

JAMA ROCK

The Voice of Jamaica

Projects  Abroad

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Message from Country Director

When Projects Abroad chose Jamaica as a new destination, it chose the best island in the Caribbean. The island was described by Christopher Columbus, who landed here in 1492, as “the fairest island that eyes have beheld; mountains and land seem to touch the sky and full of valleys and fields and plains”. Jamaica is known for its friendly people, rich culture, fascinating traditions, beautiful countryside, lovely beaches, pulsating reggae beat, sumptuous food, religious emphasis and relaxing atmosphere. From the cool hills of Mandeville, to the rustic country side of Treasure Beach, the captivating sunset in Negril, Georgian architecture and history in Falmouth, and the natural beauty of Portland, there are so many things to experience.

Our motto is ‘Out of Many, One People’. This truly epitomizes the various blends in Jamaica, and we have all unified to make the country what it is today. Among our many achievements, such as having one of the greatest entertainers of all times – Bob Marley –, and the two fastest men on earth – Asafa Powell and Usian Bolt –, this island is small but great; as we would say in Jamaica “wi likkle but wi tallawah”. And so I say a warm Jamaican welcome to all. If you are a volunteer, we are delighted to have you here with us in Jamaica. If you are thinking of volunteering, we would encourage you to come and immerse yourself in our culture.

Mandeville, Manchester, is delighted that Projects Abroad has chosen our town because there is a great need for volunteers to assist in these critical areas. In May there were eight volunteers in Jamaica; five taking part on our sports project, two volunteering on our care project, and one on our teaching project. These volunteers were from six countries: Germany, Switzerland, Canada, Australia, France and the United States of America. We are blessed to share with them our culture, and we are happy that we are also able to learn from them. “Justice, truth be ours forever. Jamaica, land we love”.

One Love

Bridgette B. Barrett – Country Director

Country Director's Profile



Bridgette joined Projects Abroad in April 2008. She was born and raised in Manchester, Jamaica. As a ‘parish hopper’ she also knows the terrains of the entire island. Her background is in psychology, sociology and community development. Before joining Projects Abroad she worked as a research, training and community development consultant at her own home-based company. She is passionate about helping homeless and street people, advancing the education of needy children, and helping young people to empower themselves; therefore she spends much time coordinating projects for these marginalised members of society. She likes interior decorating, car racing, driving to different parts of the island and interacting with community people, and, yes, working! She is a mini cooper fanatic and domino enthusiast.

Placements

We are most grateful to the placements that accommodated Project Abroad volunteers from May 2008. These include Kendal Primary School, Villa Road Primary and Junior High, Hanbury Children's Home, May Day High School and Anna Miller Basic School. Both the placements and volunteers have benefited immensely from this experience.

I was impressed with the competence of Dominik Rohe and Thorsten Rosch and their level of commitment in assisting the children in learning new skills. The volunteers for the most part punctual and respectful to students and teachers with whom they interact. We are grateful for the cross-cultural exchange, this is an excellent initiative and I hope we get more volunteers soon. Their time was too short.

Mr. Gerry Lemonius ~ Multi-purpose Teacher
(Kendal Primary School)



Volunteers with students at Kendal Primary School

This programme is a wonderful initiative as it promotes the integration of different cultures. It gives our students an opportunity to experience different teaching styles and methodologies. And not only students benefit, but teachers also learn and adopt the high level of professionalism that these volunteers demonstrate. The programme is also beneficial to the volunteers because they are given a

chance to teach in a different environment, and this can only serve to develop their teaching skills.

Mr. Ewan Henningham ~ Physical Education Teacher (Villa Road Primary & Junior High School)

I have benefited by getting much needed help, and I have learnt new ideas from the volunteers. The children are able to meet, interact with and learn about people from different countries and learn all about their culture. The school has also been given material to enhance learning.

Miss Lola Brown ~ Teacher
(Hanbury Children's Home)

The children benefited by getting to know about other countries. The children have benefited so much, and the sporting activities and games are very helpful. The help that I get on a day-to-day basis is appreciated because I have special needs children of different ages.

Miss Heather Walters ~ Teacher (Hanbury Children's Home ~ Special Needs School)

Miss Lewis has thrown herself into the work and has been very active in telling stories, puppetry, and at times taking her own class. She does not hesitate to assist where help is needed, such as in the delivery of lunches to the children and tidying up. The children love her, and sometimes I wonder how she copes with them pulling at her all over and playing in her hair.

Miss Hildred Lewis ~ Principal (Anna Miller Basic School)



Volunteer teaching sports Villa Road Primary & Junior High School

Host Families

Being away from home can be a frightening experience; however, our host families provide a warm and loving atmosphere that make our volunteers feel right at home. The host families also provide a rich cultural experience, and for this we say thank you to:

The Parker Family - Aunt Liz, Grandma Vicky, Grandpa David, Asia, Lelah, Tamar & Malachi

The Rattray Family – Mr. & Mrs. Rattray, Xavier and Joan

The Thomas Family – Paulette

The Williams Family – Miss Vivian, Kadian & Paul

The Boothe Family – Tia, Laton, Christopher and Brianna

The Banton Family – Novlyn, Fabian, Arrayma, Wayzaro, Garnet



Courtney with host family (Tia & Brianna)



Dominik & Xavier



Diana & Asia

Volunteers' Voice



We were the first volunteers in Jamaica – the pioneers – and so we faced a few hiccups, but our supervisor helped us in every situation; she is always available to answer questions and fix our problems. So far we have been here for more than six weeks and have enjoyed everyday. Enjoying your time here isn't difficult because you'll be overwhelmed from new experiences daily; on your first few days here you will be almost flooded! We like ..., what are we saying? We love it here.

Being in Jamaica is so awesome. We have seen the most beautiful beaches (probably in the whole world), magnificent landscapes, and we have met some very friendly and openhearted people. The mentality of the Jamaicans is so great and they are so helpful. If you need help, you'll get it. Okay, there still exist a few who will try to fool you, but if you talk to them and mention that you are a volunteer here, they will change their behaviour. Bargaining becomes easier when you say you are volunteering; sadly you cannot bargain the with route taxi fares. Travelling in Jamaica is very cheap though, but be careful on Sundays though because in some towns it is difficult to get a taxi as this is 'stay at home/family day' in Jamaica.

Dominik & Thorsten (Germany)

When you first step out of the airport in Jamaica, a wave of heat will hit you, and among the many people asking you if you need a taxi you will try to find the person holding a Projects Abroad sign waiting to take you to your new home. The first thing you will experience in Jamaica is the



driving. A little different from what you are accustomed to; however, you always make it to your destination perfectly

safe, and you will be happy to meet your host family. If they are anything like our host family you will grow to love them very quickly. They welcome you with open arms, and are eager to show you 'their Jamaica'. You will experience the food (and develop your own likes and dislikes) and many other things which make up their amazing culture. If you are in the teaching program, you will find the children excited to meet you ... and to touch your hair! They want to know where you are from and what it is like back home. Even though you will enjoy your work very much, we still always look forward to our weekend travel adventures. It is exciting to discover the other parts of Jamaica as each place has its own unique atmosphere. From the Blue Mountains to Long Bay to Margaritaville, you will experience something new. However, if you decide not to travel one weekend your family will love to take you to their church. It will be on Saturday or Sunday, and you can enjoy dancing, singing and clapping with them. Whether you are religious or not, it is an experience you will have to make as church is a very important part of their lives. It is difficult to sum up our experience here in just a few lines. So come to Jamaica and see for yourself all that this beautiful country has to offer because when the time has come to say goodbye, you won't want to leave.

Bless – Diana (Switzerland) & Elise (Canada)



Jamaica ... it has been one of the most wonderful experiences of my life to date, and I am so pleased that I decided to take the plunge and do this. The Jamaican

people have been so friendly and kind from the very moment I stepped off the plane in Montego Bay. Bridgette is one of the most amazing people I have ever met. She has gone above and beyond her call of duty to ensure that all the volunteers are comfortable and are prepared for the cultural experience. The children and staff at Hanbury Children's Home have been wonderful and have made my volunteer experience there truly fulfilling. And of course my home stay – the care and food has been an amazing experience. It certainly is a great way to be immersed in the culture as well as giving community support in a worthwhile way.

Wendy (Australia)



Hello, my name is Nick Dunki-Jacobs. I am 20 years old, a student from Holland (now living in France), and am teaching sports at May Day

High School. I have been in Jamaica for 3 weeks now and I am loving the country, friendliness of the people, the food, and the weather. Just by going into Mandeville I was able to meet local people very quickly and make contacts. The openness of everyone amazed me as well: you can literally walk up to anyone and start a conversation and enjoy yourself. I have been on one excursion to date; this was Dunn's River Falls and Dolphins Cove. It was a day to remember; with beautiful scenery and beaches, and of course the dominoes and rum added to the experience. I will have to recommend Jamaica to anyone and everyone because it is a beautiful country and definitely a place to visit. Big up Bob Marley!

Nick (Holland)



My experience with Projects Abroad has been wonderful. My host family has made me feel welcomed and comfortable in

a place that is far from home. I have been able to see the Jamaican life first hand and have enjoyed the opportunity to be introduced to such a wonderful community and friendly people. My placement at the orphanage (Hanbury) has allowed me to see that happiness does not depend on how many materials you possess. The little kids are so full of life and I quickly learnt to love them. My assignment is helping to teach school subjects. It has taught me patience and love, and I get great satisfaction seeing them progress. Overall, I am loving the new friends I have made and the laid back atmosphere in beautiful Jamaica.

Courtney (U.S.A.)

Social Events

What you are missing “Come to Jamaica and feel alright, let’s get together and feel alright” – Bob Marley

Information sharing Meeting



Section of audience at meeting

On May 1, 2008, an information sharing meeting was held at the Golf View Hotel in Mandeville. The purpose of the meeting

was to introduce Projects Abroad to key stakeholders and agencies within the parish of Manchester. In total, forty two people attended. These included individuals from the health sector, education sector, government and nongovernmental agencies that focus on community, children’s, youth and adult literacy issues, media and volunteers. An overview of the mission of Projects Abroad was presented by the Country Director and was followed by a question and answer session. Participants provided useful suggestions on areas that could be focused on and highlighted the importance of Projects Abroad coming to Manchester.

Reggae Dance Class

Do you want to learn all the latest reggae dance moves? This includes Dela, Bogle, Signal Di Plane, Log On, Gully Creeper, Flowers A Bloom, Umbrella, Rum Ram, Cut Dem Off, Shovel, Ever Fresh Ever Clean, and many others. The colourful, well decorated and skilful Ray, along with Claude, will teach you. On May 8, 2008 our volunteers attended their first ever reggae dance class. See the volunteers in action, doing the Gully Creeper.



Ray & volunteers doing the Gully Creeper.



‘Gi dem di dance, bus di dance’ – Jamaica Crew

Dunn’s River Falls & Dolphins Cove

Dunn’s River Falls, in Ocho Rios, is one of the most beautiful falls in the world to climb (approximately 900 feet). You should not come to Jamaica and not climb this falls. You will have friendly tour guides who will make your experience like none other. We visited Dunn’s River Falls and Dolphins Cove on May 11, 2008. During the month volunteers also visited Treasure Beach, Portland, Montego Bay, Oracabessa and the YS Falls.



Courtney, Diana & Nick resting a bit on their way up

News & Updates

Projects Abroad Gives ...

During the month of May, Projects Abroad donated the following items:

Hanbury Children's Home – one children's cricket set, one football and four tennis balls,

May Day High School - two table tennis rackets and four balls,

Anna Miller Basic School – one child's football,

Wendy & Melvin – paint and material for pillows and wall painting.

Volunteers Give ...

During the month of May volunteers donated the following items:

Elise – posters to Villa road Primary and Junior High School,

Wendy – recorders, stickers, pencils, erasers, sharpeners, card for table top games, and animals to help in activities.

Projects Abroad and Volunteers Give ...

May 23rd is a holiday in Jamaica called 'Labour Day'. As the name suggests, communities across Jamaica are supposed to get together and do something meaningful. Projects Abroad provided paint and material to assist in giving the home of Wendy and Melvin in Heathfield, Manchester, a new look. Elise did some fantastic paintings and Diana made pillows. The community and the volunteers came together and worked hard to make this a success. After the hard work, the volunteers challenged the community to a game of football, which they lost 6/2. Better luck next time guys; you fought a good battle.



Nick, Tameka and Thorsten hard at work



Diana, Elise and Courtney whitewashing the tank

Upcoming Social Events

- Volunteers day out – June 8, 2008
- Reggae Dance Class – June 12, 2008
- Retro Thursday at Jerky's - June 19, 2008
- Feeding street and homeless people in Mandeville – June 27, 2008

Upcoming Country Events

- Reggae Sumfest – July 13-19, 2008
- Little Ochi Seafood Carnival – July 13, 2008 at Little Ochi in Alligator Pond
- Manchester Fiesta, All Food Festival and
- Fun Day – July 26, 2008 at the Kirkvine Sports Club

Celebrations

- Happy Birthday Diana!!! We wish you all the best.

It's so hard to say Goodbye...

- So long Wendy. It was great having you on the team. Keep in touch.
- 'Lata' Courtney, all the best.

Radio and Television Programme

The local radio and television station operated by the Northern Caribbean University (NCU) has been assisting in sensitising stakeholders in Manchester about Projects Abroad. On May 14, 2008 the Country Director was interviewed on the television programme 'Scrutinizing the Issues'. The media is keen on Manchester getting a real cross-cultural experience, and so the radio programme 'A Different Dimension' has asked volunteers to come in and be a part of the International Hour. To date Nicholas Dunki-Jacobs (Holland/France) and Thornsten Rosch (Germany) have participated. They shared aspects of their culture; it was very interesting.

New Volunteers in June – Warm Jamaican Welcome

Names	Countries
Olivia Williams	United States of America
Benjamin Gruner	Germany
Alison Mackintosh	United Kingdom
Karen Mackintosh	United Kingdom
Eilidh Rice	United Kingdom

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