



The Official Newsletter of Projects Abroad Jamaica

January 2013 Issue No. 50



TABLE OF CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE TEAM	3
MEET AUSTRALIAN VOLUNTEER ROBERT DIVOLA	4
CARE PROJECT UPDATE	5
JOURNALISM PROJECT UPDATE	6
CULTURE & COMMUNITY PROJECT UPDATE	7
DONATIONS	7
SOCIAL EVENTS	8
THE PEOPLE WHO CAME	10
WHAT IS ON THE CALENDAR	11
SOCIAL MEDIA CONTACTS	12
STAFF CONTACT DETAILS	12
PROJECTS ABROAD JAMAICA CONTACT DETAILS	12

Message from the Team

December was truly a memorable month. There were so many activities and the spirit of giving was definitely in the air.

Team Jamaica would like to acknowledge, with thanks, the hard work of the volunteers who worked throughout the festive season. We acknowledge too, the sacrifices made of family and friends and being away from the familiar celebrations of your home countries, to volunteer with us in Jamaica.

December was a very active month for all involved, including our partners, stakeholders, staff and volunteers. We look forward to increased numbers of volunteers for the month of January and cannot wait to welcome the various nationalities to our shores.

We embrace the New Year and look forward to the coming challenges that it will bring. We also embrace the new volunteers that will be arriving this month and wish them all the best with their relevant placements.

Each experience had in Jamaica is truly a treasure; from work, to activities, to travelling around island. We guarantee that you will never have another experience like the one you will have here, any of our previous volunteers would agree. Remember, “Nothing ventured, nothing gained,” –Benjamin Franklin. Each staff member is ready and geared up to receive the new volunteers, the hard work that goes into organizing placements, host families and various activities is worthwhile when we see the happy faces of you, our volunteers, and the beneficiaries of your hard work.

With that said we are excited and ready for this New Year. Let us start it with a bang and remember the reasons why we do the work of volunteering and keep with the spirit of giving. Let us have a remarkable January built on communication, support and hard work.

Jamaica is calling, remember... Once you go, you know.

Regards,

Team Jamaica

(Bridgette B. Barrett- Country Director, Cherricha Jacobs- Assistant Country Director & Desk Officer, Sean Baugh- Information Manager, Collette Kerr- Project Officer (Teaching & Medicine), Stacy- Ann Barrett- (Office Assistant & Project Officer (Culture & Community), Patrina Thomas-Morrison- Project Officer (Care), Sanikia Morgan- Volunteer Liaison Officer)

JOURNALISM FOR YOUTH EXPOSURE AND DEVELOPMENT



(Journalism volunteer Robert Divola in studio)

“I became a journalist because I did not want to rely on newspapers for information.” - Christopher Hitchens

Australian volunteer Robert Divola has been interested in Radio Broadcasting and Journalism and wanting to have a hand in creating his own news for years.

So far, while being placed at the Northern Caribbean University (NCU) Media Group in Mandeville, Jamaica; Robert’s day is typically quite busy with outdoor broadcasts, recording news, editing scripts, doing phone interviews and much more.

For Robert, upon arrival at his very first day of work he was told to put his things together as he was going to an outdoor broadcast in Old Harbour, Jamaica. He then went on to do more outdoor broadcasts at the Mt. St. Joseph Primary School, Glenmuir High School, and in Trelawny (Out of Many). For Robert, his most rewarding experiences came from the outdoor broadcasts.

“While at a school I just love to see kids get excited about radio and getting them involved in showcasing their talents in poetry, singing and voiceovers within a high school setting,” he says.

Robert claims, “I wanted to do an internship initially but then figured why not volunteer and gain some experience that way. So I searched online and found Projects Abroad and noted they had a Journalism project at their destination in Jamaica.”

“I totally recommend the Journalism project in Jamaica, NCU has a great set up and life outside the placement is amazing,” he says as he relates what he would tell other folks back home who are interested in Journalism and would want to volunteer with Projects Abroad.

In his free time Robert enjoys what he calls, “mini vacations,” going to the beach regularly on the weekends as well as traveling to various parts of the island. During the week he is most likely to be seen having a drink or two or shooting some pool with his fellow volunteers.

"I wanted to volunteer with Projects Abroad because it was the most established organization out there. When I sent my first email I got a really helpful response and the staff was quite informative, I knew for sure that I would be comfortable here.

Care Project Update



(Marianne Van Rijn Painting the playground at the Hill Crest Day Care Centre)

Currently there are six (6) volunteers on the Care project. Five of which, are volunteering at day care centers and one at a children's home. The Hill Crest Day Care Centre had a major fundraiser which was partly funded by departed volunteer Marianne Van Rijn. Marianne, as you may have noticed from the previous newsletter, has made generous donations to the Hillcrest Day Care Centre; from painting supplies to painting the swing set and playground at the day care.

Recently departed Care volunteer Alice Payne had a wonderful Christmas treat at New Hope with the Children. Alice too had made numerous donations in food, supplies and money to go along with her newly implemented 'Fruit Day' at New Hope Children's Home. Alice, along with her grandparents, made generous donations that will be of benefit to New Hope for months to come.

The Care Project Officer is currently taking steps to expand the Care Project in Jamaica, by sourcing additional partnerships with new placements in order to provide much more

We hope great stories like these inspires others to help Projects Abroad continue to make a difference, and by doing so, learn something themselves along the way.

diverse project offerings. Details will be provided in the coming newsletter.

So far we have a diverse array of Care projects in both Mandeville and Montego Bay; however there is a continued need to diversify so as to fill the needs of numerous volunteers that may have varying interests or reasons for volunteering with us.

During this month, Mathias Wiegell of Germany attended a cultural school trip to the Outameni Experience in Trelawny with the children of his placement, 'The Children's Place.' This outing occurred on December 14th, 2012.

Project meetings were held every Thursday at 2pm. December 6, 2012 reflected 'Care Across Borders' which aimed at highlighting cultural differences between volunteers' cultures and Jamaican culture. December 13, 2012 spoke about 'Child Control' helping volunteers to identify strategies that could be used to obtain and maintain class and nursery control. December 20, 2012 was all about 'Understanding Feelings' which was geared towards helping volunteers to build positive self esteem in the children they work with.



(Mathias with a youngster at The Children's Place)

Journalism Project Update



The month of December saw the continuation of the Journalism project with three volunteers. The volunteers got a fully rounded experience while at Northern Caribbean University (NCU) Media and our services continue to grow.

We had mentioned the commencement of the Voices of the World Project which will be with the Manchester High School in Mandeville. With the start of this project during the second week in January we look forward to encouraging more volunteers to the Journalism Project here in Jamaica. The project not only involves practical experience at both a radio and television station attached to a prominent University in Mandeville but will now include weekly visits to a high school to encourage cultural exchange, the exchange of ideas and writing and journalism tips, but also the interaction from the worthwhile activity of imparting knowledge to younger students who may have an interest in journalism or a related field.

We are looking to create more exciting workshops for volunteers that will not only be interactive but ensure that we are not keeping volunteers in an office. With Journalism there is a lot of travel involved and going out of one's

way to get a story. We are implementing new workshops that will enable volunteers to take advantage of events and occurrences within the town of Mandeville to enhance their journalism experience.

This initiative will see the use of opportune occurrences, including but not limited to, natural disasters, as well as a possible liaison with reporters in the town of Mandeville. This will ensure that volunteers in the Journalism Project get maximum exposure to Jamaica and the field.

We are looking forward to your support and cooperation within the New Year. Who knows, maybe you will be volunteering with us.



(Saskia Bleher in studio at the NCU Media Group where she volunteered in Journalism)

Culture & Community Project Update



(Franziska in Portland on the building project)

The month of December revolved around the continuation of the Windsor Primary School project.

So far, for the building project there will be further construction of the bathrooms at the Windsor Primary School which was using pit latrines that were already in bad shape. For the coming month of January it is highly likely that building projects will take our volunteers out of the parish, as there has been a lot of work identified mostly in the parish of St. Elizabeth.



(Casper looking on at the work they have started to replace the pit latrine in the background)

Donations

Within the month of December, quite a few of the new volunteers who came to work on our projects did not come empty handed. They brought with them several gifts/ donations for their various placements. The items received were as follows:

Laura Fuss:

- 5 skipping ropes for the Villa Road Primary School
- 5 toy cars, pens and paper to the New Hope Children's Home

To these volunteers Projects Abroad Jamaica says a big Jamaican Tenky – thank you.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Patois and Culture Class

Patois and Culture Class was held on Tuesday December 11th at the Projects Abroad Offices.

The class began with an activity - Chinese telephone. Volunteers were asked to stand in a large circle, then a staff member whispered to the volunteer beside him/her, a phrase in Patois and it in turn was whispered to the next and so forth. This activity was bound to be interesting because we know Patois isn't always easy to understand, let alone repeat and pass through so many mouths with various accents. The activity brought home the fact that due to the various language barriers some volunteers found it easier or harder to pronounce or understand Patois while listening. The activity worked as an icebreaker, by laughing at the end result we had become comfortable and this set the scene for the activities to follow.

We used our very own version of the Hangman game to learn how to spell popular words and phrases in Patois. Our volunteers had to attempt to spell words in patois and for each incorrect letter a new part of the hangman was drawn until he was fully hanged or we started over if they got the correct spelling. The 3rd and final part of the class revolved around Jamaican culture. Our volunteers watched a short video of Rastafarians performing dub poetry. Volunteers were educated about dub poetry and how it was used in Jamaica. The perfect example was a poem entitled "Who a di owna fi di oil." This poem spoke of the political violence over oil in the Middle East and combined the serious nature with sexual overtones and mild jokes wrapped up in the language being used, Patois.

Reggae Dance Class

Reggae Dance class was held on December 4th, 2012.

Reggae Dance Class featured new dances like "Box of Money" and went on to have a small

dance off between PRO volunteer Fiona Miesel and dance teacher Alex Williams. This dance class got everyone involved, including staff.



(Dance teacher Alex Williams shows off a thing or two)

The class featured volunteers learning five dance moves that were made into a routine followed by the dance-off and a free style session.

Dirty Day



(Sports volunteer Carolin Cloes lifting bricks for use at Dirty Day)

Dirty Day was held on Friday, December 14th, 2012.

Bill is an elderly gentleman who currently lives in deplorable conditions, his current abode is a zinc shack with no flooring, no windows and is only one small room. The ceiling of this shack is infested by wasps. Bill also suffers from asthma and as such finds it difficult to walk long distances or complete simple tasks. The

cost of his asthma pumps, of which he goes through several weekly, is already much more than he can afford. When Bill came to our attention, Projects Abroad Jamaica knew we had a new project to complete; Bill's very own house.

On Friday morning we journeyed to Morningside, St. Elizabeth to the site of an elderly man, Bill. Our volunteers were set to work right away; this occasion did not require different teams as there was one main focus in mind, to complete the foundations.

Our volunteers carried cement, blocks and aided in mixing which amounted to another physically demanding Dirty Day activity. Our teams were instrumental in ensuring that we completed the entire foundation for Bill's new house. Thanks Team Jamaica. We made it happen.

Cake and Sorrel Day

Friday, December 21st, 2012 Projects Abroad Jamaica hosted a cake and sorrel day for all our partners, stakeholders and volunteers. The day featured various Jamaican foods including, Jerked Chicken, Festival and Bammy, Ackee and Salt fish, curried goat and of course delectable fruit cake, what we call Christmas cake with freshly made sorrel. The day was well received and well attended by our partners and stakeholders. We saw many of our host families come out to show support. It was the perfect start to the Christmas and set everyone along that mood.



(Patrina serving Jamaican food to volunteers at our Cake and Sorrel Day)



(Cake and Sorrel Day almost ready to start)



(Sanikia getting ready for our volunteers and partners/ stakeholders)



(Volunteers relaxing as more of our Partners arrive)

What is on the Calendar?

Upcoming Projects Abroad Social Events January 2013

- Reggae Dance Class - during this class volunteers will be taught the latest reggae dance moves that are sure to wow patrons at any party, club or social gathering. Tuesday, January 15th, 2013.
- Patois & Culture Class - you have not been to Jamaica until you have spoken Patois and of course our volunteers must get the full and complete experience of Jamaican life, so we must teach Patois; and of course it is crucial that they learn about Jamaican culture. Tuesday, January 8th, 2013.
- Cultural Fashion Show- Show off your very own interpretation of Jamaican fashion and give us a taste of fashion from your home countries as well. Work the runway in a series doubling as both Jamaican and foreign models. Tuesday, January 22nd, 2013
- Dirty Day - Dirty Day January 18th, 2013 will see staff and volunteers alike, working hard to finish construction of a house for an elderly gentleman known to many simply by the name of Bill.

Upcoming Events for Jamaica January 2013

- Western Kite Festival(January 1, 2013)

Be amazed at the various kites that will soar at the Manning's High School in Savannah- La-Mar, Westmorland. There will be music and other forms of entertainment. This event starts at 10 AM. Basic admission; Adults \$1,000 presold & \$1,200 at the gate, Children \$300. Event will feature a kids' corner with bounce about, merry go round and more. Prizes include money for the biggest Kite, smallest kite and prettiest kite.

For more information, visit:

<http://allevents.in/Jamaica/WESTERN-KITE-FESTIVAL/411395235600036#>

- South Coast Carnival 2013 (January 10,2013)

The South Coast Carnival's 10th anniversary, come revel in the madness.

For more information, visit:

<http://allevents.in/Jamaica/SCC-2013/341197719274102>

- JAMAICAAA ... Mana Power Yoga Fitness Vacation (January 17, 2013)

Mana Power Yoga goes to JAMAICA this winter! January 17th-21st we will be jammin', yoga-in', and workin it out at Jake's Hotel, Villa and Spa.

Come and be a guest at a Yoga Fitness Vacation where you can relax, enjoy workouts and practice yoga at this peaceful Caribbean escape...

For more information, visit:

<http://www.manapoweryoga.com/JAMAICA.html>

- Rebel Salute (January 18,2013)

After 19 successful years in Manchester and St Elizabeth, reggae singjay Tony Rebel's annual birthday bash, Rebel Salute, has found a new home.

For more information, visit:

<http://rebelsaluteprod.com/>

Social Media Contacts

Social Media is the current trailblazer for interactive, instant and irie information. Projects Abroad Jamaica is certainly trendy and has logged on to the latest social media offerings get your slice of the pie or perhaps we should say pudding.

Facebook - Offers the unique opportunity to know what is happening in Jamaica and with our volunteers during any day. Our Facebook page is full of photos, daily/ weekly updates, our calendar of monthly events and comments from our adventurous volunteers. Here is our link, don't forget to check us out...

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/projectsabroad.jamaica/> join the official group.

Mytripblog- There is no time like the present to start blogging, and so in order to keep you connected to our many adventures and volunteer stories we have been blogging just for you. Check out Jamaica here...

<http://www.mytripblog.org/pg/groups/266/jamaica/>

Twitter- Get real time updates on what is happening in destination Jamaica right now.

Follow us on twitter we are sure you will love our tweets; https://twitter.com/Proj_AbroadJM

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If you would like to contribute an article to this newsletter please email it to seanbaugh@projects-abroad.org by the 23rd of the month so they can be vetted and included.

One Love.

THIS MONTH IN PICTURES

