



COSTA RICA ALTERNATIVE BREAK

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Student Program Director: Ethan

Assistant Student Program Director: Jomelis

WHAT IS COMMUNITY OUTREACH?

Mission

Our mission is to enrich learning at the University of Connecticut through preparing students to be active community collaborators by engaging them in service activities that enhance the quality of life for both others and themselves.

WHAT ARE ALTERNATIVE BREAKS?

CO Program

“Alternative Breaks are service-learning experiences supporting alongside the community. Alternative Breaks are designed to heighten participants’ awareness of social issues, grow as individuals, and prepare them for lifelong community collaborators. The program provides students the opportunities to meet new people, learn new things, and live simply in community off-campus.”



ALTERNATIVE BREAKS COMPONENTS

1. Direct Engagement
2. Full Immersion
3. Positive Impact
4. Orientation

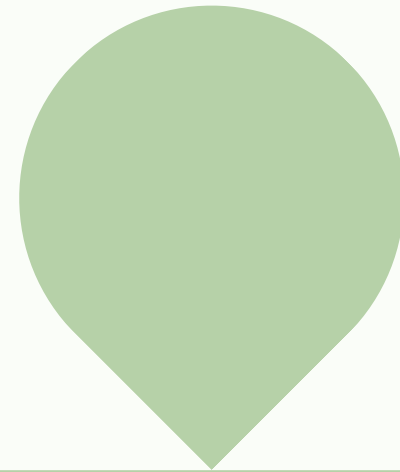
5. Education
6. Training
7. Reflection
8. Reorientation



ALTERNATIVE BREAKS VALUES

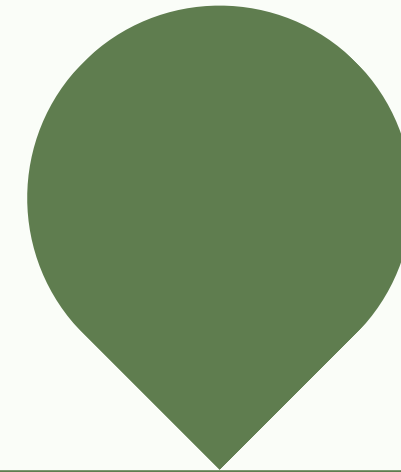
- Welcoming Environment
- Empathy
- Mindful Collaboration
- Growth

PEOPLE TO KNOW



Learning Partner

UConn Staff member who is there as a support for the SPD. They don't lead the break, but rather serve as a resource and provide risk management support and oversee the financial aspects



Community Partner

Someone from the community who guides our project. Our Community Partner is Reto Juvenil, and the Project Director is Fabio. We have worked together for many years now!

LOGISTICS

- Trip Dates: January 8-15, 2027
 - Participants will move into their dorms on January 7 and depart for Newark International Airport (EWR) very early on January 8, via a private shuttle
 - Participants will arrive at EWR late on January 15 and will be transported directly back to campus
- Location: Escuela Los Jazmines A - Los Jazmines, Costa Rica
 - We will arrive in Liberia, Costa Rica, and take a shuttle bus to Los Jazmines
- Anticipated Cost: \$950

SAMPLE SCHEDULE

7 am: Wake up

Breakfast

First project shift

12 pm: Lunch Break

Second project shift

4 pm: Interact with the community members (mostly kids)

6 pm: Dinner

Reflection

Free Time

10 pm: Lights out



The daily projects and schedule will vary day by day to accommodate the needs of our community partner

WHAT WE WILL DO

Service:

- Painting/Community maintenance
- Construction
 - New pharmacy building
- Gardening
- English lessons

Other Activities:

- Cooking lessons
- Games with local community

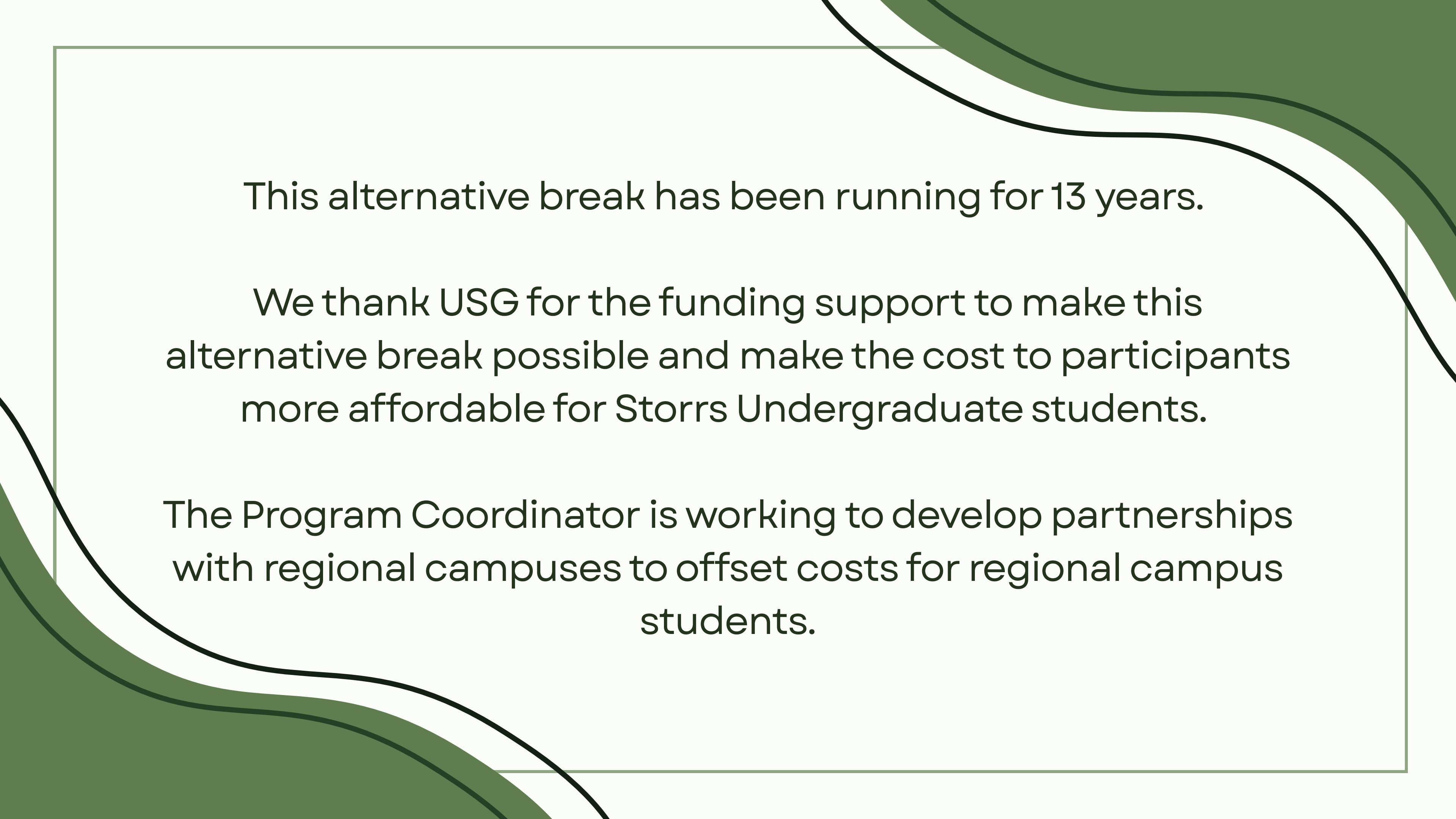


EXPECTATIONS

- Pre-Program Meetings (PPMs): Participants are expected to engage with and attend 6 pre-program meetings. These meetings will have info about safety, preparing for service, practicing cultural humility, building relationships, the community we are working with, among other topics. If you miss a meeting, you are expected to make it up.
- Physical Labor in Service: The community service here involves physical labor for about 6 hours per day in the Costa Rican sun. You will have breaks, but be prepared. Participants are expected to be fully engaged.
- Reflection: Participants are expected to participate in nightly reflection activities individually and in a group while on the trip.
 - “We do not learn from experience. We learn from reflecting on experience.” (John Dewey)
- Reorientation: After the trip, participants will attend a reorientation event where they will share their experiences to raise awareness of social issues and organize activities that extend the impact of their work.

THINGS TO NOTE

- Safety: We will be staying at a school that is enclosed by a tall locked fence. Participants won't be allowed to leave the housing space unless under the guidance of the SPD, LP, and the CP.
- Sleeping Arrangements: We will be sleeping on the floor in mosquito nets. Bring a sleeping bag or air mattress.
- Meals: The school where we will be staying will provide 3 meals per day for us. Meals will be cooked by a community member who is trained in US food standards. Meals consist mainly of rice and beans with regional produce and contain no meat.
- Limited WiFi Access: Although the school has wifi, UConn only has access to certain WiFi networks. To ensure a stable connection at all times for emergencies, only leadership will have access. Participants will have the opportunity to call home during free time.



This alternative break has been running for 13 years.

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 costs for regional campus students.

APPLY!



- The Application Deadline is September 17, 2026
- In the meantime...
 - Visit the UConn Community Outreach Website
 - Follow the UConn Community Outreach Instagram (uconnoutreach)
 - Reach out to uconn.co.costarica@gmail.com with any questions



USG Funding Supports Alt Breaks