Volunteer Placement Profile
Special Needs Assistant Volunteer

Autism Awareness Care and Training
Accra, Ghana
Job Description

The Autism Awareness Care and Training Center is an organization that teaches children with autism and provides them with a safe place to learn. Their aim is to help these individuals reach their highest potential by utilizing a number of different therapies to reach that goal.

The Autism Awareness Care and Training Centre is looking for volunteers to help teachers and caregivers with the daily activities at the Center. You would have the opportunity to assist the teachers, as well as interact closely with the children and caregivers. By assisting these children to learn important life skills you would be helping them to develop skills that will help them increase their ability to live happier and more productive lives.

This placement would be great for volunteers who are looking for experience interacting with autistic children and at the same time they would be working alongside skilled professionals and passionate caregivers, from whom they could learn so much. As a special needs education assistant volunteer at the AACT Centre you would be a vital component to their team.

During a volunteer's time at the organization you would be expected to assist in many of the daily activities like: supervise organized play activities with the children, work one-on-one with the children and their caregivers, assist in art and musical activities, (songs and nursery rhymes), lead vocabulary group sessions and help to teach grooming and personal hygiene, (comb hair and brush teeth), etc. These activities can help autistic children gain self-care, social, and communication skills that are necessary for everyday functioning.

Special needs education assistant volunteers do not require to have had training in this field. However, volunteers considering this type of placement should first educate themselves about autism so they can make an informed decision about their ability to make a positive contribution at this placement.

Volunteer Tasks Required
Seminars For Autism Parents
A special needs education assistant volunteer would help to organize seminars for the parents of Autistic children. At these seminars parents would learn about the affliction and the different approaches that may be tried in trying to communicate and teach their children.

Teaching Materials & Supplies
A special needs education assistant volunteer would ensure that all materials and supplies for the up-coming lesson were clean and in proper order to be used.

Teach One-on-One
A special needs education assistant volunteer would be given the opportunity to work with the children on a one-on-one basis to assess the child's weak and strong points and then help to develop methods to improve their problem areas.

Activities
A special needs education assistant volunteer would be expected to participate in numerous activities with the children. Some of these activities would be mainly aimed at just having fun but others would be geared towards a more learning aspect.
Organization Details

Autism Awareness Care & Training (AACT) was formed specifically to help children with autism and their families in Ghana; to better understand the disorder and to feel that there is a safe place to go for support and help. Today the organization not only supports the parents and families but it also has become a center for these children to receive quality education.

The Center has developed educational workshops and support groups for individuals who have autism and their families. They have also developed workshops for community members to learn about autism and hopefully help to reduce the stigma and discrimination that people living with autism in Ghana endure.

In 2009, the Center was awarded, "The Heart Spring Award for Innovation and Creativity in Special Education", for being "...true pioneers who bring innovation and creativity to achieve even greater results for children in need."

This was a huge achievement for the organization to have their program recognized for the major contributions it makes to help autistic children and their families learn to communicate while at the same time trying to reduce the stigma and discrimination that many of these children face.

The Autism Awareness & Care Training Center is committed to supporting individuals and families affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder. They believe that each person can use their God-given talent to reach their maximum potential, regardless of their disability. They are dedicated to fostering meaningful education and independence for every autistic individual.

When the Organization was Founded

In a failed search to find services that would help her child, Mrs. Serwah Quaynor, a mother of a child with autism, decided to fulfill her commitment to her son and to people living with autism, by founding the Autism Awareness Care & Training Organization in 1998. From that point on Mrs. Quaynor has made it a personal commitment to help children with autism.
How the Organization is Funded

This organization is self-funded. They create artwork such as paintings and jewellery at the organization's center that is sold to help sustain their programs. They also receive private donations from different organizations and individual donors.

Role of Religion Within This Organization

Ghana is a very religious country and religion is incorporated into the daily lives and workplaces everywhere. However, there is absolutely no pressure to be of any practicing religious faith. The center has an informal worship service every Friday for those who wish to attend where the staff and students dance and sing.
Placement Location Information

This organization is location in Accra in an area known as New Town, roughly 30 minutes from our BaseCamp Center. It is in a fairly densely populated part of the city of Accra.

The Autism Awareness, Care and Training Center is a one level, gated building with nice green grass and a play ground for the students. There is a canopied area outside where they do bead work to help raise money for the center. The inside is small, with two classrooms, an office and a kitchen. Unfortunately, due to the size limitations of the center they cannot accept any new students.

City Description

Accra is a vibrant city that is steeped in history. There is a historical lighthouse in the district of Jamestown; built in 1871, by the British. Climb to the top and enjoy the fantastic view of the Gold Coast. Note the traditional fishing boats and Fort Ussher. Observe the hustle and bustle of Jamestown.

Accra is home to the National Arts Market which provides an opportunity for volunteers to practice their bartering skills for paintings, carvings, bead work, fabric, and many other unique West African Arts.

There are many places to see in Accra. Why not visit one of the many museums? Accra also has an eclectic music scene, with a good beat to be found on almost every corner.

Activities in and around Accra include biking, swimming, catching a soccer game, drumming, dancing lessons, art lessons, and much more.

Points of Interest

Accra was settled by the Ga people and along with Twi, Ga is a common language spoken amongst its residents. Accra was one of the main slave trade centers in Africa with many nations setting up outposts here. Forts still exist in Jamestown and Osu, and are common tourist destinations. People can climb the lighthouse in
Jamestown which provides a great view of Accra.

Accra has been the capital of Ghana since the 1870s. As the capital and a major city in West Africa, Accra has a diverse population from many of the surrounding regions.

Weather in the Area

The dry season in Ghana is from September to March and temperatures generally range from 25-40 degrees Celsius. The rainy season begins in April and lasts until August and the temperature is a bit cooler at 20-35 degrees Celsius. As the name of the season suggests, rainfall increases dramatically throughout these months. It is generally not constant rain, but when it does rain, it usually pours.

Often the weather can change throughout the day. At one moment it is very hot and the next moment it is pouring rain. Volunteers are advised to bring a good waterproof jacket while in this area.

Transportation From BaseCamp

Volunteers will take tro tro (public transit) to the placement site each day. From our BaseCamp Center, volunteers will take a tro tro to a nearby main road - Ring Road Central, then take a second tro tro to New Town, a area within Accra. From New Town it is only a ten minute walk to the Autism Awareness Center.
Accommodation and Meals

All of our volunteers begin their stay in Ghana at our BaseCamp Center in Accra. 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 Ghana. 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 Ghana 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 Ghana

The BaseCamp Center in Accra is a hostel situated in the residential neighbourhood of Asylum Down. This is a relaxing and peaceful area, away from the continuous activity and hubbub of the tourist district, but central enough that we are within walking distance of many attractions in Accra including the National Museum, Kwame Nkrumah Circle and Adabraka Market.

The centre itself is a three-story building with several dormitory rooms. There are also several quiet areas where volunteers can study and relax including a covered area outside. There is an internet cafe, allowing volunteers to stay in touch with friends and family abroad. In addition to this, free WIFI can be accessed throughout the building.

BaseCamp Ghana Address
C/O Pink Hostel
5th Crescent
Accra, Ghana

Contact Details
Tel: 233-243-745-771 (Hostel Number)
Tel: 233-245-916-108
All volunteers spend their orientation in this centre when they first arrive in Ghana. The workshops and language training take place in this building as well although each day we incorporate outings to learn about the area and how to get around independently.
Living with a host family in Ghana 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.

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 Ghana.
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 Ghana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registration Fee</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Week</td>
<td>395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Weeks</td>
<td>535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Weeks</td>
<td>675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Weeks</td>
<td>815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Weeks</td>
<td>940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Weeks</td>
<td>1,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Weeks</td>
<td>1,190</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Weeks</td>
<td>1,315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Weeks</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All program fees are listed in US Dollars.

**This placement has a placement fee!**

In some cases, a placement will have to take on certain expenses in order to host a volunteer. For example, some medical internship placements take time away from paid medical staff to help with educational assistance. This has a cost that is compensated by a placement fee. In other cases, the organization may have to pay for additional equipment, energy consumption or other expense in order to put a volunteer to work.

In such cases, the organization charges a fee. This fee is paid directly to the organization in cash on the ground and IS NOT part of your Program Fees.
One of the reasons that we keep this fee separate is so that volunteers who do not pay us for accommodation, meals etc (Program Fees), will see that they will still have to make this payment directly to the organization upon their arrival.

The placement fee for this organization is: 100 USD
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

The following is a list of all months during which this placement is not available.

- August
- December

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.

| Jul 03, 2020 | Aug 07, 2020 | Sep 04, 2020 |
| Oct 02, 2020 | Nov 06, 2020 | Dec 04, 2020 |
| Jan 01, 2021 | Feb 05, 2021 | Mar 05, 2021 |
| Apr 02, 2021 | May 07, 2021 | Jun 04, 2021 |
| Jul 02, 2021 | Aug 06, 2021 | Sep 03, 2021 |
| Oct 01, 2021 | Nov 05, 2021 | Dec 03, 2021 |
| Jan 07, 2022 | Feb 04, 2022 | Mar 04, 2022 |
| Apr 01, 2022 | May 06, 2022 | Jun 03, 2022 |

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.