08:00 – 15:00 and 15:00 – 18:00 (this may vary depending on the specific activities planned)

### Volunteer duties

Basic sports coaching and fitness training. In some instances sports coaching involves informing about healthy lifestyle awareness programmes and teambuilding programmes.

### Other skills required

A love for sports and people. A willingness to help and to adapt to various programmes offered. Please find below an example of a programme that focuses on sports development in local communities:

## FUTURE FACTORY


**Location:** Various schools

**Structure/facilities:** Future factory is a sports development project that works with a number of disadvantaged schools in the southern suburbs of Cape Town.

**Staffing:** Depends on the school you are placed in.

**Number of learners:** Varies, usually about 15-30

**Age groups:** 6-14 years



**Socio-economic status:** The schools are all in coloured or black areas. These schools do not have very structured sports development programmes and Future factory come in to fill this gap.

**Working hours:** 8am-4pm

**Duties:** Assisting in sports coaching

**Transport:** Transport provided

**Skill requirements:** Keen interest in sport and love for children

## KONEK

**Location:** Ottery

**Structure/facilities:** Organised

**Staffing:** 6 teachers, 2 in each class

**Number of learners:** Varied

**Age groups:** 6-13 years, sometimes teens

**Socio-economic status:** Learners are from lower to middle class families and backgrounds.

**Working hours:** 10am-5pm, break between 1pm-2:30pm

**Duties:** Sports related activities, etc

**Transport:** Very close by

**Skill requirements:** Patience, creativity, initiative. A love for sports and children.

## HEALTH

Open throughout the year but note that placements during December are not as busy. Things are generally also very quiet over the festive season

Based in most local communities close to where SASTS host families are located.

### Structure and facilities

Most of the medical projects are understaffed and there is a lack of resources. This can be a very stressful and challenging environment to work in.

### Categories of placements in health related projects:

Local clinics

Public hospitals

Homes for mentally and physically challenged

Hospice centres for terminally ill HIV/AIDS patients

HIV/AIDS Awareness programmes

### Opening times

Monday to Friday 07:00 – 16:00 (local clinics) and 08:00 – 17:00 (hospitals)

### General overview and possible volunteer duties

Duties of volunteers will vary from day-to-day. Exposure to various specific tasks is very limited due to government regulations for volunteers in these types of placements. It is important that volunteers understand the local South African Health situation and the challenges that it's faced with. **Also very important is that these placements should not be seen or regarded as internship positions or an opportunity to gain experience or practical training in the medical field for the intention of intended further medical studies.** Volunteers need to be extremely open-minded and flexible in their approach to this type of placement. They must be willing to give any basic help needed. Initially it will take a while for them to get to know the staff and understand the limitations. The staff will assess the volunteers and they will be given more to do once they find their way around basic activities.

### Other skills required

Medical related experience or studies in this field. A love for people with health related problems. Patience and flexibility are very important.

## HOMES FOR PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY CHALLENGED

### SIVE NATHI HOME

**Location:** Blackheath

**Structure/facilities:** Sivenathi is a home for children with disabilities. 90% of these children suffer from cerebral palsy, but kids with HIV/AIDS are also accommodated.

**Staffing:** 17 full time staff, 8 part time

**Age groups:** 2/24 years (mental ages much younger)

**Socio-economic status:** The children of the home are orphaned or abandoned children. The caregivers are from very poor backgrounds.

**Working hours:** 7am-6pm

**Duties:** Jobs will be varied and include washing, feeding, nappy changing and dressing the children. Volunteer will also be expected to interact and assist with the children.

**Transport:** Transport provided

**Skill requirements:** Patience, dedication, hard work, resilience, and a genuine love for the handicapped.

## LOCAL CLINICS/DAY CARE MEDICAL CENTRES

### ELSIES RIVER CLINIC

**Location:** Elsie's River

**Structure/facilities:** The day hospital is a medical centre for the local people in the community. Day hospitals offer medical services free of charge for the underprivileged and emergency cases.

**Staffing:** Varying medical staff and nursing sisters

**Socio-economic status:** The community of Elsie's River consists of a variety of social classes ranging from informal settlements to lower and middle class communities. All these residences make use of the facilities of the day hospital. HIV/AIDS awareness is offered. Various training and life skill programmes have also been initiated.

**Working hours:** 7am-4pm

**Duties:** Assisting the nursing sisters with day patients. Jobs may vary from day to day and also depending on experience and qualifications.

**Transport:** Transport provided

**Skill requirements:** Preferably students with a medical background or a very keen interest in the medical field.

## HIV/AIDS AWARENESS

### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**Location:** Offices in Mitchells Plain

**Structure/facilities:** HIV/AIDS Awareness project. The offices are based in M/Plain. Volunteer would be taken to various schools and organizations during the placement.

**Staffing:** Volunteers will be working directly with David Stephens – project co-ordinator.

**Socio-economic status:** Project is very diverse and there is exposure to various areas, communities and organisations with a range of socio-economic backgrounds

**Working hours:** 8 hours/day (7am-14pm or 8am-5pm) including 1 hour lunch break.

**Duties:** Assisting and being part of training and workshop sessions within schools on various levels. Also general administration support will be required.

**Transport:** Transport will be provided

**Skill requirements:** Open minded and eager. Interested in various aspects, and also generally flexible to a varying schedule.

## WILDLIFE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Open throughout the year and based in the Eastern Cape Region (Kwantu) – **Please note these projects are currently suspended.**

Based 10 hours drive by bus from Cape Town. The Kwantu Game Reserve is situated in the Eastern Cape Region about 1 hours drive from Port Elizabeth. Volunteers work and live on the game reserve.

### Structure and facilities

Volunteers are placed in staff housing accommodation. There are two fully furnished staff houses (one for male staff members and male volunteers and the other for female staff members and female volunteers). Recreational activities are limited on the reserve. Kwantu will however arrange for weekend get-aways to the city every alternative weekend. **Kindly note that no alcohol consumption is allowed on the reserve.** The reserve has the BIG 5 and strict safety precautions and measures are kept on a daily basis.

### Times

Monday to Sunday 07:00 – 17:00 or as per the programme provided on arrival (this may vary depending on the specific activities planned) Weekend work is also required but volunteers will get two weekends off per month.

### Volunteer duties

Duties of volunteers will mostly be outdoors and will sometimes be under unpleasant weather conditions. Duties will include: tracking animals, removing alien vegetation, mending fences, animal counts, animal feeding, general visitor management, accompanying guides on game drives and clearing paths.

### Other skills required

A love for wildlife and the outdoors. A willingness to get your hands dirty and working in sometimes unpleasant weather conditions. Flexibility and willingness to learn and help where help is needed.

## USA

### COUNTRY INFORMATION

**Capital City:** Washington DC

**Population:** 305,468,000

**Languages:** English

**Religion:** Christianity

**Currency:** US Dollar

**Climate:** Extremely varied

**Highlights:** New York City, the Rocky Mountains, the Grand Canyon, Californian Beaches



The USA may be known for its sheer size, diversity and world power but it is the incredible natural beauty of the States that is often underestimated and overshadowed by its famous cities. With spectacular natural wonders like the Grand Canyon, Niagara Falls and the gorgeous old trees in Redwood National Park, there is a lot to be said for the American wilderness.

*Volunteer USA* gives you the opportunity to live and work in some of the most beautiful spots in America while playing a valuable role in maintaining and caring for these sites. Imagine camping in some of the most stunning national parks in the world (Yosemite, Grand Canyon) and waking up to unbelievable scenery. *Volunteer USA* offers inexpensive volunteering opportunities for participants eager to contribute 40 hours of determined effort each week in exchange for housing and food on projects. You will be based in either Flagstaff, Arizona or Santa Cruz, California, and will work in various available locations surrounding the two areas.

Volunteers work in teams of between 6 and 11 volunteers. The teams will normally work for periods of 4 days followed by 3 days off. Projects are rotated every 2 – 4 weeks to provide a variety of experiences. The work is **physically demanding**, normally in remote areas. Days are long (10 hours) sometimes in **extreme weather** conditions. However, the camaraderie and sense of achievement is immeasurable.

Project locations are remote and may involve a long hike - just to get to the base camp! However the volunteers will have the chance to work in some of the most magnificent parks of America.

## PROJECTS BASED OUT OF FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA

### Grand Canyon Trails (Arizona): All year, Every Year

With over 500 miles of trails subject to floods, landslides, and damage inflicted by mules, maintenance of the Grand Canyon Trails system is a constantly challenging effort. Over the past three years *Volunteer USA* crews have been a valuable resource to the Grand Canyon Trails crew, participating in a variety of trail reconstruction efforts both on the Rim and below the Rim. Throughout 2009 *Volunteer USA* crews are scheduled to install erosion control structures, replace walking tread, and construct retaining walls while hiking up to 17 miles to reach remote worksites. Expect difficult daily hikes and all the challenges associated with working in extreme weather conditions while enjoying the friendship and support of the National Park Service trail crew workers.

### Grand Canyon Planting (Arizona): May-October each year

The fragile high desert ecosystems of the Grand Canyon are especially vulnerable to the invasion of non-native plant species. With the constant impact of hundreds of thousands of tourists trampling native plants and carrying the seeds of dozens of species of weed, native ecosystems are in constant peril. Working alongside the Grand Canyon Revegetation team, *Volunteer USA* crews minimize the impact of stampeding tourists by collecting native seed, spreading mulch to prevent weeds from germinating, planting and transplanting native species, constructing wooden fences to protect newly planted areas, surveying and pulling weeds, and caring for the native plant nursery. Work can be as simple as walking along the rim collecting grass seed or as demanding as operating jackhammers to drill fence post holes into solid Grand Canyon limestone.

### White Mountains Apache Trout Restoration (Eastern Arizona): July-October each year

All of the fish native to the state of Arizona are endangered, with many on the brink of extinction. The introduction of exotic sport fish such as the Brown and Rainbow Trout has jeopardized the survival of native species that cannot compete for habitat. The Apache Trout is endemic to only 13 small streams and rivers in the remote mountains of Eastern Arizona. *Volunteer USA* will partner with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department, National Forest Service and with conservationists from Trout Unlimited to preserve habitat by building creek barriers to prevent exotic species from migrating upstream and thus competing with the native Apache. Volunteers will participate in a

variety of projects associated with this restoration effort, including hauling endless loads of rock for use in the barriers, surveying creek habitat to count frogs and insects, setting up water temperature monitoring stations, and taking fin samples for genetic testing. While much of the tasks will be physically and mentally exhausting as well as repetitive, volunteers will gain the satisfaction of contributing directly to the effort to prevent one of the rarest fish species in the world from disappearing into extinction.

### Prescott National Forest Trails: (Arizona): March - October

The Prescott National Forest maintains dozens of miles of multi-use trail in ecosystems ranging from pinyon and juniper forests to high elevation ponderosa pine and mixed conifer in the mountains. *Volunteer USA* will partner with the US Forest Service in to accomplish preventative maintenance such as removal of encroaching brush and basic erosion control in a variety of locations and trails within the system. This project will provide an excellent overview of trail maintenance techniques common to Arizona public land management agencies while introducing *Volunteer USA* participants to more beautiful forested scenery in central Arizona.

### Lake Mead National Recreation Area (Nevada): January-May

The Desert Tortoise is native to the Mojave Desert surrounding Las Vegas, Nevada, the fastest growing city in the United States over the last 10 years. Urbanization brings intense pressures on the fragile habitat of the Desert Tortoise, as off high vehicle activities, collection by humans, vandalism, and predation by ravens has conspired to endanger the survival of this officially threatened species. *Volunteer USA* crews partner with restoration biologists from Lake Mead National Recreation Area in an effort to close and replant illegal roads, preventing jeeps and all terrain vehicles from rampaging through fragile tortoise habitat. The project will involve transplanting native desert plants and constructing fences to block access to critical habitat. As is true with many *Volunteer USA* projects, the task will demand patience and a positive attitude, while affording the opportunity to contribute to the protection of a threatened species in a uniquely beautiful desert environment. Volunteers should be prepared to camp in temperatures at or just below the freezing point in order to take part in this winter project



### **Gila National Forest Trails (New Mexico): July-September**

The Gila National Forest has spectacular scenery ranging from high cool mountains with aspen and douglas fir to warm semi-arid lowlands with juniper, oak and cactus. It is one of the more remote and least developed National Forests in the southwest. Covering 3.3 million acres of publicly owned forest and range land, the Forest is the sixth largest National Forest in the continental United States. The Forest is also home to the first designated Wilderness area in the United States. For the past three years and continuing in 2009, our crews have partnered US Forest Service professionals reconstructing trails damaged by fire and/or years of neglect. The project will take place in a remote section of the Gila, requiring a difficult 12 mile hike to reach base camp. Expect cold nighttime conditions, spectacular scenery, and limitless opportunity to challenge yourself in a truly isolated environment. In many senses, Gila Trails may be *Volunteer USA's* most demanding and most appreciated projects, with hikes of up to 35 KM to the project site. Gila projects are intended for those endowed with a sense of adventure, a spirit of determination, and strong set of legs and lungs!

### **Bryce Canyon National Park Trails (Utah): May-October**

The surreal forest of rock towers for which Bryce is famous were created by a combination of highly erosive rock and extreme weather conditions. Located at nearly 3,000 meters in elevation, Bryce receives heavy winter snowfall and dramatic summer monsoon rains, both of which result in a rapidly eroding hiking trail system. With limited staffing, Bryce Canyon National Park calls upon *Volunteer USA* crews to rebuild and stabilize trails throughout their entire backcountry system. *Volunteer USA's* project partner ACE has been asked to design a trails maintenance plan for the Park, which our crews will implement. Projects almost always involve long, strenuous hikes into steep canyons.

### **Bryce Canyon Revegetation (Utah): June – October**

Just as the unique soils of Bryce erode to create spectacular rock spires, so also does the ecosystem of Bryce support a large number of endemic plants, or plants that exist only in the immediate area surrounding the National Park. *Volunteer USA* crews play a large role in protecting those plants by pulling the competing weeds and replanting native species.

### **Arches National Park Trails (Utah): Year-Round**

As its name suggests, Arches is known for soaring red rock arches as well as the sweeping red sandstone high desert landscape. Over the past year, *Volunteer USA* crews have enhanced visitor safety by using natural rock to create stable staircases that will endure both sudden summer rainstorms and the pounding of thousands of tourist feet. *Volunteer USA* crews are projected to continue stabilizing the trails at Arches National Park in a series of projects requiring a high level of skill in dry stone masonry. Projects take place throughout the spring, summer and fall months and almost always involves much exertion in temperatures ranging from cold and windy to hot and sunny. *Volunteer USA* corps members pause between the difficult tasks to take in the soaring scenery of one of America's hidden treasures.

### **Canyonlands National Park (Utah): Year Round**

Before the Colorado River descends into the depths of the Grand Canyon, it enters Utah in a dramatic maze of canyons encompassed in Canyonlands National Park. Much larger than nearby Arches N.P. Canyonlands consists of dozens of miles of backcountry trails crossing hundreds of small, steep drainages. For the past two years, *Volunteer USA* crews have been called upon to construct complex rock structures to provide safe hiking passage across the network of red rock canyons. Trail projects at Canyonlands almost always involves hiking long distances across very rough terrain carrying up to 40 pounds of food, water, tools and camping gear. It also involves camping in some of the most unique and inspiring landscapes in the United States.

### **St. George Area Trails (Utah): January - April**

Located near St. George, Utah, the gateway to Zion National Park, the Santa Clara River Reserve offers spectacular views of an arid, untouched landscape and contains a lush riparian zone along the Santa Clara River where visitors enjoy shade and cooler temperatures, even in summer. Other valleys and washes in the reserve support wondrous desert microclimates. In the summer of 2006 *Volunteer USA* crews constructed the first mountain biking trails within the reserve. Designed to provide local inhabitants with access to the natural beauty surrounding their rapidly growing city, the river reserve represents a little known but truly beautiful opportunity to explore classic Utah desert.



## PROJECTS BASED OUT OF SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA

The Californian projects will focus on Yosemite (pronounced Yoh-sem-mitty) National Park re-vegetation and trails projects while offering a variety of opportunities in parks in spectacular settings throughout California.

### Yosemite Revegetation

Yosemite offers challenging and diverse revegetation projects, including cutting down encroaching lodgepole pine trees with hand saws, building fences, planting trees, spreading mulch, cutting blackberry bushes and of course planting vegetation. Yosemite Trails is one of the premier trails programs in the USA. Yosemite crews are famous for their skills in rockwork. Expect production oriented projects in breathtaking front and backcountry environments. Spend up to six weeks camping in remote high elevation mountain environments.

### King's Canyon/Sequoia National Park

Home to the world's largest trees growing in lush forests in the soaring Sierra Nevada Mountains, Sequoia N.P.'s unique habitat is threatened by invasion from exotic species. *Volunteer USA* crews will help eliminate one such species, reed canary grass by running mowers and weed eaters, and laying black fabric down and anchoring it with blanket pins.

### California State Parks

*Volunteer USA* is currently organising both Revegetation and Trails projects in many of Central California's most beautiful state parks. 12 state parks in coastal preserves and Redwood covered mountains offer a wide range of restoration activities in a variety of climates within two hours of Santa Cruz.