



Your World, Your Stage

Dance Volunteer and Cultural Exchange

Costa Rica

Sample Itinerary





Why Performing Arts Abroad?

Performing Arts Abroad (PAA) customizes both credit and non-credit bearing international faculty-led programs for high schools, colleges, and universities around the world. Here is some of the best of what we offer:

A Focus on Performance in All Opportunities. Many international education organizations talk about their theater, music, dance, or film programs, but upon closer inspection participants find limited opportunities and secondary value placed on the arts themselves. Here at Performing Arts Abroad, your craft is the focus of your program, not an afterthought.

Run by Arts Practitioners. Performing Arts Abroad is run by individuals with extensive training in the performing arts with international travel experience who are passionate about theater, music, dance, and film. We believe performance is based in the culture of a community, and in order to truly understand it participants need to understand the culture. For this reason we include cultural activities and excursions in most of our programs as well as providing readings and orientations for participants. As performers ourselves, we are well aware of the value of arts as a transformative experience.

We go everywhere, and off the beaten path. We add new destinations every year! We are proud to offer group programming to almost any country in the world. Many teachers and group leaders are interested in designing programs based in locations that best match their areas of expertise and complement their course content. When venturing into uncharted territory, or to a new destination for your institution, there is a lot of additional work involved to ensure program quality and student safety. We recognize how much time and effort that takes, and we're here to support you at every step.

Onsite staff on every program Every program we operate includes a 24/7 staff member to manage not only the logistics of the program, but also any incidents and emergencies that may arise during your time abroad. This full-time staff support allows the teacher or group leader to focus on meeting the objectives of the course, academic or otherwise. Without this onsite coordinator, you would be left to manage everything entirely on their own.

Experienced Risk Management and Emergency Response Team At PAA, we know our greatest responsibility is to develop and operate programs with the health and safety of our participants at the forefront of our decisions. We also know that studying and working abroad involves a certain amount of risk. Our job is to mitigate these risks without sacrificing the wonderful opportunities that only studying and traveling abroad can offer. Here's a brief outline on some of the ways we manage risk, prepare our participants ahead of time, and respond if things don't go as planned:

- Risk Management Training and Professional Development for Staff
- Careful Choice of Program Locations and Overseas Partners
- Student Health Questionnaire (submittal and staff review)
- Pre-departure and onsite orientation
- International Medical and Accident Insurance, and Liability Insurance
- Onsite support and 24/7 Emergency Assistance
- Experienced PAA Crisis and Emergency Response Team

We are vigilant about staying current on the latest guidelines and protocols available to us in the field. We employ best practices as defined by the field of International Education, are involved in professional discussions and workshops, and also actively work with our U.S.-based and field staff on an ongoing basis to ensure we mitigate risks and are well prepared to manage situations should they arise.

“...we empower performing artists through cross-cultural artistic collaboration...”

“We will provide prompt, reliable service in a personalized manner.”



Program Support Staff

Meet our Founder and Executive Director, Reynolds Whalen Reynolds graduated summa cum laude from Washington University in St. Louis with a degree in Theater and African and African American Studies. For an honors thesis Reynolds filmed, edited, and produced a full-length documentary in Kenya with Haba na Haba, a group using performance for education and social change in the slums of Nairobi. This project earned him the Forum on Education Abroad Undergraduate Research Award. A year later, Reynolds organized a trip to bring Haba na Haba to the United States for a tour of St. Louis and Washington University. Immediately after graduation, Reynolds worked in Rwanda as a filmmaker for Millennium Congregations, an interfaith organization connecting communities of faith in the United States with development projects in Rwanda's Bugesera District. Reynolds then served two years with Teach for America, teaching in the South Bronx and receiving a Masters Degree in Education from Hunter College. He completed a second graduate degree in African Studies from Indiana University in Bloomington, and his Masters thesis focused on the impact of donors on the creative process of Theatre for Development (TfD) groups in Kenya.



Reynolds has traveled extensively in Africa, spending time in Ghana, Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He also studied acting, voice, and movement at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London. Reynolds is a two-time Rhodes Scholarship finalist, the inaugural recipient of the Dred and Harriet Scott Award for the Advancement of Human Rights, and the winner of two research fellowships. He was also a Dialogue Fellow for the Xenia Institute, has twice served as the co-director for the Roosevelt Institution's International Diplomacy Center (Washington University branch), and was president of the Graduate Students of African Studies (GSAS) at Indiana University.

Reynolds lives in Northampton, MA with his wife Julia who is a professional costume designer and their daughter, Lillian. In his free time Reynolds likes to play his guitar, go hiking, act in local productions, hit the karaoke bars, sing with his dog Captain (the best doggy singer in the universe), and play various yard games such as KanJam, cornhole, "cups", and Kubb.

What is an OPC?

As part of your group program abroad, you will be led and supported by a PAA On-Site Program Coordinator (OPC). OPCs are experienced staff members who are present at all times on the program to ensure that the schedule goes according to plan. Each OPC attends an extensive training program that covers a range of modules.

The primary role of the OPC is to facilitate the in-country implementation of the assigned program by providing emergency response and logistical support. During the program, the OPC is responsible for managing the day-to-day logistics of the assigned program and providing in-country support to both the faculty/group leader and students. Using personal travel experience and professional work experience, the OPC will help create a program environment that is safe and culturally engaging.

The PAA OPC may or may not be an in-country local. The majority of our OPCs are expats from the US, who have traveled, lived, volunteered, or worked abroad in the program destination. The OPC is not a registered tour guide nor expected to provide tours of sites visited during the program. If the program is one that requires specific guided tours of various sites, these will be provided separately.

If your program travels to one of PAA's regular program sites, you might have the opportunity to interact with our Site Director. Site Directors are an additional level of support for your program should an emergency occur.



Program Inclusions

The following are included in all Performing Arts Abroad (PAA) group programs. Specifics are noted in your daily itinerary below.

Onsite staff and Guides We value the need to have staff on the ground available to you 24/7. Our trained Onsite Program Coordinators (OPC) and Site Directors are there to assist you with logistical changes, cultural curriculum, student incidents and onsite emergencies. In some locations your itinerary may also require a licensed guide, which we can provide in addition to your Onsite Program Coordinator.

24/7 Emergency Support Your OPC will be with you for the entire duration of your program. In the rare event that your OPC is unavailable and you find yourself in an emergency situation, please call the PAA emergency phone immediately. The emergency line is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by a member of the PAA Emergency Response Team. If you do not reach someone on your first call attempt, keep trying; someone will always answer.

Ground Transportation From touchdown in country to take off, you don't have to worry about getting from point A to point B. Whether by vetted and approved private coach, or by local and public transportation, we will get you there safe and sound.

Pre-Departure and onsite Orientation Materials Where are we staying? What is the local currency? Who will be picking us up at the airport? You may have a lot of questions prior to your program departure, and through our online materials and an in-person pre-departure orientation with our Executive Director, we'll make sure that no question is left unanswered. Additionally, in each destination, our onsite staff will lead the group through an onsite health and safety orientation.

Accommodation We budget for the accommodations best suited to your group needs and learning outcomes. Your own housing recommendations are also welcome and we'll do our best to accommodate your top choices, taking another worry off your mind.

Excursions, Workshops, and Academic Visits This is where customization is key! Our program coordinators are prepared to collaborate with you to design your ideal program. Major tourist attractions are a big draw for students and faculty leaders alike. After all, what trip to Paris would be complete without a stop at the Eiffel Tower? We recognize the need for students to experience what makes certain cities so iconic while also exposing them to hidden gems that enhance their understanding of the course material. Our knowledgeable staff can help you identify the perfect excursions for your program, both on and off the beaten path.

Health Insurance and Liability insurance Health insurance is essential for all study abroad participants. Through our partnership with Cultural Insurance Services International, we are proud to offer the industry's best. If your institution already provides comparable coverage, let us know and we can leave this out of your program cost. Looking for travel or trip insurance? Contact us to learn more about additional coverage. Also included in the package that PAA provides to you is your institution named as an "Additional Insured" on our company's liability insurance plan. This gives you and your school or institution an extra layer of protection.

"From the beginning of preparations, working with PAA was a pleasure. Our students were always cared for by attentive instructors, host families, and other administrators. Our students stretched themselves as leaders and performers to go beyond what they thought they were capable of."

Amy Pasterczyk
Director of Off-Campus
Studies
Purnell School, New Jersey



Day 1: Arrival

Morning / Afternoon: Arrive in San Jose, transfer to host family accommodations

Afternoon / Evening: Meet host families, settle in to neighborhood, dinner with host families

Meals: Dinner

Transportation: Airport to accommodations (one group transfer via private bus)

Day 2: Introduction to Costa Rica

Morning: Breakfast with host families, transfer to language school in private bus

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.: Orientation and Spanish classes

12:00 - 1:00 p.m.: Lunch

1:00 - 2:00 p.m.: Latin dance class

2:00 - 3:00 p.m.: Transfer to volunteer placement in private bus

3:00 - 5:00 p.m.: Dance volunteer work

Evening: Welcome dinner and Costa Rican folkloric dances

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Transportation: Accommodations to language school, language school to volunteering, volunteering to evening activity (private bus)



Program Itinerary



Day 3: Volunteering and National Theatre

Morning: Breakfast with host families, transfer to language school in private bus

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.: Spanish classes

12:00 - 1:00 p.m.: Lunch

1:00 - 2:00 p.m.: Costa Rican cooking class

2:00 - 3:00 p.m.: Transfer to volunteer placement in private bus

3:00 - 5:00 p.m.: Dance volunteer work

Evening: Dinner with host families and attend performance at National Theatre

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Transportation: Accommodations to language school, language school to volunteering, volunteering to evening activity (private bus)



Day 4: Volunteering and Packing for Weekend

Morning: Breakfast with host families, transfer to language school in private bus

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.: Spanish classes

12:00 - 1:00 p.m.: Lunch

1:00 - 2:00 p.m.: Latin dance class

2:00 - 3:00 p.m.: Transfer to volunteer placement in private bus

3:00 - 5:00 p.m.: Dance volunteer work

Evening: Dinner with host families, pack and early to bed for weekend excursion

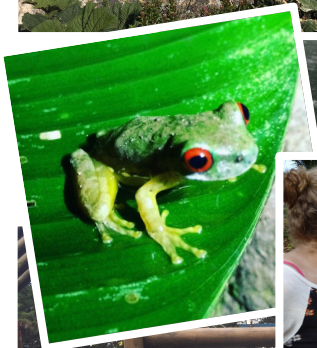
Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Transportation: Accommodations to language school, language school to volunteering, volunteering to host families (private bus)





Program Itinerary



Day 5-6: Weekend Excursion

Excursion to Rainforest, Volcano, or Beach

Transportation: All transportation provided in private bus

Day 7: Volunteering and Final Rehearsal

Morning: Breakfast with host families, transfer to language school in private bus

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.: Spanish classes

12:00 - 1:00 p.m.: Lunch

1:00 - 2:00 p.m.: Latin dance class

2:00 - 3:00 p.m.: Transfer to volunteer placement in private bus

3:00 - 5:00 p.m.: Dance volunteer work, rehearsal for final presentation

Evening: Dinner with host families, roller skating or movie with subtitles in Spanish

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Transportation: Accommodations to language school, language school to volunteering, volunteering to host families and evening activity (private bus)



Program Itinerary



Day 8: Final Performance and Farewell Party

Morning: Breakfast with host families, transfer to language school in private bus

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.: Spanish classes

12:00 - 1:00 p.m.: Lunch

1:00 - 2:00 p.m.: Latin dance class

2:00 - 5:00 p.m.: Shopping for Souvenirs

Evening: Dinner with host families, final performance at volunteer placement including party with food

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner, Farewell party

Transportation: Accommodations to language school, language school to volunteering, volunteering to host families and final performance (private bus)

Day 9: Departure

Pick up at host families and transfer to airport in private bus

Meals: None

Transportation: Accommodations to airport (private bus)

