

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

For Projects Abroad Moldova



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VOLUNTEER STORIES

Medical project

Hospitals in Chisinau

By Callum Prosser from Canada



Since arriving in Moldova on the 1st of July, I have taken part in Project Abroad's Medical Project. This project means I volunteer Monday to Friday within a hospital environment to gain an insight of a doctor's day to day life. During my time, I have been lucky enough to visit three of Moldova's main hospitals, giving me a wide variety of experience from paediatrics to adult cardiac surgery. From the 3rd of July to the 11th, I was positioned at the children's hospital called E.Coțaga. This was a reasonably small hospital in comparison with the two other hospitals I later visited and it was also much older. Nevertheless, I was fully impressed with the staff and treatments I saw whilst being placed here in both departments I was situated in. For the first four days I was placed in the Oral-Maxillofacial department which was a new department which I had heard very little about. On arrival the doctors and staff were very welcoming, especially the chief, DR Lupan; they tried to make my stay as interesting as possible. During the time I watched surgeries, which were mainly short but very interesting and included the removal of cysts and surgery to reduce the sizes of tongue frenulum. Other parts of the department included the removal of stitches which often seemed a difficult task with young children reluctant to have treatment, but the doctors and other staff dealt well, to calm and reassure the children and parents. On the 9th of July I moved to another department within the hospital known as the Burns Centre. This was a very distressing place as the young children were in immense pain and there was very little which the staff could do, as recovery is slow and gradual. In my three days in the department I witnessed my fair share of bandage changing; it became clear that this part of treatment is often long term. I was given the chance to get 'hands on' experience as the Chief encouraged me to help holding patients whilst the doctors cleaned wounds and replaced bandages. The more hands on approach kept me alert as the doctors were constantly asking for my assistance to either hold a child or to get them bandages. Both of these departments were extremely beneficial for me as they both illustrated how a doctor cannot always deal with situations alone and rely on other staff to help, showing a good team structure required for a successful treatment to be given. On the 14th of July I began at the Republican Hospital which is known in Moldova as it's main and central hospital. Within the hospital I was placed in the cardiology department under the supervision of Chief Doctor, Mr Batrînac. Before coming here I had not witnessed any sort of open heart surgery in the UK as it is strictly forbidden, but here I was able to get up close to witness surgeries and many of the doctors spoke through the procedure in English which made the whole situation much more intriguing. By the end of my time in the cardiology department I had witnessed multiple heart surgeries which included: a triple heart bypass, mitral valve replacement and an aortic valve replacement. All three were very interesting as each case was completely different and all were very complicated cases as all three patients were aged 60 years and above. The conditions in this department were extremely good and were comparable to some of the best operation rooms in the UK, this alongside side with the expertise of the specialty doctors led to a great experience, which I will treasure for the rest of my life. On the 21st July I began working in the Emergency Hospital within the Microsurgery department. This is another department which I have seen and heard little about in the UK. Nevertheless, I became impressed as both operations on the first day were dealt with very fast and efficiently. Both of the operations involved reconnecting arteries, including the radial artery in the forearm of the patient, which had been severed do to deep lacerations. I was also lucky enough to follow a residency doctor around the accident and emergency department who luckily was the daughter of the chief of microsurgery. It was good to see how much responsibility even the young doctors get in the hospital, as immediately she had a case where a man had severely cut his leg with a roof tile and she was given the responsibility of dealing with the patient alone. Apart from volunteering in Moldova, I have enjoyed plenty of leisure time whether that be going to explore the centre of Chişinău or see the great night life. I have been lucky enough to make some good friends with other volunteers here in Moldova which has meant as a group of volunteers we can be a bit more adventurous than maybe I would be by myself. This thrive for adventure has led to around eight of us planning a weekend trip to Bucharest, Romania, which I am thoroughly looking forward too and I'm sure it will be an amazing end to my trip here in Moldova.

Teaching project

Projects Abroad Moldova - Summer 2014

By Trecia Kilback from Canada

Coming into Moldova, I had one mission in mind. It was to create a positive and long lasting impact on the youth I would have the privilege of teaching. It was important for me to share my love of the English language and inspire my students to reach new heights in their education and dreams for their futures. I had recently finished my first year of civil engineering at the University of Calgary in Canada and a summer term at the University of Stuttgart in Germany. Instead of flying straight home, I felt that since I was already in Europe, it was the perfect opportunity to do a volunteer Teaching Project with Projects Abroad. I chose Moldova for several reasons: firstly, Eastern European and Russian culture has always intrigued me, and I was excited for the chance to integrate in these cultures; secondly, I have many friends who live or have connections in Eastern Europe, such as Russia and Ukraine; most importantly, I felt an personal instinct to come to this small but amazing country. From the moment I exited the airport terminal, I was greeted with the first gusts of Moldovan geniality, as I met the staff of Projects Abroad Moldova. They introduced me to the traditional Moldovan soup, zama (which is very, very delicious), and gave me a tour of the Chişinău Centre. I enjoyed seeing the Soviet styled buildings, the wifi saturated parks, the well-priced eateries, and the insane number of women walking in sky high stilettos. The following day I was given a more in-depth tour of the city, learned about the history of the country, and witnessed a baptism at an Eastern Orthodox Church. I quickly became accustomed to the fact that life in Moldova is completely different from life back home, but it became my motivation that I must not just 'see', I must 'live' it. The great thing about Projects Abroad is you are able to stay with a host family, which allowed me a taste of the Moldovan way of life. My room was spacious; the neighborhood felt safe and lively, and my work placement was conveniently located close to my accommodation. On my first day of classes, I had three students. I taught them past continuous. On my second day, I had 17 students. We read the Greek myth, Orpheus. The next day, I had 24 students. We went over English idioms. As my project was during the summer vacation, my class was optional for the students. The enrollment fluctuated day to day and I had complete freedom over all lesson plans. Every day was slightly challenging because I had to accommodate the fact that the ages, proficiency and my class number varied significantly. There was no set curriculum or textbook I followed and all my lesson plans, assignments, and exams were made in the afternoon after my classes, which took hours to organize. Projects Abroad and my friend from Canada, who was an English second language teacher, provided me with materials which I combined in my lessons for the beginner class. I had two classes, my advanced classes and my beginner class, which I respectively called English Language Arts 10 and 20. In my advanced classes, I alternated between grammar and stylistic writing practices and English literature, such as Edgar Allan Poe and Martin Luther King Jr.



I have two very memorable experiences from my advanced class. The first was when I finished reading Martin Luther King Jr's, "I Have a Dream" speech, and once I finished, I had about 60 seconds of complete silence in my classroom until, finally, one girl quietly remarked, "That was really great." We spent the last 20 minutes of the class reviewing the imagery in that speech and the next day I gave them each a copy to keep for themselves. The second was probably the smiling faces of all my students after their first exam. Two days prior to the exam, I gave them a practice exam to do. Once they were graded, I returned them, and told them that I expected an improvement for the actual exam. I was not disappointed in the least. The average jumped from 73% to an 84%! My beginner class was much smaller, but it allowed me to focus more attention on individuals. I'd start the first half with simple vocabulary or grammar, and the second half with short videos or games, such as Jeopardy and the Price is Right. It feels so rewarding to have these students gain confidence and actually have fun with the English class. For this class, the highlight was walking home with all the children after class and talking with them about everything and anything. The short ten minute walk was something I looked forward to everyday. When I had time on the weekends or some evenings, I would go out with the other volunteers. To the left of the statue of Ștefan cel Mare in the Centre, there is an Opera House, and lest be assured, everyone was acquainted with that area. If you are into the arts, they have tickets to the ballet and opera for 10 euros, and if you into sports, during the World Cup they had an impressive public viewing. Nearby, there are many lounges, bars and restaurants, including the famous Andy's Pizza. On weekends, Projects Abroad organizes social events to museums, parks and art galleries in Chișinău and you have the option to hire private tours to different areas around Moldova, such as Old Orhei and Soroca. However, I chose to go to Romania. I took two individual trips to Romania, the first one to Brașov, Rașnov and Bran, and the second to Bucharest and Constanța. The adventures I had with the other volunteers would fill up another 30 pages of text alone. Simply put, anyone who loves history, beautiful landscapes, and a fun, crazy night out, go to Romania! Romania is a diamond in the ruff, completely overlooked by the world for tourism, but I assure you this country and its people are exciting and beautiful! One week before my flight home, a friend that we met on the bus to Bucharest invited me and the other volunteers to her village, Ialoveni, for dinner. We met her mother, brother and his friends, and ate in the garden. That evening has got to be one of the best evenings of my entire summer in Europe as it was with great food, great wine, and great company. For me, I received so much from my time in Moldova. I realized a whole new culture, one which I am dearly fond of, I made many friends from all corners of the world, learned the fascinating history of Eastern Europe, not through the trite chapters of a textbook, but rather through conversing with the locals, laid eyes on the magnificent Carpathian mountains, danced until sunrise in Bucharest, not once but twice, strolled the beaches of the Black Sea, ate so much placinta that I was full for the next two days, and gave everything I possibly could give to my students. My host family, my students, my amazing friends, and the wonderful staff at Projects Abroad have become my extended Moldovan family. I really appreciate my stay in Moldova and wish that all future volunteers can find this appreciation as well. Vă mulțumim Moldova! Vă mulțumim! Vă mulțumim! Vă mulțumim!



Care project

Experience at fantastic Daily Care Centre for Children

By Nina Pusic from the USA

I had a wonderful time in Moldova. Although only a short two weeks, it was indeed very sweet. Living with my host mother Irina was wonderful, and the food just kept coming, as eating is definitely not optional in Moldova. I worked every day from 10am until 4pm at the Fantastic Center for Children, which was probably the highlight of the experience. I did not think I could get so close with the handful of children in just two weeks, but by the end it was very difficult to leave. I would definitely recommend anyone coming to Moldova to stay for at least three weeks, as three to four weeks seems to be the optimum amount of time. At Fantastic we worked with children ages four to 14-years-old, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays we went to the pool which was often the highlight of the week. The other days we worked on creating cards in the morning and played outside or with cards in the afternoon, with some occasional English lessons here and there. I cannot emphasize enough how amazing the children of Fantastic were; by my third day working there I felt completely at home. On the weekends apart from Fantastic, I explored the city with friends finding a favorite cafe that I returned to regularly. I was so surprised at how safe I felt within Chişinău; after my first couple of days I felt completely comfortable going around the city. Chişinău was a great city to live and explore in, in a very inexpensive way. When my last few days in Moldova came, I was very sad to go to say the least, and I couldn't help by crying on my last day at Fantastic. I am so grateful for my experience in Chişinău and was so pleasantly surprised with everything about Moldova, and I can't wait to return someday.



Donation page

Donations from volunteers in destination

We really appreciate our most active volunteers of this summer who brought a great contribution with their hand work and also with their donations.

First of all, we would like to say a big thank you for the trust and encouragement from our organization to Miss Sheila Honegger from Switzerland. Sheila together with members of her family made a donation of clothes for adolescents and young people consisting of winter coats, t-shirts, shirts, pants, sweaters, 13 pairs of socks for winter, etc.



Our

very



young

volunteer Mr. Blake Norton from the USA made a valuable contribution to our placement Fantastic Daily Care Centre. He donated balls, puzzles, balloons, trouble game, bingo, letterhead, latch hook, flesh cards, books, collection of US coins, marbles, sport t-shirts, etc. Fantastic Daily Care Centre staff and children together with all Projects Abroad Moldova staff are delighted to express our sincere



Thank you and gratitude to him personally for all his active work and help during his time in Moldova. THANK YOU all volunteers, partners, supervisors and members of the Projects Abroad team for all that you did during this summer.

Photo Gallery



A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

Salut! August is here again and Projects Abroad Moldova staff are welcoming new volunteers from different countries across the globe.

We thank you for choosing the Republic of Moldova as a destination for your volunteering projects.

This month the Republic of Moldova will celebrate two main holidays: on the 27th of August we will be celebrating the Day of Independence, and on the 31st of August is celebrated „Limba Noastra” (our language) National Holiday.

We invite and encourage you to write stories, articles, interviews about your experience in Moldova and send it to our address: elenachirica@projects-abroad.org . This is a way to show how amazing volunteering in Moldova can be!



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