

Summer Internship Handbook 2012

Why become a Summer Intern?

Change your life
Change someone else's
Work on your Spanish
Gain international experience
Improve your leadership abilities
Learn about another culture and customs
Apply your passions, skills, and knowledge
Learn about yourself and others from the shared living/working environment
Hands on experience with community development

"I want to say thanks to the PDs; I had the most incredible month of my life. I am forever changed and for the better."
Jodi, MPI-Guatemala Summer 2011

"Manna was one of the greatest experiences of my life and has impacted me greatly, so thank you for giving me that opportunity!"
Steph, MPI-Nicaragua Summer 2011

"Manna, to me, seems to be not only an experience, but a launching point. This month becomes sustainable when it becomes a lifestyle. In that way, each little daily task is a small cog in a greater purpose, a realigning of my worldview and my purpose."
Grace, MPI-Ecuador Summer 2011



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I. WHAT IS MANNA PROJECT?

Manna Project International (MPI) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that connects college students and recent graduates with international service opportunities to collectively apply their passions and education through service to communities in need. The overall vision for our work is to establish a global network of Manna Project communities where young adults live and work alongside one another in underserved communities. MPI's model is a collaborative community-based approach to development stressing three organizational pillars:

- *Holistic Approach:* MPI takes a holistic approach to development, recognizing that the challenges facing the communities we serve are multi-faceted and must therefore be addressed through a variety of disciplines.
- *Community Focus:* By focusing on a specific community they are able to effectively pursue holistic development with the vital foundation of building relationships and trust with community members.
- *Volunteer Development:* Investing in MPI's volunteers and their personal and professional development is an intentional part of our organizational structure, and they give large responsibilities to volunteers, providing them with the opportunity to learn from experience.

By working hand-in-hand with locals and other international organizations towards, MPI provides first-hand exposure to international issues, raising awareness of community needs and the means through which students and graduates can pursue their call to service. In order to tie career interests to service work for participants, MPI has many different types of development projects. Taking a grassroots approach allows for an effective assessment of the community's needs and a widespread involvement in targeting specific actions in order to effectively meet those needs. In essence, MPI builds community to serve communities.

The luxuries of growing up in a country of high standards of peace, justice, liberty, and prosperity inhibits some Americans from realizing the uniqueness of their lifestyle. Although many college students across the country are informed of the social realities of foreign countries, most have not had the opportunity to leave the confines of national borders to experience living in another culture. International community service opportunities bring students in contact with global issues, allowing them to identify with foreign cultures and gain perspective into their own lives. MPI participants broaden their horizons through first-hand contact with a foreign culture and gain valuable work experience by leading community development programs in areas of their education and work interest.



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II. A BRIEF HISTORY

Manna Project International was started by a group of four Vanderbilt University students who were looking to harness the creative energy of college students and recent graduates to serve populations in need. Hoping to get their peers involved, they established an on-campus service organization. This new group's goals were to bring the university campus into greater contact with the local immigrant community, and to provide international service opportunities for students.

After visiting Nicaragua several times and making connections with others on the ground, the four college seniors established MPI as an IRS-recognized nonprofit organization, and began recruiting other college graduates to commit to working in Managua for one year. In September 2004, eleven college graduates arrived in Managua to begin their year of service that has forever changed, and will continue to change, their perspectives and outlooks on life. While the faces have changed, current MPI-Nicaragua members are helping over 400 community members through 11 programs, and hope to further develop the facilities of the community center.

In September 2007, Manna Project's second international site was launched in Ecuador. In conjunction with a local non-profit, the MPI Ecuador group began running an after-school program for over 30 children in a small, impoverished town, San Francisco, one hour outside of Quito. The Ecuador group became acquainted with the community and surrounding areas, working closely with a local financial cooperative to better understand the area's circumstances and needs. In March 2009 MPI Ecuador opened a community center in nearby Rumiloma which has now grown to serve 531 participants through 16 programs.

In January 2010, a feasibility team travelled to Guatemala and identified Chaquijyá as MPI's newest international site. In Guatemala's first year, a team of six Program Directors taught English to 230 students in two primary schools, implemented a health program for 500 children, and initiated a bottle school project (using recycled bottles filled with trash as building materials for a local school) to teach environmental stewardship and provide more classroom space. The founding team partnered with 20 hard-working teachers, half a dozen local institutions as well as several other Latin American organizations in order to conceive and implement these programs. The current team continues to work with these programs and also hopes to expand the range of programs.



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III. VISION

MPI seeks college students and recent college graduates to execute community development programs abroad. We offer two types of international volunteer service opportunities. "Program Directors" serve for thirteen months and are responsible for the long-term growth and sustainability of the organization and its programs. College-aged volunteers can participate in short-term sessions including one-week spring break group trips and four week Internships.

MPI directs its efforts towards communities in need: communities with inadequate access to basic educational, medical, and recreational resources. MPI aims for a holistic approach to community development, working with people of all ages in various aspects of their lives. This broad approach enables those with diverse passions and skills to work together towards providing each target community with the resources to serve its specific needs. For example, to better serve the healthcare needs of a target community, a holistic approach involves teaching health classes, providing access to clinics, and offering recreational activities that increase physical and mental health. College campus chapters and other domestic participants, who work towards similar goals by raising awareness and support for our international initiatives, complement the MPI international service team.

International Participants

- Work with fellow volunteers to develop community programs
- Create opportunities for growth and education in communities
- Broaden understanding of current international issues
- Define personal career goals
- Focus on career interest through service work

Domestic Participants

- Establish MPI chapters in U.S. universities and colleges
- Build bridges between university and community
- Provide local service options for current students & faculty
- Offer short-term international service-work opportunities
- Encourage community programming events

Partner Organizations

- Develop relationships with other international organizations
- Provide sustainable effort from college students and recent graduates
- Assist in supporting and sustaining the efforts of partner organizations serving communities in which MPI also works



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IV. THE ROLE OF AN MPI SUMMER INTERN

Developing programs & facilities

Interns serve an important role with MPI's programs. With extra hands and focused energy directed into specific programs and projects, short-term volunteers can complete lasting accomplishments in a short amount of time. We work to match your interests as a volunteer with our programs on the ground, and also welcome you to submit specific ideas for work projects based on personal interest or training. If you have an idea already, please provide the details of it in your initial application.

The intern experience

Short-term international volunteering can be a life changing experience. MPI encourages volunteers to take their role seriously and challenge themselves to take the opportunity to think and step outside the box in order to gain a full and rewarding volunteer experience. Summer interns are hosted by a team of Program Directors. This short-term opportunity provides interns a glimpse of what a full term of service looks like for those who are considering applying for Program Director positions after graduation. Since volunteers live, work, and spend down time together, there are always opportunities to meet like-minded people and form fast friendships with other volunteers from around the U.S.

Raising awareness

Being able to spend time in the developing world is a privilege that few people get to experience, and volunteers act as a window into the developing world for our friends and donors. Through presentations, slideshows, blog entries, and online photo publishing, volunteers raise awareness of MPI's mission and the global inequities it challenges.



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V. SUMMER INTERN TIMELINE FOR 2012

MPI's Summer Internship Program offers two four-week sessions as well as an eight-week option to four selected students. **Interns must arrive and depart on the specified dates for each session.**

Applications Due	Early decision deadline: Dec. 1, 2011 First round: January 23, 2012 Second round: March 26, 2012
Notification of Acceptance	Two weeks from deadline
Contract and \$250 Deposit Due	Two weeks from acceptance
Full payment due	One week prior to arrival
Session 1 Arrival Date	May 12, 2012
Session 1 Departure Date	June 9, 2012
Session 2 Arrival Date	June 10, 2012
Session 2 Departure Date	July 8, 2012
Eight-week Session Arrival Date	May 12, 2012
Eight-week Session Departure Date	July 8, 2012



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VI. CURRENT MPI PROGRAMS

Our programs are at various stages of development, some more permanent than others. Varying levels of development require different degrees of proactiveness, creativity, and flexibility; providing you the unique opportunity to expand on and make more thorough your set of leaderships skills. You will have the well-rounded experience of researching, designing, and implementing projects; complete with both great accomplishment and frustration. Working with MPI requires that you be flexible, patient, creative and proactive in problem solving, as well as a self-starter. If those traits describe you, you are perfect for this job. Below is the full program list for the three sites. More specific information on each site can be found at on our website.

Nicaragua

Education:

- Advanced English
- Elementary English
- Conversational English
- Children's English (3 classes)
- Creative Art
- Preschool
- Educational Scholarships
- Beginner English (3 classes in all 3 communities where we work)
- Intermediate English
- Computer Program

Health and Wellness:

- Feeding Program
- Child Sponsorship

Job Security:

- Business Development
- Career Center
- Microfinance

Sports & Recreation:

- Lacrosse the Nations Program & Partnership
- Women's Exercise
- Women's Soccer

Ecuador

Education:

- Children's Art
- Children's English
- Adult English
- Computer classes

Development:

- Community Public Library
- Teen Center/Youth Development

Preventative Health:

- Exercise Classes
- Children's Nutrition
- Adult nutrition and cooking class

Agriculture/Environment

Small Business Development

Guatemala

Education:

- In School English (3rd through 6th grade)
- Educational Summer Camp
- After School Beginner's English
- After School Intermediate
- English for Teachers

Health:

- Healthy Habits & Preventative
- Baby Weighing and Monitoring
- Women's Group Workshops

Environmental:

- Bottle School Project
- Education in Schools/during summer camp

Development/Business:

- Consultant to local women's weaving cooperative
- Consultant to local microfinance institution



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VII. SAFETY AND THE MPI HOUSE

The MPI House

In Nicaragua and Ecuador, MPI summer interns live in the MPI house with our yearlong Program Directors, and in Guatemala, volunteers live together in housing within walking distance of the Manna house. These living arrangements provide significant benefits in coordination of projects and in having a comfortable place to discuss and reflect on things learned each day. All interns have access to the resources of the MPI house in their country. In Nicaragua, interns are able to use in-house internet and laptop computer, phones for limited inexpensive international calling and our pool and hammocks for beating the heat at the end of an exhausting day. In Ecuador, there is a laptop computer for summer interns to share as well as several internet cafés within walking distance of the house to check email and make inexpensive international phone calls. Also, interns have access to lemon, coconut, and avocado trees right in the MPI front yard. In Guatemala, the views of the lake and volcanoes from every window in the house are breathtaking.

Organizational meetings also take place in the MPI house. Summer interns are required to attend weekly meetings so that they are informed of the week's schedule, are aware of any organizational updates or changes, and are able to voice interest and opinion in Manna's current projects. Throughout each week, there will also be individual planning and preparation meetings for each program.

A Note on Safety

In all three countries, petty theft is a common occurrence. Security is a priority at our MPI houses and our project sites and we take a great deal of initiative to prevent theft. As such, we recommend that interns think carefully about what valuables they choose to bring with them. In Ecuador and Guatemala we ask interns to refrain from bringing laptop computers for their one-month stay, as there is ample access to internet at these sites. Summer interns in Nicaragua may bring their laptops, though there will be restrictions on when the computers and internet are to be used, in an effort to encourage full immersion into the Manna experience.



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VIII. EXPECTATIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Attitude & Personal Presentation

Every volunteer's actions and words reflect on our country and on our organization. Interns are expected to be positive and open minded to local cultural norms. This requires flexibility when things are not easy or efficient, as well as enthusiasm for trying different activities and experiences. It also means being respectful of others' beliefs and values, be they community members or other volunteers.

Lifestyle Habits

MPI participants must abide by all local laws. Additionally, volatile habits such as drug use and excessive drinking are prohibited while working for MPI. The organization has the authority to terminate a contract with an intern, without refund, if he/she does not abide by or is suspected of not abiding by the zero drug or excessive drinking policy.

Please note that due to the nature of MPI's structure, the lines between work life and personal life are often significantly blurred. For this reason, lifestyle habits such as drug use and excessive drinking not only impact home and work relationships but they also harm the Manna Project reputation that hundreds of volunteers have worked to establish in the communities we serve. We ask that you take these points into consideration while deciding whether or not to apply for a summer internship position.

Couples

Couples are welcome to apply as summer interns, though expected to sleep in gender divided rooms.



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IX. FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

MPI's Summer Internship costs \$1250 per 4-week session per volunteer. This sum covers all necessary expenses including room, board, program transportation, weekend retreats, cultural excursions, and MEDEX international travel insurance. It does not cover "luxury" or special food preferences, though it does cover specific foods for allergies or vegetarians. Flights to/from Nicaragua, Ecuador, and Guatemala are not included.

Fundraising

Your summer costs don't all have to come out of pocket. Many of our interns raise funds for both volunteer expenses and travel by sending letters to friends and family, asking for donations to MPI as a way to fund their volunteer experience. And while you may be hesitant to ask friends and family for financial support, they often feel privileged to support such an experience.

If you do seek out donations, we will keep you updated on your fundraising success. All donations to MPI for your summer expenses should be clearly designated with your name. When personal contributions amount to more than the required amount for your stay, you may choose to donate them towards a particular community program or to MPI's general fund. For a template fundraising letter and information about how we process donations, please email summer@mannaproject.org.

All donations to Manna Project International are tax-deductible. However, MPI volunteers cannot receive a tax-deduction if they write a personal check to cover their own program expenses. Financial information is kept strictly confidential between administration and each individual.

All donations must be mailed directly by the donor to:

***Manna Project International
PO Box 121052
Nashville, TN 37212***

This is to facilitate timely processing of donations and quick turnaround on acknowledgement letters.



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X. APPLY

In our application, you will be asked to complete several sections that will help us to better understand you a little bit better. You will be asked to specify your site, program, and session preferences. Additionally, please be prepared to write a one-page personal statement in which you address your fit with our selection criteria: commitment to service, community focus, holistic development, and living/working abroad.

With your application, you will also need to submit a letter of recommendation and a resume. Please e-mail both of these in .pdf format to summer@mannaproject.org.

When you are ready to apply, you can find the application [here](#).

