

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

For Projects Abroad Mongolia

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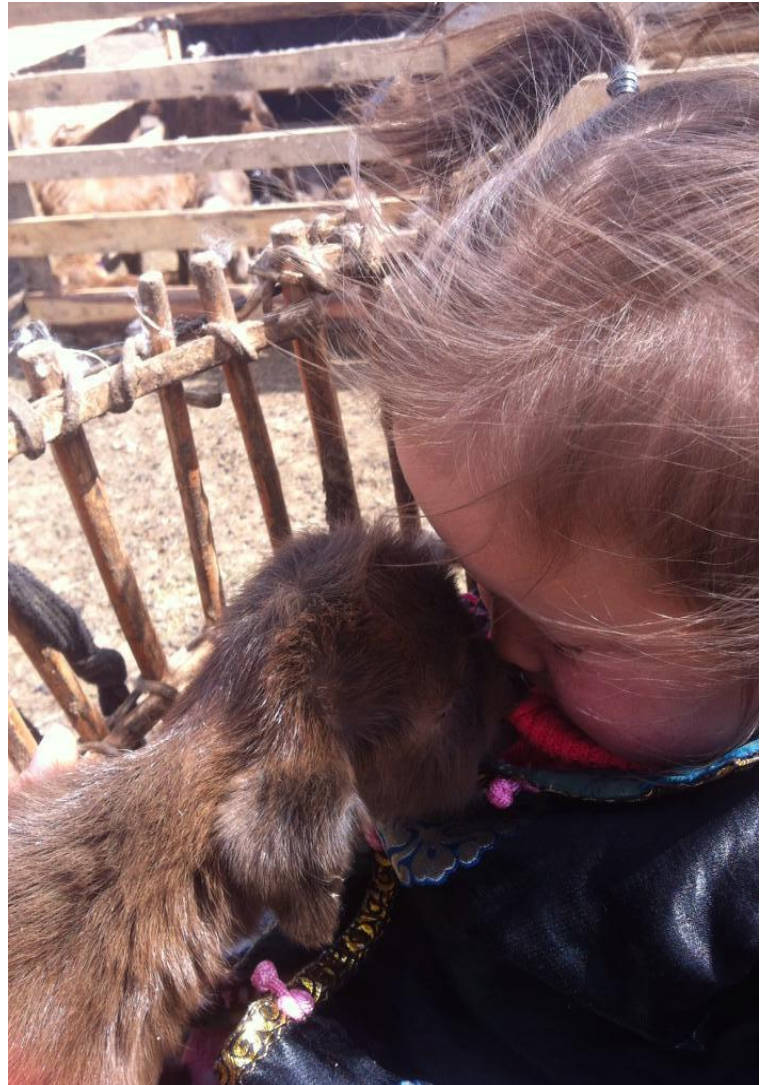
Editor's Note

SAIN BAINA UU?

Welcome to the October edition of our newsletter for Projects Abroad Mongolia. This October issue will give you a further insight into our culture and is filled with project updates, volunteer stories and events. Get a glimpse of what it is like to volunteer here in the "Land of Blue Sky"

Have a wonderful month,
Projects Abroad Mongolia Team
Send your stories, opinions, funny anecdotes and pictures anything you want to share) to Azaa.

Email: mongoliasocialmanagers@projects-abroad.org



Volunteer Stories

By Laura Vorsteveld

My name is Laura and I am a 44 year old woman from the Netherlands. I really was looking for a change in my life and specially something that will change my way of thinking about live. I would also like to help other people. When I went online I found Projects Abroad and it looked like something that I was interested in.

After Mongolia I will go to Nepal for more than three months. I quit my job, arranged everything at home and just took off!

I had never really travelled before so I was a bit nervous, of course.

During my first four weeks in Mongolia I stayed with a very nice family, a father, a mother and two small children of three years and five months old, in the city Ulaanbaatar while volunteering at the Care program.



I worked in a kindergarten as an English teacher and helped out with taking care of the children for the rest of the day. This was very interesting and new for me. I don't have children myself so it was a bit difficult in the beginning. But the people from Projects Abroad as well as the teachers at the kindergarten supported me.

I also worked at a home for disabled children for two days. It was very interesting to see the care system in a different country. I enjoyed the city very much; a lot of nice people, shops and food. I had to get used to the food, because it is completely different too the food in Holland, but now I love it. On the menu are cooked internal organs of a sheep and horse (not my favourite), or marmot cooked in the traditional Mongolian way. It is cooked from the inside with hot stones. First I was a bit scared to eat it, but it was really the best meat I ever had! The best thing about it was that it was a real family happening and very special.

For the second half of my stay I volunteered at the Nomad Project. This was a big challenge, because you live with a nomadic family out in the countryside and there is no running water, toilet or electricity, no shops to go to or any real heating in the „ger“ (nomad house).

I found this, as a sort of spoiled western person, difficult in the beginning, but I must be honest that now as I am back in the city, I really miss it.

The family I stayed with was very nice, polite and warm. The beds in the „ger“ are a bit hard but after a few nights I slept like a baby.

Every day I helped with herding the sheep and the baby-cows, cleaning the „ger“ and did some cooking. The family also owns a lot of horses that they milk. I personally did not like the horse milk but I was one of the few who didn't.

Mongolia is a beautiful country with very nice people.

The Mongolian people and specially the nomads are honest, nice and warm people who shared everything with you. They are willing to let you experience their traditions and way of live.

I can honestly say that so far it is the best experience of my live. I learned a lot and really started to respect other cultures.

Greetings,
Laura Vorsteveld

Project Updates

Community Day

Our October Community Day took place at 'My Family' Orphanage, a home for ten orphaned children. Our volunteers extend their helping hands to the children at the orphanage by improving their study environment by placing new book shelves, table and wall decorations and donating books.



Volunteers in Action

Michael Skolen graduate spends part of her gap year volunteering in Mongolia

Seventeen-year-old Ida Poulsen from Jyllinge, Denmark, wanted to work with children somewhere completely different from home and somewhere that she will probably not have the opportunity to visit again. This motivated her to travel to Mongolia to volunteer at the Projects Abroad Care Project during her gap year.

After witnessing her sister's volunteer service abroad, Ida was inspired to give something back to the community. Eager to fulfil her plan, she applied with Projects Abroad and was placed at „My Family“ orphanage, a home for 20 orphaned children and at the Kindergarten and Nursing Complex for Disabled Children #10, a home for children suffering from a range of disabilities.

Ida went above and beyond her volunteering duties of feeding, helping with cleaning and playing with children by teaching English, introducing a variety of new games, playing and singing with them.

“At the beginning, it was hard for me to work with disabled children as they were in pain and had physical impairments, but, after having spent some time with them, I didn't see them as disabled and learned that there is no difference between us.”

Ida's volunteering experience has taught her a lot; such as working with disabled children, taking care of orphanage children who have different mind, and teaching English and new skills to children. But, on a more personal note, Ida has learned a lot about herself:



“When I was home I was so strict that everything should go as planned and when it didn’t, I got either upset or angry. This experience has taught me that it’s all right, if it doesn’t go as planned, we can change the plan. I think that will change a lot when I get back and take things as they come.” Aside from her work, she enjoyed staying with a Mongolian host family and experiencing, first hand, life in a new country, a new language and new people half way across the world. “I think living with a family gives you an insight into „real life“ in Mongolia and a much better experience than travelling as a tourist and staying in hotels,” Ida says. Other activities she participated in included spending time with the other volunteers from all over the world, travelling to the beautiful Mongolian countryside and participating in events organized by Projects Abroad.

Ida completed her three months’ Care Project with much to share: “I’ve taken so many challenges and accepted them gratefully. Instead of just refusing the challenges, I’ve taken them on, learned so much, and actually mastered the challenges. So, I think I’ll be braver to accept more challenges and won’t be nervous or afraid.”

“All in all, I was really happy to be able to have this experience. This was a different, yet eye opening three months’ experience of my life.”

