

# ProjectsAbroad

The Official Newsletter of Projects Abroad **Bolivia**



## Editor's Letter



Carmen Herbas  
Country Director

Hi all,

Welcome to the March edition of our Newsletter for Projects Abroad Bolivia. This newsletter aims to inform all our volunteers with news and information about the latest happenings in Projects Abroad Bolivia, and the country in general.

We encourage everyone to join us in making it interesting and exciting by sending in your own written articles and pictures of your experiences here with us. Your stories and pictures will help others to understand and learn about Bolivia.

Feel free to join us in our Facebook group so we can be in touch, before, during and after your trip to Bolivia!.

If you have anything you'd like to contribute, suggest, or comment on, please contact: [bolivia@projects-abroad.org](mailto:bolivia@projects-abroad.org)

Best wishes from Bolivia!

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# Bolivia: a volunteering option for music lovers

Simone Batelaan  
Journalism, Netherlands

Projects Abroad Bolivia offers a variety of programs and projects and one of these is the music program. It is perfect for music lovers, as it gives volunteers the opportunity to work alongside trained music teachers in different institutions around town.

The music project in Ciudadela SEDEGES Orphanage, for example, was created by Projects Abroad to give volunteers the chance to interact with children from difficult backgrounds within the frames of musical teaching. This project not only helps the children to learn new skills and discover new abilities; it also often works as a form of therapy.

As said, many of the children have had terrible experiences and come from difficult backgrounds. Due to this, they can become frustrated and depressed which might develop into behavioral problems in the future. Music often allows these children to replace negative thinking with a more positive attitude. By learning a new skill they gain self-confidence and build self-esteem.

A perfect place for this kind of therapy is Bolivia, as it is well known for its rich musical culture. Bolivian folk music has helped to form the culture and history of the country. It is important that children carry on this tradition and learn more about the unique country they live in.

For the past three years, the Ciudadela SEDEGES Orphanage has also started to provide more familiar instruments that are used throughout the world such as drums, tambourines and guitars; so that the children can learn how to play instruments that are common all over the world, not only traditional Bolivian instruments (thanks to a generous donations of other volunteers).





Lea Tischer (from Germany) is one of the volunteers who is working on this project three times a week. She is a singer herself and also masters the guitar, drums, piano, flute and trumpet - a real musician! During her time here she also wanted to learn how to play traditional Bolivian instruments so she can add even more to her repertoire; such as the 'zampoña' and the 'charango'.

She explains: "We work with children between the ages of 6 to 18 years old. We try, with patience, to impart to them some knowledge about music. If we have a singing class we start with the lyrics. We try to just pronounce the lyrics with slowly saying the (English) words. Then we hum the melody and finally we try to get it all together."

Since Lea is capable of playing a lot of instruments she also teaches them how to play the drums, the electric guitar and the transverse flute. Vice versa the children and the teacher from the project teach her how to play the traditional musical instruments from Bolivia.

As Lea tells: "For me, it is amazing to not only teach them the modern instruments but that they, the children and teacher, also give you the opportunity to learn something from them, it is very special. I even got so enthusiastic about the zampoña, the Andean pan flute, that I went to La Cancha (a market here in Cochabamba where you can buy absolutely everything) and bought one."

Finally, to me it appears as a very interesting and enriching project. The culture, the happiness, and the satisfaction you get from it. If I wasn't already doing the journalism project I would know at which project I would want to volunteer!



## Projects Updates

## Harry Williams Hospital: Workshop on Dental Health

Mariel Torrez  
Desk Officer, Bolivia

Harry Williams Hospital is a medical placement of ours that has an outreach program that seeks to promote healthy practices in different communities on the outskirts of Cochabamba. The volunteers that work at this placement have the opportunity to visit these places through the mobile clinic, a medical bus equipped with basic equipment, and participate in workshops on different matters that are relevant for the communities, from food security to family planning.

Last week, for example, Harry Williams organized a series of workshops on dental health whose purpose was to explain to mothers and children the importance of a proper tooth brushing and fluoridation. Our volunteers, Frederikke Nissen from Denmark and Anja Fjose from Norway, helped to carry on the activity despite the heavy rain that day at the Tiquirani community.

They spent the afternoon showing mothers and children how to brush their teeth on a dental model and later helped each of them to do it properly. Once everybody accomplished a happy and "clean" smile, Frederikke and Anja helped to put fluoride on those fresh teeth. Well done ladies!





## Projects Updates

## Equine Therapy

Mariel Torrez  
Desk Officer, Bolivia

If you have been reading our last newsletters, you must have realized that we're really fond of our Equine Therapy Project and we're always trying to find new ways to contribute towards this one as it offers this sort of therapy to special needs children in town, that do not have resources to afford any other treatment, for free.

So we head up back to the centre with all our volunteers in destination to finish the painting work that was pending from the last time we went as this one had to be interrupted due to the start of the rainy season.

It's enough to say that we managed to complete all the work and spend some time with the horses. All in all it was a fun afternoon!





## Photos of the month



"You have not lived today until you  
have done something for someone  
who can never repay you."  
-John Bunyan



## *Credits*

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Thank you to everyone who has helped bring about this month's issue of the Official Newsletter of Projects Abroad Bolivia. If you would like to contribute your experiences, stories, photos or anything else to the next edition then please send them to:  
[bolivia@projects-abroad.org](mailto:bolivia@projects-abroad.org)

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