

UC San Diego Extension Launches Center for Global Volunteer Service

U.S. State Department Officials To Lead Safety and Security Workshop

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Forget about your typical tourist travel advice. How do you prepare if you want to offer humanitarian assistance as part of your trips to impoverished foreign locales? Visiting a nation with extreme poverty and rampant diseases creates real concerns.

In response to a new trend in international travel that links service work with destinations in developing countries, UC San Diego Extension will officially launch its new Center for Global Volunteer Service with a two-day workshop October 5-6 on "Safety and Security for the Global Volunteer" led by two members of the U.S. Department of State.

The potential audience is greater than the many college students deciding whether to go to work immediately after graduation or spend time helping others with a short-term or long-term volunteer experience.

"More and more students, adults and seniors are looking for meaningful ways to spend their vacations and retirement making a contribution to others," says Jill Andrews, former regional manager of the Peace Corps and the founding director of the Center for Global Volunteer Service.

Andrews helped start the center because she saw a need for more collaborative grass-root approaches that match U.S. citizens of all ages with local citizen groups that focus on tangible, manageable issues within the country. As part of the initiative, UC San Diego Extension has designed several courses to help individuals interested in international volunteer service determine if such service is right for them. The training also prepares them to have productive and safe experiences.

The kickoff workshop features Kenneth Durkin, Western Hemisphere Affairs division chief and Gregory Hoobler, an international security specialist with the U.S. State Department's Office of Overseas Citizens Services. They will provide information on threats to international travelers and tips to minimize risks. Representatives from various study abroad programs will be on hand to talk about the safety and security aspects of student programs and provide information on cross cultural adjustments and strategies for success.

Two UC San Diego School of Medicine faculty will also participate in the workshop. Allen McCutchan, MD will present information on HIV-AIDS and stress how to protect your self during service. Sharon Reed, MD will talk about food production, preparation and storage plus provide tips on how to avoid common tourist medical complaints. The workshop price is \$270.

"Often international volunteers attend more funerals than weddings and birthdays and many have just not been prepared to work in areas impacted by HIV-AIDS. These kinds of situations cause concern and create a lot of stress," says Andrews.

In addition to traditional courses offered on campus, two online courses will be accessible to any one in the world with computer access. The self-paced online courses are available each quarter, starting in the fall any time between September 24 and December 15.

"Basic Overview for Global Volunteers" provides information about the types of volunteer opportunities that are available. The course teaches basic community assessment skills, consensus building skills and fundraising tips. The online course price is \$95.

"HIV/AIDS & Infectious Diseases" covers the essential information and practical advice concerning health and safety issues frequently encountered by volunteers. UCSD Medical faculty members McCutchan and Edward O'Neil, MD, will present information on major health and safety issues plus advice about immunizations, water treatment and food preparation. The online course price is \$300.

Before launching the center, UC San Diego Extension did its homework. Many non-governmental agencies, faith-based organizations and government agencies were consulted and participated in developing the courses. The aim is to meet the needs of the volunteers who want to work in undeveloped nations and help the poor and sick, provide educational opportunities, create income generation projects or increase awareness of how to use computers and the Internet.

"UC San Diego Extension believes that great gains come from integrating the collective knowledge of the university, community leaders and professionals," says Andrews. "In addition to improving the workforce talent pool, continuing education can help individuals enrich their lives and build better communities."

UC San Diego Extension has a four-decade track record of helping boost the university's global reach, local impact, and national reputation. In addition to annually educating 40,000 people through innovative local, corporate and online programs, public programs such as Global CONNECT and San Diego Dialogue play a key role in connecting disparate communities by conducting timely research and providing new business assistance to regions around the world, including the San Diego-Baja California, Mexico region.

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