



**Community Development
Alternative Break
to Los Jasmines, Costa Rica**

Winter Program Info Session

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How many years this alternative break has run

We thank USG for the funding support to make this alternative break possible and make the cost to participants more affordable for Storrs Undergraduate students.

The Program Coordinator is working to develop partnerships with regional campuses to offset cost for regional campus students.





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What's CO??



CO (Community Outreach)

“Community Outreach’s mission is to enrich learning at the University of Connecticut through preparing students to be active global citizens by engaging them in service activities that enhance the quality of life for both others and themselves”

Each program is student-led, with faculty/staff support.

Alternative Breaks

A subsection of CO that works on service-learning experiences supporting alongside the community to seek a more equitable and inclusive society. We run ten alternative breaks, and these range in topics such as racial justice, environment justice, housing security, healthcare access, etc.





Important People



Learning Partner

UCONN Staff member who is there as a support for the Student Program Director. They do **not** lead the break, but rather serve as a knowledgeable resource and provide risk management support and oversee the financial aspects. (and a *real* adult ;))!




Community Partner

Someone (or multiple people) from the community who guides our project. Our Community Partner is Reto Juvenil and Project Director is Fabio. He has worked with for the us for many years now!



Carl

Staff Program Coordinator. He will also serve as Learning Partner for this Alternative Break. He most likely will send you some important program emails.





Introduction to Ethical Service Abroad



Work in line with the community

Reto Juvenil works closely with community members and leaders to create projects that the community asks. We work with community partners and are flexible to their needs.




Three components of quality service

Education, Service, and Reflection. We incorporate these three components as much as possible before, during, and after the alternative break.



Ethical Storytelling

Being able to go on this trip is a privilege, and as students we recognize this. We want to make sure we are getting the most from the experience while making sure we are working in line with the community and presenting our experience in an authentic, non-exploitative way.





Logistics

- **Dates:** Wednesday, January 8- Friday, January 17th
 - *Depart JFK early on the 8th. Participants will gain access to their dorms on campus on the 7th to move in and meet in person the night before. We will take a private shuttle to JFK.*
 - *Arrive back in JFK late on the 17th. Participants will be able to stay in their dorms straight into spring semester.*
- **Anticipated Cost:** \$620 for Storrs Undergraduate Students. Regional Campus students please email Carl (carl.soares@uconn.edu) for more info about your anticipated cost.
- **Location:** *We will fly directly to Liberia, then take a private shuttle bus to Los Jazmines.*
 - *Escuela de Los Jazmines A*





Construction - 2024

Before



After!





Construction Projects

We have a long term partnership with Los Jazmines and Reto Juvenil. Past construction projects have included a teacher's dormitory, sidewalks and shade covers, and a health center. Each year participants past have worked on these construction projects and steps to continue to develop/sustain these projects as well as other smaller development projects such as murals, gardening, and English classes as needed. Afterward, they will engage in educational and required reflection activities for around an hour to an hour and a half hour a day.







Sample Day Schedule

- 7am - Wake-up
- Get ready for the day and breakfast
- First project shift (Participants break up into smaller groups)
- Lunch break
- Second project shift (Participants break up into smaller groups)
- 4pm - Kids come to play
- Dinner
- Reflection (1-1.5 hours)
- Free-time
- 10pm - Lights out



Educational Immersion



- The goal of our educational immersion is to learn more about the community..
- In the past, we have visited a local farm, visited a pineapple plantation, hiked, and sat down with community members as a group.



Most commonly asked questions



1) **What is covered by the participant fee?**

Food, room and board, transportation, flights, and project fees are all covered by the program fee. What is not covered are personal expenses, such as souvenirs, snacks, or passports.

2) **Is there financial support available?**

Financial assistance is available for participants. Participants that receive an acceptance offer will also receive information on how to apply for financial assistance.

3) **What is a typical meal?**

Food is cooked by a community member who is trained in US food standards **Meals consist of mainly rice and beans with regional produce.** We will work with Reto Juvenil (who has a hired nutritionist) for participants dietary restrictions.



Most commonly asked questions



4) Where will we be staying?

- Our philosophy on Alternative Breaks is to live simply and in line with the community in which we are staying.
- Safety is a top priority, We will be staying at a school, which is enclosed by a locked tall fence. This is where we will also be doing our service! Participants will not be allowed to leave the housing space unless under the guidance of the Student Program Director, Learning Partner, and the Community Partner..

5) What are the sleeping arrangements like?

- CO will provide mosquito nets, but participants will bring their own bedding and padding. Picture of an example set-up below.

6) How much luggage can I bring?

- Each student gets a backpack sized carry-on and a checked bag.



Most commonly asked questions



7) What are bathrooms like?

- There is a shower and two toilet stalls. We will bring a water filter that has been tested to meet US standards.

8) Is there wifi or service?

- Leadership will have phones available for contact with UCONN departments, for emergencies, and for participants to call home during free-time..
 - While the school has wifi, UCONN only has certain wi-fi access, and to ensure a stable connection at all times for emergencies, only leadership can have access to the wifi.



Important Applicant Expectations to Know



- **Participants are expected to engage with and attend 6 pre-program meetings and materials, as these are incredibly important for safety, preparing for service, practicing cultural humility, building relationships, managing expectations, etc.** If you have to miss a meeting, you will be required to do a makeup meeting.
 - Students from regional campus campuses and extenuating circumstances will be given accommodations for virtual attendance.
- **This project involves physical labor for approximately 6 hours a day outside in the Costa Rican sun.** No prior experience in construction is needed (most people do not!).





Thank you!

