



JAMAICA

Nuff Respect!

Projects Abroad

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## **Message from the Team**

The month of February was indeed an exciting one for us all at Projects Abroad Jamaica. A total of 46 volunteers came from Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, UK, Denmark, USA, Belgium, France, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Australia and Norway. They worked in nine different project areas. These include Medicine, Care, Teaching, Community Literacy Project, Music, Sports, Building, Farming, and Journalism.

We acknowledge all our hardworking volunteers who have recently departed and we are grateful for the contributions they have made to their respective projects. Of course we must express appreciation to the volunteers who are currently in Jamaica, continuously supporting their placements and working hard to enhance the lives of the young and the old, the sick and the healthy and the weak and strong.

We were granted the opportunity to raise money for our Immunitative project via a benefit performance of the play 'Courthouse Drama'. We were kept busy with preparations regarding the coordination of the event and selling tickets. The date was set for March 17. Thanks to everyone who participated and supported the event and by so doing supported Immunitative.

February was a special month for Jamaica as we celebrated Black History Month Island wide. Projects Abroad Jamaica is committed to ensuring volunteers are socially aware of events such as these that have a strong impact on our work and activities during the period. We also celebrated Bob Marley's Birthday, Big up to a true Jamaican legend. Additionally February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2013 was the international celebration of Jamaica Day under the theme, 'get on it'. Jamaica day is most recognized in schools and forms a unique way within which Jamaican culture is celebrated and enjoyed for what it truly is. Bob Marley's birthday and Jamaica day were two special events that occurred during the month of February that would have left a lasting impression on Projects Abroad Jamaica volunteers.

Team Jamaica is waiting for you...

Regards,

Team Jamaica

(Bridgette B. Barrett- Country Director, Cherricha Jacobs- Assistant Country Director & Desk Officer, , 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, Pettia Williams- Volunteer Coordinator,)

**British high school graduate, Simon Eastwell makes a difference  
through music while volunteering in Jamaica.**

Eighteen-year-old Simon Eastwell, a recent graduate from Queen Elizabeth High School in Hexam in the UK, wanted to use his love for music to help others and gain some experience in teaching. Simon travelled to Jamaica to volunteer on the Music Project at the Villa Road Primary School in Mandeville.



***Simon Eastwell teaching children to play the drum***

He started his first class just observing the teacher and getting a feel for what music class in Jamaica entails. “I started off observing a lesson, and then I was getting involved, helping the teacher in delivering her lessons. I then began to write my own lesson plans that I would use to teach the children.” said Simon.

A typical day for Simon involved teaching, alongside fellow volunteer Sarah from Australia, up to 4 classes per day. Imparting his musical knowledge - to young children who were sure to benefit from an education in music

had been a passion of his for some time. Teaching children aged 6 – 11, Simon describes a typical lesson: “We do more singing and voice exercises with the younger children. Teaching them songs mostly, it’s all practical, we have them

use drums, triangles and tambourines. For the older children we do a bit of the same but we include some music theory in their lessons.”

It was Jamaica’s rich musical history that inspired Simon to volunteer in Jamaica: “The musical culture and history of the island just seemed so right for this kind of project. I had always wanted to explore the island and wanted to be able to give something back. It is true that as a volunteer you get to see a different side of Jamaica as an island, a home that you would not be able to experience or have any idea of as a tourist.”

Simon enjoyed being part of the experience helping children to learn, that moment when a child has learnt something new can be an inspirational moment for many. “In lessons when you are teaching and the children don’t quite grasp what you’re saying, you take time out to go over it in greater detail or even one on one, to experience that moment in which they have grasped what you are teaching is truly rewarding, and not just from a teacher’s perspective, but overall I think. It makes everything about why I am here absolutely worthwhile.”

Simon has this piece of advice for prospective volunteers who are skilled in music and would like to volunteer on this specific project: “Overall there is a major difference in class sizes in Jamaica as opposed to back home. Be prepared for larger class sizes and be prepared to keep things going and interesting so you don’t lose their focus. I think more volunteers should come and do music at schools across Jamaica, they need this opportunity and the experience is one of a kind.”

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.

### **Care Project Update**

The Care project had 19 volunteers during the month of February with 12 new arrivals during the month. Currently our active care placements are The New Hope Children’s Home, The Children’s Place, Hillcrest Day Care Centre and Preparatory School, The Learning Centre, The Manchester Infirmary, The Child development Agency (CDA), The Care Centre, The Learning Centre, Small Wonders Day care, Millennium

Kid’s and the Institute of Arts and Culture.



***Anna Hillstrom playing with children at The Children’s Place***

The Broken Wing’s project which commenced on January 17, 2013 had its continuation on February 27, 2013 during the time allotted for project meetings. Again Projects Abroad Jamaica Care volunteers made their way to the Mandeville Regional Hospital to provide much needed and appreciated support to children on the ward by reading to them, playing with them, drawing and being attentive. We know the children on the ward at the hospital are eternally grateful for the work being done by care volunteers. These children may

be ill and or have done surgery or have broken bones, but the genuine smiles prove how worthwhile these activities are and how much it means to a child who is sick and cannot have a parent around all the time due to visiting hours and the fact that their parents work. Volunteers fill the gap and re-instill happiness to children who need it.

Care project meetings during the month of February focused on two main topics. On February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013, care volunteers were trained to administer first aid to infants and the elderly whom they work with by Registered Nurse, Pro volunteer Delphine who facilitated this project meeting and imparted her knowledge to her fellow volunteers. On February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013 the project meeting focused on Personal Development. The rationale behind this was to help volunteers identify their strengths and weaknesses in order to build their capacities to enhance the work they do at their placements and improve the placement’s operational outputs in general.

The Project Officer for the Care Project was delighted to continue the legacy of the volunteers who implemented a nutrition programme at the Bethabara Primary and Junior High School. With donations from Projects Abroad a total of 118 children across grades 3, 4 and 5 were served breakfast on the morning of February 27, 2013. The children received Milo tea with bread and callaloo and salt fish and orange and banana. The dedicated staff of the school's canteen and the humility and kindness of the bursar to help Projects Abroad with breakfast preparation is much appreciated.



***Christina Hanenberg dresses a resident at the Manchester Infirmary***

The Care volunteers were not quite done yet for February as Poppy Bogle and Merel Duit engaged in an outreach Project in a rural community in South Manchester on February 26, 2013 . The duo trekked the 30 minute journey to meet 6 foster children who were either orphans, had terminally ill parents or had abuse or anger management issues. In addition to these interpersonal challenges all children needed help with home work and academic guidance as their performances in school were very poor. The objective of this first visit was to establish rapport and get to know the children so that trust can be built for the

coaching and counselling sessions to come. The general goal of this activity is to help children find themselves, enhance their self-esteem and help them to improve their academic performance. Volunteers enjoyed their visit and the children wanted the volunteers to live with them for the duration of their stay in Jamaica.

After leaving the foster home, the volunteers made their way to the dilapidated home of a single mother of two sets of twins, twin girls 11 years old and twin boys 14 years old. The children's physical features were as diverse as their needs, with the older of each twin much smaller than the younger. The children appeared shy initially but then warmed up to the volunteers as soon as wide smiles and encouraging words captivated them. The single mother who is unemployed struggles to find food daily, keep the children comfortable and safe in a house that is slowly collapsing on them. The children's academic performance is poor and has deteriorated as much as their discipline since their father left the home two years ago. The volunteers will function as mentors for the children and help them with their home work, talk to them about career planning and self-esteem issues. The volunteers will also seek to enhance the mother's employability and parental control by teaching her basic subjects and coaching her on appropriate child rearing and discipline strategies.

We look forward to the continuation of these amazing stories and the transformation of many lives in the process including those of our caring and self-less volunteers.



## Culture & Community Project Update

### Building Project Update

Do you have the skills to design an original yet antiquarian building? I bet this sounds impossible to you. This is the challenge that our building volunteer Joe Martin from the UK has on his hands. Joe is a professional engineer working in Black River, St. Elizabeth with the Roads and Works department of the Parish Council. He is entrusted with the task to design a library and a park to be erected on a vacant land close to the sea on High Street. The library and surrounding landscaped park should possess aesthetics that boast a continuum of style, texture, scale and material that is authentic to the rich architectural heritage of the first city in the world to beam with electricity. In addition to conducting extensive research to ensure he follows appropriate local protocols, he visits various construction sites with local engineers and assists with oversight and consultation tasks.



*House being constructed for Bill by Building Volunteers*

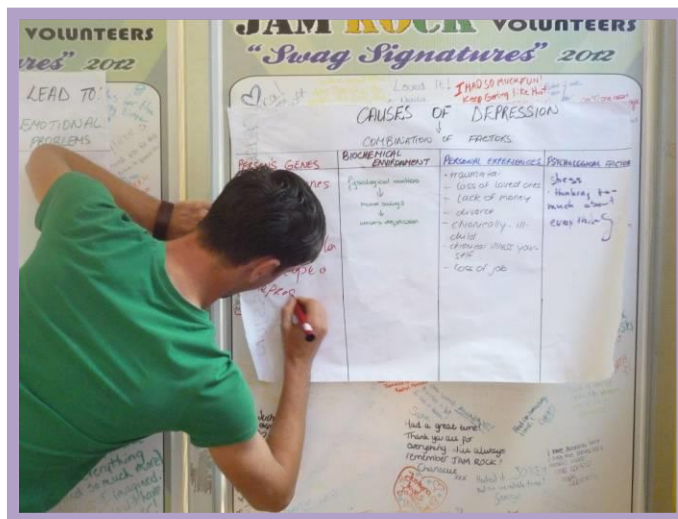
Other building volunteers worked with the Adventist Disaster Relief Agency (ADRA) to construct 3 bathrooms at the Windsor Primary School. They were subsequently assigned with the task to complete the house being constructed for elderly St. Elizabeth native, Bill. The house is expected to be Completed by April 2013.

### Farming Project Update

Resilient and focused. These are the words one may use to describe farming volunteer Claire Shrimpton from Australia. Her responsibilities on the farming project at the Christina Potato Growers are two folded; she works in a laboratory engaged in tissue culture and she works in a greenhouse planting potatoes and ginger, providing water and fertilizer and monitoring their growth.

### Medicine Project Update

During the month of February we had 8 arrivals for the Medicine Project. Medical volunteers worked at placements such as the Percy Junor Hospital, The Manchester Health Department, and the Mandeville Regional Hospital. In total there were 10 volunteers in the medicine project throughout the month of February. Volunteers on the medicine project come as pre- med, nurses, physiotherapists and students on internship who would like some insight into the hospital/ healthcare setting.



*Luuk van Ooijen participates in Medicine Project Meeting*

Project meetings for the month of February were as follows: February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 with the topic 'Dealing with ethical issues' which focused on identifying ethical issues, their causes and brainstorming scenarios. February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013 was facilitated by pro volunteer Monique Fournier as she provided a presentation on and demonstration of acupuncture highlighting techniques and the benefits of this alternative medicine methodology in easing pain and discomfort. March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013 concentrated on clinical depression and exploring biological and physical components of same.

### Teaching Project Update



*Helena corrects the work of a boy in English class*

We noted 5 new arrivals for the teaching project during the month of February. Teaching volunteers worked at placements such as the Villa Road Primary & Junior High, where they specialized in sports and music, the Bethabara Primary & Junior High, Woodlawn School of Special Education, McIntosh Memorial Primary School, May Day High School and the Bethabara Infant School.

In total we had 6 volunteers on the teaching project in February. Teaching volunteers provided classroom support and aided in classroom management. They helped to teach mathematics, English, Social Studies,

Art, science, reading and spelling. Although the large class numbers is a cultural adjustment for the volunteers they enjoy the work they do in the various schools. They are able to make a difference in a child's academic performance and this is what is important. At the Woodlawn School of Special Needs, our volunteer assisted in all aspects of teaching and writing of lesson plans for a class that needed assistance. A special programme within the teaching project is RAPD (Reading, Attendance, Punctuality and Discipline) which focuses on instilling in children a positive attitude towards school, developing high moral values and increasing their overall academic productivity. Children are assessed on a daily basis in the four key areas and points allotted based on performance and conduct. This month the programme ran concurrently with the schools' Readers are Leaders" initiative, - a programme which encourages students to read. The series of events surrounding the two programmes included reading, spelling and essay and poster competitions. The programmes culminated on February 22, 2013 with a prize giving and awards ceremony. Projects Abroad volunteers helped to coordinate the event and assisted with the presentations to the children.



*Naomi Luck presents prizes at RAPD ceremony*



## **Community Literacy Project (CLP) Update**

Steve Collis is the current volunteer on the CLP project. This project which is geared towards the numeracy and literacy of adults in a rural communities has successfully advanced participants to level 3 of a national standardized numeracy and literacy certification with the Jamaica Foundation for Lifelong Learning (JFLL). Steve currently works with two female participants whom he is preparing for the level four examinations and certification. Both participants and volunteer have a great relationship which works well in achieving the planned learning goals and objectives.



*Steve Collis teaching Marge, one of several CLP Participants*

## **Music Project Update**

There were two volunteers on the Music project for the month of February, Simon and Sarah. Volunteers taught music theory and practice and individually trained children to play the guitar, keyboard, recorder, drum, tambourine and other percussion instruments. The volunteers have made an indelible impact on the children and have enhanced their appreciation for music and by extension honed their skills in various aspects of music. In addition to participating in music related school activities the volunteers provide much needed support to teachers and add flair to the delivery of music lessons with their sense of originality and cultural diversity.

## **Sports Project Update**

February was the month of school sports day in Jamaica and so the volunteers on the sports Project were kept very busy preparing children for the big day. The two sports volunteers assisted with standard physical education classes but more importantly spent many hours training the athletics teams in track and field events for sports day. On sports day volunteers coordinated events, organized children and assisted with monitoring the children after events. It was an interesting experience for the volunteers to see first hand how passionate Jamaicans are about sports even as young as 6 years old.

## **Journalism Project Update**

The month of February brought one Journalism volunteer to the Northern Caribbean University's Media Group. Journalism volunteers have the opportunity to specialize in Radio or Television at NCU as there are no facilities for print. Of course volunteers may choose to do both radio and television. During the month of February for Black history Month and noting Jamaica Day and Bob Marley's birthday there were numerous outdoor broadcasts for both Radio and Television that Projects Abroad Jamaica journalism volunteer was involved with.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- The month of February marked the start of the month long recognition of Black History Month. This month was celebrated with various field trip activities and “guided learning” lessons within Schools Projects Abroad Jamaica paid tribute with our Black History Month themed Reggae Dance Class where volunteers learnt dance moves to some of Bob Marley’s most loved songs. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 2013, Jamaica and the world celebrated and recognized the birthday of a true Jamaican and musical legend, Bob Marley.
- February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2013 was the island wide celebration and recognition of Jamaica Day within Schools. This day was marked by numerous celebrations, concerts and tributes celebrating Jamaican culture and history.
- The Care project saw its second hosting of the ‘Broken Wings’ project at the Mandeville Regional Hospital on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February. Projects Abroad Jamaica Care volunteers went to provide much needed support to children on the ward at the hospitals that were ill in by playing with them, reading to them and providing overall interaction and stimulation. Care volunteers engaged in community outreach project with foster children and a struggling family of 5 on February 26, 2013. The Nutrition Project at Bethabara school was continued on February 27, 2013.

## Social Events

### Patois and Culture Class

Patois and culture Class was held on Tuesday February 5, 2013 at the Projects Abroad Jamaica office in the volunteers’ lounge. Volunteers began the class with an icebreaker by learning and playing a popular Jamaican ring game; “Brown Girl in the Ring.”

The patois segment of the class began with a brief history of patois as a language. Volunteers learned how to say popular words and phrases in patois which were taught via a PowerPoint presentation. This was followed by a short activity designed to stimulate their memory by testing what they remembered from the presentation.

The cultural segment of the class involved a practical demonstration of how to make authentic Jamaican jerk seasoning. Volunteers were first given the recipe and then shown all the ingredients required. Having pulsed all the ingredients together in a blender the finished product was raw Jerk sauce. Volunteers were then given the opportunity to taste the sauce and recognized it immediately for its spicy and tongue scorching flavour.

### **Reggae Dance Class**

Reggae Dance class was held on Tuesday February 26, 2013. There was a special edition of Reggae Dance class for the month seeing that it was indeed Black History Month and the Month of Bob Marley's birthday. The class had an initial focus on Old School Reggae Music and then back to typical modern day dancehall.

The class began with warm-up exercises designed to enhance flexibility which created the perfect segue into the dancing lessons to some truly old school music that would have anyone rocking to the beat. After some old school music we moved the beat back to modern day dancehall and had volunteers working up a sweat.



*Volunteers practicing dance routine at Reggae Dance Class*

### **Dirty Day**

Dirty Day was carried out on Friday February 15, 2013 at the site of Bill's new house. Approximately 40 volunteers were on hand to provide aid to the building process.

It was a truly dirty day indeed, as rain prematurely ended the efforts of volunteers as they sought to source additional stone and material required to complete the verandah area which was recently added. As at February 20, 2013 the project is being completed by Building volunteers.

Currently the foundation, and the respective rooms as well as a verandah have been partially blocked up. The structure is all set for blocking and completion within the 2 months .

### **Projects Abroad Rising Stars**

Projects Abroad Jamaica's Rising Stars was a unique activity designed as a talent show. With 6 talent areas in voice, dance, group, international, staff, and a project area showdown we received the most attention in dance and voice.

Conducted at the OMG Restaurant and Coffee Bar, the activity was laid out with a stage area and 2 judges who were Projects Abroad Jamaica staff members. The venue was again transformed to provide volunteers with adequate space for all types of performances. Volunteers had the option of providing their own music and a stereo and laptop were provided to read whichever format they decided to bring their music in. Prizes were awarded to first place winners of each category. Congratulations to all our winners.



## What is on the Calendar?

### Upcoming Projects Abroad Social Events March 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, March 26, 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 a little practical demonstration on how to make something uniquely Jamaican. How about rum punch? Tuesday, March 5, 2013.
- Potluck and Games Evening- Bring us a taste of some traditional food from home. Share with other volunteers your experiences and your culture. For a full cultural exchange we will learn to play some unique Jamaican games. Tuesday, March 12, 2013.
- Dirty Day - Dirty Day March 15, 2013 will involve the beautification of the Manchester Infirmary, the grooming of its residents, the preparation of food and washing of laundry and bed sheets for the elderly at the home.

### Upcoming Events for Jamaica March 2013

- Follow the Arrow-  
Saturday March 2, 2013 is the date for this all day party. Admission: \$1,200 presold \$1,500 at the gate, \$2,500 VIP.  
For More Information, please visit: [http://go-jamaica.com/entertainer/view\\_event\\_details.php?id=8731](http://go-jamaica.com/entertainer/view_event_details.php?id=8731)
- Campari Outrageous in Red-  
This all day event at Margaritaville Ocho Rios on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March is sure to impress. Music by ZJ Chrome, ZJ Ice, DJ Ashile and Yung Gunnerz.  
For More Information, please visit: [http://go-jamaica.com/entertainer/view\\_event\\_details.php?id=8734](http://go-jamaica.com/entertainer/view_event_details.php?id=8734)
- University of Technology Job Fair-  
March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013 will host one of the largest job fairs organized by a University in Jamaica. This will be staged at the Alfred Sangster Auditorium, University of Technology, St Andrew.  
For More Information, please visit: [http://go-jamaica.com/entertainer/view\\_event\\_details.php?id=8694](http://go-jamaica.com/entertainer/view_event_details.php?id=8694)
- Bacchanal Beach Jouvert-  
For all the soca and Carnival lovers, Bacchanal Jamaica presents beach jouvert at James Bond Beach in St. Mary. Save the date, March 30, 2013  
For More Information, please visit: [www.bacchanaljamaica.com](http://www.bacchanaljamaica.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](https://twitter.com/Proj_AbroadJM)

## Projects Abroad Jamaica Contact Details

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Blogsit: <http://blog.projects-abroad.net/mytriblog.org>



*Jamaica's National Flower - Lignum Vitae*

If you would like to contribute an article to this newsletter please email it to [bridgettebarrett@projects-abroad.org](mailto:bridgettebarrett@projects-abroad.org) by the 23<sup>rd</sup> of the month so they can be vetted and included.

One Love



# This Month in Pictures

