Volunteer Placement Profile
Tutoring Volunteer

Palliative Care Unit Foundation
San Jose, Costa Rica
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Job Description

Costa Rica’s Pro Palliative Care Unit Foundation provides palliative care to children with advance diseases whose prognosis is less than 6 months. It also provides care for children whose illnesses have progressed to the stage of multiple symptoms and complications where a curative approach is no longer possible and their illness has deteriorated to affecting their quality of life and their increased dependence on their parents and health staff.

One of the best ways to show love and affection to children with palliative diseases is through music. Currently the foundation organizes entertainment activities focused on crafts for children and their families at the daycare centre. However, it is well known that music brings joy to the heart.

A volunteer music teacher at the San Gabriel Daycare Centre could provide a source of entertainment not only for the participants but others at the daycare as well. The lessons could not only include the learning of a musical instrument but a sing song occasion for all after the musical instructions. These sessions may be able to do much in relieving the stress of the disease for these children for a little while and help to enhance their quality of life.

The volunteer must be proficient in the instrument they would be teaching and have had experience in teaching said instrument. The organization does not have musical instruments for the children, so the volunteer needs to provide the instrument or instruments to be taught. Perhaps the volunteer could conduct a fundraising event in their native country to obtain instruments for the children before coming to their placement.

A volunteer music teacher needs to understand that some of the children will have major problems in learning a instrument due to the advancement of their illness. However, the time devoted to them through music is one of the most valuable gifts that a volunteer can provide.

It is mandatory for volunteers to know a conversational level of the Spanish language. Volunteers must also be mature individuals who are able to conduct themselves in a warm and positive manner with these very ill children and their families. What an opportunity this is to provide some happiness to these children.
who have so little to look forward to.

Volunteer Tasks Required

Instrument Lessons

A volunteer music teacher would teach the instrument he/she is proficient in. Lessons would be organized depending on the number of working days between Tuesday and Thursday and according to the number of children in the daycare at the time.

Tell Stories

Children always loves stories and a volunteer music teacher must be very creative to teach music and tell stories at the same time. Extra supplies like pencils and colouring books are good tools to help with the stories.

Teach English

It is possible that many of these children do not understand English as most of them have never had the change to be in contact with international volunteers. A volunteer music teacher must have the ability to teach the instrument in the Spanish language but also could use the occasion to teach some English.

Dancing and Singing

To complement the music lessons, volunteers would be expected to teach easy songs in English and/or Spanish, if possible; so that the children who are able can sing and dance. Dancing can be done just with hand activities which allows the children to move according to their capabilities.
Organization Details

Costa Rica’s Pro Palliative Care Unit Foundation provides palliative care to children with advance diseases whose prognosis is less than 6 months.

The foundation also provides care for children whose illnesses have progressed to the stage of multiple symptoms and complications where a curative approach is no longer possible and their illness has deteriorated to affecting their quality of life and their increased dependence on their parents and health staff.

The foundation annually attends to a population of approximately 1450 children throughout Costa Rica. Their numerous home visit services include: medical equipment and medical staff, physiotherapists, psychologists, nutritionists and any other required division of care.

The foundation operates two daycare centres where they act as intermediaries between the National Children's Hospital and the patient's home. At the centres, they provide not only patient care but support to the patients relatives through psychological therapy and/or entertaining activities, where parents can release emotional stress and strain.

Ninety-eight percent of the patients come from low income families and they can not afford the expensive equipment necessary in the last stages of life that provides a more comfortable and dignified death. The foundation ensures that this occurs by loaning all the necessary equipment and supplies such as: concentrated oxygen, oxygen cylinders, wheelchairs, orthopaedic mattresses, air mattresses, aspirators, etc.

The foundation provides a 24/7 emergency service for palliative care patients and their families where they can obtain immediate assistant when necessary.

Upon death of the patient, the foundation staff provides support for the whole family until no longer required.

When the Organization was Founded

The foundation was created in July 1992. Two years later a patient requested a high
dose of morphine, prescribed by Dr. Lisbeth Quesada and it was denied. Under the law, all Costa Rican's have the right to a dignified and painless death, so Social Security was forced to deliver the drug. Due to this occurrence, Dr. Quesada determined the need to create the Pediatric Palliative Care Unit where the correct care and action would be adhered to by informed staff.

**How the Organization is Funded**

The foundation does not receive any support from the government. They get their funds through donations from private national and international organizations and national campaigns where they organize several activities during the year.
Placement Location Information

In November 2000, by Dr. Juan Carlos Moya Irola the Foundation Pro Unit or Palliative City opens the doors of First Day Center Pediatric Palliative Care in Latin America, and one of five around the world, "San Gabriel Daycare Center".

This center is an organized and efficient option for the care of children and their families in a place other than the hospital. In the center the patients are evaluated, observed, provided the necessary medicines, and simple medical procedures. But above all, it seeks to provide comprehensive care to enable learning and entertainment during the patiences' stay.

The center has playrooms, sensory stimulation room, hydrotherapy bath, kids rooms, teen room, rest room for dads, nurses, massage room, kitchen and dining room.

Located just five blocks from the National Children's Hospital, in the heart of San Jose with easy access through the public transport system.

City Description

San Jose is situated in the central valley and is home to one third of the population of Costa Rica. It is the political, transportation, and entertainment centre.

San Jose is a hub of art, culture, and international events. There is a large system of inter-city parks, full of rare breeds of trees and plants, as well as statues of important figures in Costa Rican history. Festivals happen regularly, providing a unique look into contemporary Costa Rican culture. There are many opportunities in San Jose to learn to salsa, meringue or samba. San Jose has some incredible restaurants serving local and international fare, and has several cinemas showing Latin American films. The night life in San Jose is happening, and there are many great clubs in which to dance the night away.

San Jose, is a fascinating city from a political perspective: as the only democratic nation to decline a national army (instead choosing to allocate funds to public health care), the capital has long been a centre for Central American peace talks and forums. A politically active city, San José, serves as the headquarters for the
Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

Points of Interest

The population grew during the eighteenth century colonial planning, which was different from the traditional foundation plans of Spanish cities in the continent.

Founded in 1738 by order of Cabildo de León, its objective was to concentrate the scattered inhabitants of the Aserrí Valley. To do so, the construction of a chapel near the area known as La Boca del Monte was ordered, and was completed two years later. That year St. Joseph was chosen as parish patron, hence its current name. The chapel, which was very modest, was erected with help from the church of Cartago.

San Jose had water problems, and that was one of the main reasons that the population grew slowly. However, the water supply was assured by ditches, and the fertility of the surrounding fields along with the installation of the Tobacco Factory of Costa Rica, which aided urban concentration.

San Jose, unlike what happened in Cartago, was not founded with a formal act of foundation, therefore it was not considered a city or town, and consequently lacked a city government. It was not until the enactment of the Constitution of Cadiz in 1812 that San Jose had its first city government. In 1813, the Spanish parliament gave the town the title of city, which was then lost in 1814 when Ferdinand VII of Spain annulled the proceedings by the courts. The municipal government was restored in 1820 with the title of city population. San José is one of the youngest capital cities in Latin America by year of conception, though it was not named capital until 1823.

Today it is a modern city with bustling commerce, brisk expressions of art and architecture, and spurred by the country's improved tourism industry, it is a significant destination and stopover for foreign visitors.

San José exerts a strong influence because of its proximity to other cities (Alajuela, Heredia and Cartago) and the country's demographic assemblage in the Central Valley.

San Jose, was founded in 1737, and became the capital of Costa Rica in 1823. The city grew very slowly and by 1940 the population was approximately 70,000. As land
became scarcer in the rest of the country, many moved to San Jose, in search of a better life and by the 1970s and 1980s San Jose, was booming. It now is one of the largest cities in Central America.

**Weather in the Area**

San José City lies in the Torrid Zone and is in a tropical rainforest. However its elevation gives it a mild climate. Under the Köppen climate classification it features a tropical wet climate that borders on a subtropical highland climate.

The temperature ranges between 17 and 30 °C (63 and 86 °F). Relative humidity averages 68.2% (with extremes of 55% in March and 78% in October) and the daily range tends to be between 60% and 90%, with the humidity typically dropping to the lower end of this range near mid-day and rising again during the night.

It rains on an average of 170 days per year but half the rainfall pours down on only 15 of these days. The rainy season is from May to mid-November, but cloudiness and rainfall can occur during the dry season. There are approximately 2040 hours of sunshine per year. The weather is also very windy.

**Transportation From BaseCamp**

From the BaseCamp house walk to the main street to San Jose and take any bus to San Jose and get off at teh Municipality of Guadalupe where you need to take La Periferica Bus. This bus will take you to Paseo Colon, where you will need to get of at the stop at the Benemeritos Park. From there walk one block to the east, turn left and walk a half block until you find a white and green building with the foundation sign.
Accommodation and Meals

All of our volunteers begin their stay in Costa Rica at our BaseCamp Center in San Jose. Given that this placement is less than a 1 hour and 15 minute commute from BaseCamp, volunteers working here will have the option of living with us at BaseCamp or living with a host family.

The following information outlines a brief description of life at BaseCamp and also what someone can expect living with a host family in Costa Rica. Once you have completed our application, you can let our staff know if you would prefer to live with a host family. Otherwise, your application will default to having you live with us at BaseCamp.

If you have any questions about the difference between life at BaseCamp or life with a host family in Costa Rica you can always give us a call or send us an email. Our contact details are listed in the footer of every page of the site.
BaseCamp Costa Rica

Take a Tour of BaseCamp

BaseCamp Costa Rica Address
Ave 16 St. 39&41
Los Yoses Sur
San Jose, Costa Rica

Contact Details
Tel: 506-8763-9595
Tel: 506-8763-9595
Tel: 506-4030-1891
Accommodation in Costa Rica

All volunteers on our program in Costa Rica start out at our BaseCamp Center. The center is located in the capital city San Jose, and is a fantastic place from which to start your adventure.

Once volunteers have finished their orientation, where they live depends largely on the location of their placement. If their placement is more than a 1 hour 15 minute commute from BaseCamp, then the only accommodation option may be host families or volunteer lodges in the national parks. However, if the placement is within a 1 hour 15 minute commute, then volunteers can choose whether or not to stay with us at BaseCamp or live with a host family.

BaseCamp Costa Rica is located in the province of San Jose at Los Yoses area. This is a fantastic area closed to the University of Costa Rica, San Pedro Mall, banks, supermarkets, restaurants, embassies and stores. Walking distance to downtown and only 30 minutes away from the Juan Santamaria Airport.

BaseCamp has four bedrooms and three wash-rooms. The beds are mainly bunk beds in dormitory style rooms. Pillows, sheets and blankets are provided. There is a large common area where movies, books and games are available to our guests and there is a patio with a nice set up. This is an ideal setting for reading, studying Spanish or just some quiet relaxation.
BaseCamp is where volunteers first come when they arrive in Costa Rica and where they live for at least the duration of their orientation and training. The meal plan at the centre is based on a 14 day rotating schedule of a variety of traditional dishes from around the country. This meal plan allows volunteers to gain comfort and familiarity with both Costa Rican food and meal etiquette before making the transition to living with a host family.

Orientation and language training sessions take place in the BaseCamp Center. Each day of orientation blends some workshops and lessons with a mixture of outings to explore and become familiar with transportation and knowledge regarding the city.
Living with a host family in Costa Rica is a fantastic way to gain a deep understanding of and appreciation for the people and customs of the country. Each home-stay will provide a bed and three meals per day for our volunteers. The majority of host families offer private rooms with only one or two volunteers living with the family.

In the case of a volunteer lodge or ranger station (which is often the only option for placements within a National Park), volunteers will be living in dormitory type accommodation and meals will be provided in a mess hall or dining area.

Living with a host family can greatly enhance your performance at your placement. For one, it will have a huge influence on the speed with which you gain familiarity with the local language. This, along with your deeper understanding of cultural practices and beliefs that you are likely to gain in this environment, can go a long way to improving or strengthening your relationships with your team mates at work. Furthermore, a significant percentage of our host families are closely affiliated with the organizations with which our volunteers work. As such, even the evening meal or
hanging out around the house can become valuable time during which volunteers can share their ideas and continue their support of their host organization.

All of this being said, living with a host family is not for everyone. It is very important for volunteers to honor the house rules in their host family and to be punctual. Also, depending on how remote your placement location, host families can be very rustic. Our staff in country can give you a better idea of what exactly you can expect from a host family in any particular community. However, in general, if these things sound like they might pose a challenge for you, we strongly suggest that you look at a placement within commuting distance from BaseCamp Costa Rica.
How the Program Works

Our program structure and costing is completely flexible which lets our volunteers ensure that they only pay for exactly the degree of support that they want.

Option 1 - Free Services

Some volunteers prefer to coordinate their own accommodation, meals and other support while overseas.

Anyone is welcome to use our volunteer placement search tool to help in finding a placement that is well suited to their interests. Once someone finds a placement that they wish to work with, they are welcome to make all the rest of their arrangements on their own.

As well, our team of staff overseas are often able to offer a few helpful pointers for volunteers 'doing it on their own'. Just send us an email with your questions and we will put you in touch with our team abroad. We only ask that you keep your requests fairly general, as this type of advice is exactly how our team earn their living. :)

Option 2 - Placement Support - 250 USD

Other volunteers would like assistance in selecting and confirming their placement, but they plan to manage their own accommodation and other expenses on their own.

These volunteers have the option of choosing to only have our assistance with selecting and confirming their placement. This option also includes ongoing placement support while abroad, so a volunteer would be able to ask our team for help if things at their placement were not working out.

In providing Placement Support, our team works with each volunteer through email, telephone and either Skype or Google Hangouts, to ensure that each volunteer has a clear understanding of their placement options. Our in-country staff will put together a custom list of placement options for each volunteer that they believe are the most appropriate matches with the volunteer's background, skills and interests.
Then each volunteer can work with our team both in Canada and abroad to go through each of the options and narrow-down their selection.

Option 3 - Full Program Support

For most volunteers who are volunteering for less than a year, they are looking for an option that includes their accommodation, meals, airport reception, country and program orientation and placement support. This is what our Program Fees are designed for.

We are proud of how over the years we have ensured that our program fees are amongst the most reasonable of any program in the world while we continue to provide exceptional volunteer support both at home and abroad.

Our Program Fees and listings of what these do and do not include are listed below:
## Program Fees Costa Rica

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registration Fee</th>
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<tr>
<td>Registration Fee</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Week</td>
<td>395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Weeks</td>
<td>620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Weeks</td>
<td>844</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Weeks</td>
<td>1,068</td>
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<td>5 Weeks</td>
<td>1,243</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Weeks</td>
<td>1,418</td>
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<td>7 Weeks</td>
<td>1,593</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Weeks</td>
<td>1,768</td>
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| Additional Weeks | 175   |

Costa Rica wildlife and conservation placements require an additional $7 USD per day fee to cover park fees and accommodation. All program fees are listed in US Dollars.
Inclusions & Exclusions

What is Included

- Pre-Departure support
- Placement consultation
- Airport reception & transfer
- 2 Day orientation
- Accommodation (BaseCamp or host family)
- Breakfast and dinner
- Emergency & placement support

What is Not Included

Before Departure

- International flight
- Travel medical insurance
- Visa costs where required
- Work permits where required

While Overseas

- Daily transportation to and from placement
- Transport to airport on departure
- Placement fees if required
### Program Dates

Our regularly scheduled program start dates are the first Friday of each month, every month of the year. We strongly recommend beginning your program on one of these dates as this will allow you to go through our orientation alongside other international volunteers.

If you would prefer, our application will also allow you to select a custom start date for your program. Keep in mind that there is an additional fee for a custom start date which ranges from 50 to 75 USD.

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<th>Dec 06, 2019</th>
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<th>Feb 07, 2020</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 03, 2021</td>
<td>Oct 01, 2021</td>
<td>Nov 05, 2021</td>
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**PLEASE NOTE:**

These dates are the day that volunteers should plan to arrive on the ground in country. We can accommodate arrivals in-country at any time day or night on these dates.