Volunteer Abroad

**Think Big...**

**Assess your interests.** Take time to think about where you want to go, for how long, the type of work you want to do, your living situation and whether you want a rural or urban placement.

**Think about special needs and aspirations.** Consider the components of your identity—age, race, sexual orientation—and how this might affect your program choice. Also think about what you will need in a daily work environment and whether you want to work alone or in a group.

**Create a vision.** List the characteristics you are looking for in an organization ranging from cost and length of stay to more philosophical issues such as its approach to development. Circle the qualities most important to you.

**But Keep it Real...**

**Contact alumni.** Ask them hard questions about their experiences and try to get contact information for people with whom they volunteered who might be more critical of the program than they are.

**The ideal volunteer organization...**
- Is honest about expenses, activities, and challenges
- Will provide contact info of past participants
- Screens volunteers for maturity, skills, cultural sensitivity, mental and physical health
- Provides volunteers with fundraising ideas
- Is transparent about where your program fee goes
- Provides orientation materials and preparation suggestions
- Provides extensive on-site orientation and training, and has a 24 hour support network

**Resources**
- volunteeroverseas.org/html/resources.html
- peacecorps.gov
- idealist.org
- rotary.org/en/studentsandyouth
- mercycorps.org
- yci.org
- go.carleton.edu/career

Teach Abroad

**Be sure before you go.** Be in direct contact with the school you will be teaching at and sign a contract before committing and flying over.

**Keep deadlines in mind.** Often you will need to get official documents from your school, visit the doctor, and make multiple trips to government offices, so take care of it early! Also some programs require TEFL certification so leave yourself enough time to do that.

**Choose wisely.** Research where the demand is and what qualifications are needed. Search for job posting boards and government sites to compare benefits. Some opportunities you have to pay for, others will pay you!

**TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language).** Some schools only require a bachelor’s degree but others require TEFL certification. Once you receive your certification, it never expires. Turn the page for a few TEFL options.
**TEFL Options:**
- Hamline University: Intensive or semester-long course, approx. $3020
- TEFL International: 4-week intensive course, Provides job placement assistance, 19 locations all over the world, cost approx. $2000-$3000 (teflcourse.com)

**Gain experience before you go.** Make sure this is something you want to devote time and energy to by learning about teaching methodologies and building lesson plans. Gain confidence in front of a classroom and build your résumé; experience makes you a stronger candidate. Look for community service opportunities in ESL tutoring/teaching English at the local community center (themlc.org)

**Resources**
- jetprogramme.org
- epik.go.kr
- fulbright.state.gov
- frenchculture.org/spip.php?rubrique424&tout=ok
- eslcafe.com
- amscan.org/training_us_to_scan.html
- worldteach.org
- www.teacherhit.com
- go.carleton.edu/career

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**Work Abroad**

**Success in the International Job Market**

**What sets you apart?** Find a skill that is in demand overseas. Research job/skill shortages in other countries: Engineers, computer specialists, English Teachers, development specialists, health care personnel, agriculture specialists...

**Make contacts!** Current employer/internship – find out if they have overseas offices or contacts. Use study abroad contacts – can your internship supervisor offer you a long-term position? Does your host family know of an English school you could teach at? Also, Network, network, network!

**Look into domestic companies that transfer employees abroad.** Most people start working for a company in the US and then are sent overseas.

**Learn another language!** This makes you a substantially more attractive candidate in the pertinent geographic area.

**Realities of Working Abroad**

- Most of the time, companies will only hire a foreign national if no one in the country is qualified for the job
- Being approved for a work visa without sponsorship from an employer is almost impossible
- Many Americans begin their international career here in the US
- You may have to make the choice between what is more important to you, a prestigious career-oriented job or just being overseas (and willing to be a nanny or hotel clerk as long as you can be abroad)

**Resources**
- IIEPassport.org
- transitionsabroad.com
- backdoorjobs.com
- monster.com
- www.cie.uci.edu/prospective/iopother/work.shtml
- internationalcenter.umich.edu/swt/work
- umabroad.umn.edu/programs/wiv/work
- onesmallplanet.com/geninfo.htm#Working%20Abroad
- mnreturneeconference.org
- go.carleton.edu/career

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