

# Be Newsletter Spring 2008

Panamá  
Global  
Connections



## Greetings

Welcome to PGC. . Each quarter our newsletter focuses on different events and people. In each issue we try to include information that is helpful to educators and others planning trips with us. This issue includes introductions to some of our Panamá staff, updates on upcoming activities in Panama, and information that may be helpful in financing your trip. Please pass this information on to others who might be interested.

## Meet our staff in Panamá

**Mayra and Shanda Phillips** have both been working hard to prepare for upcoming events in Panamá. **Mayra**, who manages a constructions company in the Canal Zone, will be working hard to organize medical rotations established through collaboration with Dr. Hemmily Prescott, a graduate of the University of Minnesota Tropical Medicine Program. Mayra takes care of the in-country foot-work needed to secure practice sites and preceptors for upcoming rotations. She has also been a valuable liaison between our US offices and Panamá resources for the summer faculty symposiums. (*see related articles on the faculty symposium and medical rotations*). **Shanda** has traveled extensively in her work as supervisor of airplane mechanics. Her role in PGC varies based on need. Most recently she has been busy helping out with advertising, using her skill in photography to provide the images for many of our publications. This summer she will be assisting with the faculty symposiums and filling in as an interpreter when needed.



## Upcoming Events

### Medical Rotations

Starting in January of 2009, PGC will offer clinical rotations for students from a variety of medical and health care fields. Rotations may vary in length and number of students dependent on the needs of the sponsoring institution or the individual student. A group of students from a single institution may include a faculty representative. However, PGC can also place individual students with preceptors in Panamá. Please review our *Winter 2007 Newsletter* for more information:

[http://panamaglobalconnections.com/newsletters/PGC\\_newsletter\\_Winter\\_2](http://panamaglobalconnections.com/newsletters/PGC_newsletter_Winter_2)



## **Interdisciplinary Symposium on Global Education**

PGC is proud to announce an on-site curriculum development symposium designed to help faculty develop the expertise needed to successfully lead global education courses. Through this symposium, faculty will visit a number of sites where educational resources abound. They will talk with experts in a variety of fields as well as with faculty from other institutions and disciplines. Roundtables and seminars will provide a structured way for faculty to share ideas and develop teaching techniques to enhance experiential learning.

### **Some of the highlights of the symposium include:**

#### **Panamá Experience**

Home stay in Panamá City  
Biodiversity Research Center  
Aquatic National Park  
Indigenous issues  
Rainforest Canopy Tour  
Boat tour of the Panama Canal  
US/Panamá Relations  
Medical and Education Systems

#### **Professional Development**

Course development and sustainability  
Logistical planning  
Service learning  
Reflective journaling  
Interdisciplinary curriculum  
Student recruitment  
Individual student placement  
Teaching about culture

**And much, much more**

#### **Details:**

[http://panamaglobalconnections.com/activities/PGC\\_Symposium\\_Flier.pdf](http://panamaglobalconnections.com/activities/PGC_Symposium_Flier.pdf)

#### **Application:**

[http://panamaglobalconnections.com/applications/PGC\\_Symposium\\_Application\\_form.pdf](http://panamaglobalconnections.com/applications/PGC_Symposium_Application_form.pdf)

Applications will be taken after deadlines on a space available basis up to 30 days prior to departure.

### **Coiba island: one of the PGC symposium destinations**



Coiba, a Panamanian island, located off the Pacific coast, is a National Park (Nacional Parque Coiba) that consists of a group of 38 islands and covers 430,825 acres. The main island, Coiba, was declared a national park in 1992 and identified by UNESCO as “a World Heritage Site” in 2005. Coiba National Park offers rich and well-preserved natural resources.

Coiba Island became a penal colony in 1919. Later, during the dictatorship of Manuel Antonio Noriega, it gained a reputation for brutal conditions, extreme tortures, executions and political murder. The prison on Coiba was a place where no one wanted to end up. Local people feared the island and stayed away. This island was the inspiration for a song by singer, composer, and now Panamanian Minister of Tourism, Rubén Blades. The song was about the prisoners in the facility at Coiba

Besides the prison, most of the island was completely undeveloped. After the prison was closed down in 2004, its pristine condition made it ideal as a preserve. Coiba is one of the last places in Central America where the Scarlet Macaw can be found in large numbers, in the wild. A large ancient forest covers about 75% of the island. It is the home to rare plant and animal species found only on the island. Some tree species exist there that have long disappeared from the mainland due to deforestation and over harvesting.

The waters adjacent to the island are teeming with marine life. It is surrounded by one of the largest coral reefs on the Pacific Coast of the Americas. The Indo-Pacific current through the Gulf of Chiriqui provides a unique environment for divers. The warm current brings with it coral and many of the Pacific tropical underwater life.

### **Financing Your Trip**

One of the most difficult aspects of global education is the financial planning. While PGC works very hard to keep costs affordable for students and faculty, the costs add up quickly. However, with a little research and some careful planning, you can find resources to help. We would like to offer a few examples and suggestions.

### **For Faculty**

When a faculty member travels with a group of students as the primary course instructor, the faculty cost is included in the fee charged to students. We do this because we work closely with faculty instructors to tailor courses to their specifications and because we recognize the importance of the faculty input and instruction while on site. However, some faculty do not want to add to student cost and prefer to find alternative funding for their own expenses and/or to make the trip more affordable. Here are a few suggestions:

1. Many institutions have funds available for curriculum development. If you are creating a new course, look into curriculum development funds. We don't charge anything for the development phase; so all funds can be allocated to trip expenses. Faculty development funds may also be applicable to the symposium we are offering this summer.
2. Faculty are often on nine-month contracts. Since many global courses are taught during summer or other breaks, faculty are often eligible for overload pay. If the faculty instructor chooses to use some or all of that overload pay towards trip expenses, it lowers the price of the trip for students.
3. Many professional faculty have continuing education requirements. Stipends are available either through the department or through institution's professional development office. These funds can be used for symposiums such as the one offered by PGC this summer.
4. Small grants are available through many educational institutions as well as from a number of foundations. The Lilly Endowment Organization offers grants to new courses that meet their specifications. A previous course on global connections and universal responsibility received a grant of \$1000.00 per student for emphasizing vocation in the course. Explore the possibilities at: <http://www.lillyendowment.org/>. This is only one example. Look for others as well.
5. A group of faculty from a single institution exploring possibilities for expanding global education can apply for funds through the Fulbright Hayes Foundation. Requirements and programs can be found at: <http://www.grants.spps.org/15Nov20049.html>. Let us know if we can help you set up a program for your institution.
6. Please let us know if you find other funding sources. We will be happy to share those with others through our publications.

## For Students

The cost of global education for students often means more student loans. Raising money for a global education course can be a daunting task, especially if the student does not want to rely totally on financial aid. Some educational institutions are helpful. Check with your global education center on campus. Augsburg College Center for Global Education has an arrangement with the College that allows 70% of the tuition for a global course to be applied to the actual cost of the trip. Your school may have a similar arrangement. Here are a few additional ideas:

1. Look online for grants. Start early to meet grant application deadlines. For a relatively comprehensive list go to: <http://www.studyabroadfunding.org/>
2. Medical students may be eligible for funding through the Kean Travel Fellowship in Tropical Medicine. But hurry, application deadline is April 15, 2008. You will need to work closely with us to have everything in place by that date. Go to <http://www.astmh.org/funding/index.cfm> for the application.
3. Don't forget local businesses and organizations. Local corporations often have programs to support their community. They are especially willing to give you money if your group can do something for them in return. Offer to put their logo on a t-shirt (we can help you do that as we give you a PGC t-shirt anyway) or to make a presentation for them when you return. If you have a special connection it helps. For example, medical groups may want to contact hospital foundations and medical equipment manufacturers while students from the economy department may have more luck with local businesses.
4. Form your group of participants early and brainstorm different ideas. In addition to money for travel, you may want to raise money for a service-learning project planned for your global course. Medical students often raise money to buy medical equipment, medications, and educational materials. Education majors often buy school supplies and materials. Music groups may want to purchase instruments or music books.

Here are a few ideas that have been used in the past:

- Contact your local sports center. Sometimes you can work events there for money for your group.
- Contact local restaurants, bowling alleys, etc. Some will give you a percentage of their take for a specific time period if you ask all your families and friends to eat there (bowl there or whatever) during that specific time period.
- Have a huge garage sale or car wash
- Set up an ongoing fundraiser. One group buys egg rolls at a local Chinese restaurant for \$1.00 each and resells them at Church for \$2.00 each every Sunday. They raise enough to travel abroad every couple of years and to bring students from the host country to the United States on alternate years.
- A group of physician assistant students auctioned anatomy tutoring to underclassmen.
- Sell a product from Panamá at a mark-up price. Fair trade coffee is a possible choice. Here are a couple of websites that sell fair trade coffee from Panamá: <http://www.treefrogcoffees.com/panamanian.htm>, <http://www.coffeetraders.com/> (PGC has no connection with these organizations)
- Parties and dances can go well if you have the right connections.

**Let us know if we can help in any way. Send us your ideas and we will pass them on to help others. [pgc@panamaglobalconnections.com](mailto:pgc@panamaglobalconnections.com)**

