San Diego State University & International Volunteer HQ

1st January, 2018 - 31st December, 2018

- 481 students completed programs
- Average duration: 2 weeks
- 75% female participants
- $312,030 in program fees contributed to local teams in the communities in which volunteers are placed
- Students participated in 32 countries
- 66.7% of students travelled together as a group
- IVHQ participated in 2 SDSU Study Abroad Fairs
- IVHQ provided scholarships for 2 SDSU students for a 2 week study abroad program

Top 5 program choices:
- Bali
- Costa Rica
- Spain
- Peru
- Vietnam

Top 5 volunteering fields:
- Medical/Healthcare
- Teaching
- Health Education
- Childcare
- Special Needs Care
What’s changed at IVHQ?

- Introduced a support system for volunteers looking for assistance booking flights. IVHQ works closely with a reputable humanitarian flights provider who can develop customized travel paths for individual and group volunteers.

- Opened programs in Greece, Belgium, Belize, New Orleans, and Rome to recognise the growing need for support in these destinations within the fields of teaching, childcare, construction, conservation, providing support to refugees, or volunteering with animals.

- Reached a total volunteer count of 98 000, since 2007.

- Completed annual program reviews and audits across all 49 IVHQ programs.

- Launched a diverse range of new project types within the fields of Women’s Education, Marine Conservation, and Refugee Support.

- Established a number of new internship opportunities with IVHQ’s sister organisation Intern Abroad HQ in the specialty fields of physiotherapy, physician’s assistant, environmental, reserve conservation, engineering and marketing.

Student feedback data

291 of the 481 students who participated on IVHQ programs provided us detailed feedback which is a key element of IVHQ program reviews and quality control.

The following are a few highlights IVHQ are proud to share:

● 86% of students rated IVHQ’s overall service and support before their program started as greater than 8/10, with 49% ranking IVHQ’s service and support as 10/10.

● 95% of volunteers agreed with the statement: Do you feel you grew and developed as a person in your experience?

● 80% of volunteers rated the long term worthwhile impact within the local community as 8/10 and above.

● 72% of students rated their IVHQ program accommodation as 8/10 or higher, and 38% of students rated their program accommodation as 10/10 - an increase of 7% on 2017 student feedback scores.

● 65% of students rated the meals provided to them as 8/10 and above.

● 85% of students rated the local team’s in country service as greater than 8/10, with 60% of students rating the overall in country service and support as 10/10.

● 92% of students would volunteer with IVHQ again.
Students also shared valuable feedback and suggestions on improvements for several areas of the experience and we worked directly with the local teams involved at the time feedback was received to address these improvement areas for future students. Key areas highlighted was around confusion for volunteers should their flights be delayed and specific placement information being shared earlier in the planning process.

**Student application data**

As an insight into what SDSU students hope to gain out of their volunteer abroad experience and why they have chosen to use IVHQ for their journey, the following are a small number of answers in students application to the question: WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO APPLY TO VOLUNTEER ABROAD WITH INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER HQ?

“I would like to experience another culture and learn more about it. Having never been outside of the US before, I would like to have a memorable first trip and positively impact the lives of others.”

“I would like to gain experience within international communities that revolve around health, food, and nutrition.”

“As a speech language pathologist major I’ve learned how important it is to have good language input, implicit feedback, affection and attention, and so on. This program will give me the opportunity to do all the things I’ve been taught. I will allow me observe the things I’ve been learning and I will be able to take action.”

“I would like to learn more skills and techniques that are different from the ones I have been taught in America. In addition, I would like to practice and improve my Spanish speaking skills.”

“I really enjoy traveling and immersing myself into different cultures as well as giving back to the community. I liked the flexibility IVHQ gives students especially with people like me who want to study abroad for a long time but is not able to during the school year.”

“I had friends who volunteered with IVHQ and have only heard positive experiences.”
Testimonials students submitted to be shared with future volunteers

This was one of the most life-changing and memorable experiences of my life. Being exposed to a third world country really opens your eyes. This experience helped me to become more socially and culturally aware. I loved being in Cambodia, speaking the language, and providing my services where they were needed. I will definitely go back to Cambodia in the near future.

This experience was one of the best of my life. I was able to fully immerse myself in a wonderful culture.

My advice to anyone would be to do everything in your power to embrace the local mindset and customs in terms of actions, food, and dress. That made my experience many times better and allowed me to make lasting relationships.

You MUST volunteer with IVHQ if you want to grow as an individual

Fiji CHANGED my life! Come with an open mind wanting to learn and I promise you will have the best experience of your life.

You are going to make new memories and share it with the awesome people you meet! Take everything in because your time abroad is going to go fast! Even though your volunteering, make some fun out if it because your little contribution means so much to the people you are helping! Be considerate of the new country you’re in and just be open! Don't yuck peoples yum! Overall 11/10 experience and would definitely do again :-) 

Volunteering in Thailand was one of the most eye-opening experiences I have ever had. Chiang Rai is incredibly beautiful and I spent two weeks teaching English to local hill tribe children and making connections with the other volunteers. I will always be grateful for this opportunity and the memories I made in Thailand will stay with me for the rest of my life!

The program experience feels like a one and a lifetime experience. I highly recommend it because locals and the people will give you so much love and respect because of your volunteer work. You will feel the benefit of doing good with your work, and also feel like you are vacationing at the same time.