



# Manna Project International

*Communities Serving Communities*

## Spring Break Trip Information

**Manna Project International’s mission** is to foster communities of young adults and encourage them to use their passions and education in service to communities in need. Our **vision** is to ultimately establish a global network of Manna Project communities where young adults live and work alongside one another in underserved communities to initiate positive change.

**As part of our mission, we offer spring break trips to our three international sites.** The purpose of these spring break trips is to provide service opportunities to groups of college-aged students who desire to spend their Spring Break volunteering internationally. Through service trips, MPI’s goal is to expand world perspectives, raise awareness of international issues, and instill a desire to serve on a deeper level.

**Location:** In **Nicaragua**, MPI works on the southwest outskirts of Managua . MPI also has programs in La Chureca, the community within Managua’s municipal dump. In **Ecuador**, MPI operates in the semi-rural Chillós Valley, which is located to the southeast of Quito, Ecuador’s capital. And in **Guatemala**, MPI works in the Western Highlands in the small rural community of Chaquijyá, a short bus ride from Sololá and Panajachel’s city centers.

**Trip Overview:** MPI’s Spring break service trips include a mix of cultural, educational, and service opportunities while also giving a taste of who MPI is and what we do. Spring break volunteers can expect opportunities to engage the developing world in the following ways:

1. **Service Outreach:** Be active and get your hands dirty. Build something, teach classes, lead a sports clinic or run a kid’s camp.
2. **Higher Education:** Learn the ‘ins and outs’ of an area of interest in a real-world, international setting. Experience first-hand topics such as micro-finance and public health education
3. **Cultural Focus:** Immerse yourself in another culture and learn more about its history, economy, family dynamics, etc.; Spend time in the community building personal relationships.
4. **MPI overview:** Attend MPI’s programs, have discussions with current Program Directors regarding their experience abroad with MPI and how their perspectives have changed.

An **overnight excursion** at the end of the week serves as a time of debriefing and cultural immersion, with everyone hopping on a bus and/or boat for a trip to the destination of the group’s choice. Options in **Nicaragua** include the beaches of San Juan del Sur, the island of Ometepe, the crater lake of Laguna de Apoyo, Granada, Leon, and hiking the Cerro Negro volcano. In **Ecuador**, trip options include the rainforest towns of Tena and Baños, the cloudforests of Mindo, or hikes at Quilotoa or Otavalo. And in **Guatemala**, trips include visiting beautiful Lake Atitlan, hiking three nearby volcanoes, exploring Sololá’s vibrant markets, zip lining through Panajachel’s forests, and absorbing the Maya culture in one of the many small lake towns.

### Leader Incentives:

- Trip leaders from universities organizing a spring break group for the first time will receive a free trip for organizing a full team (10 – 12). Half price will be given to the leader for a team of 8-9 participants.
- Trip leaders from MPI chapters or universities who have previously sent a team to a Manna site will receive a \$100 discount for getting their team’s money in by the given deadline.
- Only one person per team can qualify for the “trip leader” incentive.

### Make Your Mark!

We recognize the importance of allowing each group to ‘make their mark’ by focusing on a specific field of interest during their short stay. Groups select their area of focus when applying, and once accepted, further define a specific program or project based on the current opportunities at the given site. Focus areas include:

Education	Health
Sports & Recreation	Business/Microfinance
Construction	Agriculture & Environment

**Trip Coordination:** Groups are organized at their respective universities. The group's leader(s) communicate with MPI to plan the trip, selecting the focus of their trip and, following from this, their fundraising requirements. Collaboration with MPI's Program Directors in Nicaragua, Ecuador, or Guatemala ensures an experience that will make a lasting impact—for the volunteers and for those they are serving.

**Group Size:** Minimum six people; maximum of 12 in Nicaragua & Ecuador and 10 in Guatemala.

**Dates:** February-April (all trips are Sunday to Sunday of the University's Spring Break vacation)

**Individual Costs:** \$375/person/week (Sunday-Sunday), price includes all meals, lodging, on-site transportation, activities, overnight trip, and travel insurance. Plane tickets are not included. Individual costs do not cover project expenses during the trip.

**Project Costs:** \$500-\$6000; varies depending on the desired focus of the trip (ex. Buying art supplies to do art classes vs. building a basketball court). Groups are encouraged to work together to fundraise in order to meet these costs. MPI can provide you with resources to assist with your group fundraising efforts.

**How to Apply:** Applications can be found on our website at: [www.mannaproject.org/short-term](http://www.mannaproject.org/short-term). Groups from MPI campus chapters as well as unaffiliated universities may apply. Interested individuals who are not part of a group are encouraged to apply for MPI's Summer Volunteer Program or contact us for further options.

**Application timeline:**

Applications due	Sept 20
Acceptance & site placement notification	Sept 30
Confirmation form with project selection & \$250 deposit due (deposit goes toward project fundraising)	Dec 1
Flight itinerary and participant list due	Feb 1
Total group money due (participant fees & project fundraising) <i>(a late fee of \$20/individual applies if not postmarked by Feb 1)</i>	Feb 1

**Contact Info:** [springbreak@mannaproject.org](mailto:springbreak@mannaproject.org); 615.746.7487