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Project GAYA: A Study Abroad Program Design for Fundación Operación GAYA Internacional

Lauren E. Johanson
SIT Graduate Institute, lauren.johanson@gmail.com

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Project GAYA:

A Study Abroad Program Design for

Fundación Operación GAYA Internacional

Lauren Johanson

PIM 69

A Capstone Paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Arts in International Education at the SIT Graduate Institute in Brattleboro, Vermont, USA.

February 2012

Advisor: Richard Rodman

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Student name: Lauren Johanson Date: February 15, 2012

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Abstract

Since 2008 Fundación Operación GAYA Internacional, a Costa Rican NGO has provided youth training and development programs to local youth in Costa Rica, empowering young people to be "architects" in the development of their own communities and to take the lead in creating a world that is more peaceful and just. Through the implementation of Project GAYA, the foundation will expand its programming to international youth for the first time.

The proposed program offers a comprehensive program design for a short-term study abroad experience for U.S. high school students to Costa Rica. Students will engage in experiential learning and critical analysis of global socioeconomic and environmental issues. The program draws on theories of Education for Sustainability, Experiential Education, Education for Critical Consciousness and Service-Learning for Active Citizenship. Through site visits, participatory workshops, and service-learning, students will explore four central themes: human rights, environmental justice, collaborative leadership, and social entrepreneurship. Drawing on best practices in international education, the design includes health and safety measures, emergency protocols, and a comprehensive budget.

Introduction and Background

The proposed program, Project GAYA, which stands for Global Achievement through Youth Activism, will engage a group of U.S. high school students in critical examination of local and global issues centered on four themes: human rights, environmental justice, collaborative leadership, and social entrepreneurship. This capstone paper is a design for the short-term study abroad program that will take place in the summer of 2013. The proposed model ventures beyond a traditional language and culture study tour model, which heretofore has been the norm for study abroad at the secondary level. The model actively engages students in the experiential study of global social, economic, and environmental issues and promotes the development of leadership, teamwork, and communication skills. The design lends itself to an articulated model youth education program situated in Costa Rica that would 1- strengthen youth capacity to address social issues in their local and global communities; 2- engage youth in service-learning and social activism; and 3- contribute to the development of a generation of empowered, global citizens.

The organization

Project GAYA is a program of Fundación Operación GAYA Internacional (FundaOGI), a Costa Rican non-governmental organization operating in Heredia, Costa Rica since 2008. The foundation's mission is to empower local youth to be architects of the development of their communities through the promotion of economic, social, and cultural rights (FundaOGI, Who Are We?, 2011). FundaOGI believes in the importance of equality, justice, and dignity of cultures and seeks to involve youth in the process of developing communities that offer healthy living conditions, access to education, environmental conservation, opportunities for women, and global harmony (FundaOGI, Our Philosophy, 2011). Toward this goal, the foundation offers

youth training programs that center on global and environmental education and the development of social leadership skills. In 2011, following a rigorous accreditation process that evaluated the foundation's programs, curriculum, and educational materials, the Costa Rican Ministry of Education awarded the foundation certification as a high-quality provider of youth programs. The foundation seeks to become a regional training center, offering a model approach to youth activism and local development that will increase regional capacity to create sustainable communities and will serve as a model for neighboring countries such as Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. Through implementation of the proposed program, FundaOGI will offer students from outside the region the opportunity to experience the economic and social realities of Central America, gain skills in leadership and communication, and return to their home communities as empowered youth activists.

Context

As my practicum placement, I worked as the on-site volunteer coordinator for ProWorld Service Corps in Cusco, Peru. ProWorld offers short and long-term volunteer service-learning programs that focus on sustainable development. Through this experience I learned a great deal about the details and logistics of running study abroad programs. Toward the end of my year in Peru, I was connected with the executive director of FundaOGI after learning that they sought to develop an international program. Courses that I had taken on campus at SIT such as Theory and Practice of International Education, Education for Social Justice, and Popular and Non-formal Education opened my eyes to the importance of social justice curricula and education for sustainability. I knew that for the course-linked capstone project I wanted to develop a program that reflected these beliefs. I also sought to work with a young organization that would truly

benefit from the design instead of creating a hypothetical project that may or may not be utilized by a larger, more developed organization. After many conversations with staff, I was impressed by the foundation's vision and leadership and am excited to have found a way to contribute to their mission.

The resulting design is a two-week study abroad program that will allow U.S. secondary students to further their understanding of critical global issues through the lens of another culture. The program will engage students in critical analysis of human rights, environmental justice, collaborative leadership, and social entrepreneurship through interactive workshops and experiential learning activities. The program culminates with a service-learning project where students will work in collaboration with a local community. As it capitalizes on FundaOGI's extensive experience with youth development programs and draws on best practices in international education program design, experiential education and critical pedagogy, I believe the program has great potential for success.

Theoretical Foundations

FundaOGI believes that youth have the power and capability to change the world and that through participatory, democratic education they will be empowered to do just that. With its focus on participatory learning, dialogue, and youth action on critical global issues, the proposed program design draws mainly on theories of education for sustainability, experiential education, and service-learning for active citizenship.

Education for Sustainability

It has long been said that the role of education is to prepare students to be successful participants in civic life. As globalization makes the world more connected and complex, society is faced with growing inequalities and instability, increasing social injustices and environmental crises. Suddenly, the traditional model of education, which according to Freire and Shor (1987), upholds dominant ideologies and seeks to maintain economic, social, and environmental standards that keep many oppressed and that contribute to the degradation of the environment, is no longer an effective approach for the development of an informed and capable citizenry. Indeed, as Brunold (2006) also notes, the model of education that has led to many of the problems that face the world today will not develop the citizens that can effectively address those social and environmental issues. In particular, Brunold cites the need to develop "more comprehensive educational tools that focus on the skills inherent in critical thinking and rational decision making, [which] are necessary to build a citizenry capable of thinking through some of the more complex sustainability issues that face communities and nations" (Brunold, 2006, p. 226).

The Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), also knows as Education for Sustainability (EFS), movement seeks to fill this pedagogical void by providing a new approach to education. EFS is an interdisciplinary, holistic approach to reveal and understand linkages between and among our social, economic, and ecological systems (Santone, 2004). It uses a systems-thinking approach to help students understand issues on both a global and local level, encouraging them to engage critically with current problems and to realize how personal decisions affect societal wellbeing.

Experiential Education

John Dewey is considered to be the father of experiential education, which purports that learning is derived from experience. He warned, however, that experiences are not in and of themselves educational. “Mere activity does not constitute experience,” he writes (2004) and provides the example of a child touching his finger to a flame, consequently burning himself. The action of touching a flame does not have meaning unless it is connected to the consequent pain of the burn. Likewise, a study abroad experience, without reflection on the experience, its context and its consequences, does not constitute a learning experience.

The key to deriving meaning from an experience is reflection and processing of that experience. Dewey writes further, “When an activity is continued into the undergoing of consequences, when the change made by action is reflected back into a change made in us, the mere flux is loaded with significance. We learn something” (p. 134). In an experiential program such as Project GAYA, students learn to reflect on and process their shared experience, thereby adding meaning.

David Kolb developed a model of experiential learning now known as the Experiential Learning Cycle. The cyclical process involves critical reflection upon a concrete experience, active experimentation of the new understanding, followed by application of the learning in another situation (Kolb, 1984). FundaOGI’s active approach to education and the program’s curriculum are designed to draw on participants’ experience and knowledge while offering a space for exploration through dialogue. The four workshop modules are structured to provide new information on topics such as environmental education and human rights, while also drawing on participants’ own experiences, thoughts, feelings, and beliefs. Participants will then

begin to process these news experiences while participating in a service-learning project, making their own personal connections and drawing learning from them through reflection.

Education for Critical Consciousness

Like Dewey, Brazilian educator Paulo Freire believed that education was and should be a tool for human empowerment, or what he called "humanization." Freire is known for his ideas of liberatory education, also known as critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy encourages the development of critical thinking skills through dialogue and believes that an important part of knowledge comes from the individual's personal connection to the learning. In his seminal work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire explains that "Education either functions as an instrument that is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes 'the practice of freedom,' the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world (p. 34). In other words, learners need dialogue about and critical analysis of their own lived experience, which is what the proposed program intends to provide. Freire (1998) denounced the traditional "banking system" of education in which the learner is seen as a passive receptacle for knowledge and information is "deposited" by a teacher. This method maintains the social, political and economic status quo, for Freire says, "The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness that would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world. The more completely they accept the passive role imposed on them, the more they tend simply to adapt to the world as it is and to the fragmented view of reality deposited in them" (p. 54).

Freire developed “problem-posing” education, also known as “problematizing” which engages learners in a critical analysis of a problematic reality (Lutterman, 2002). Through problem-posing education, the root causes of the issues are explored in addition to seeking a solution to the problem collaboratively. In this approach, education becomes participatory and student-centered, as “students learn to question answers rather than merely to answer questions” (Shor, 1993, p. 26). Through the critical analysis of the four program themes, the Project GAYA curriculum encourages students to challenge themselves and their previous understanding and to apply their skills to develop creative solutions to problematic realities.

Service-Learning and Active Citizenship

The service-learning component of the program is based on the spreading belief that through participation in a service-learning project, students may develop qualities of a global citizen. John Annette (2002) defines service-learning as “an experiential learning program where students learn through engaging in service in partnership with a local community. It involves reflective learning activities which enable a student to develop key skills and capabilities, and a greater sense of civic awareness and active citizenship”(p. 83). Service-learning promotes active citizenship, which emphasizes “not only the importance of human rights, but also stresses the significance of social responsibility, or duty, as well as democratic participation” (Annette, 2002, p. 84). Through participation in a service-learning project, developed and carried out in partnership with a local community, participants of Project GAYA will develop an understanding of these topics on both a local and global level while developing as global citizens.

Drawing on these theories, the proposed program design directly emerged from best practices in the field of international education and particularly stemmed from an intentional needs assessment. The assessment was connected to the various articulated needs of students, educational professionals, and the organization, which are described below.

Needs Assessment

To determine the need for the program, I looked to research on current opportunities that exist for secondary study abroad and had informative conversations with a potential partner school and the leadership of FundaOGI in the fall of 2011. Through this assessment, the need for a program for high school students that offers a curriculum dedicated to sustainability, global citizenship, and social justice and that includes a service-learning component became clear, as did the role that FundaOGI could play in meeting this need.

Student Needs

Research conducted by a former SIT Graduate Institute student on secondary study abroad programs revealed that "a lack of diversity of providers, destination countries, and curriculum coupled with lack of accessibility to programming has led to serious deficiencies in study abroad programming at the secondary level" (Lejnieks, 2009). Her research polled various secondary teachers and administrators and found the need to expand and diversify international programming for secondary students in terms of both content and context. There is a need for programs based on education for sustainability practices that teach critical thinking and problem solving skills, promote systems thinking, and encourage the development of skills for cooperation and teamwork (Lejnieks, 2009). Lejnieks, Lutterman (2007) and others agree that

international education programs that purport to develop global citizens and social transformation must be designed with these goals explicitly in mind, otherwise they merely uphold the ideologies that they claim to oppose. Unfortunately, few international education programs, particularly those geared toward secondary students, have met this challenge.

An informal interview conducted via phone with a secondary educator at a potential partner school confirmed this need. Roberto Guerenabarrena, a Spanish teacher at Portsmouth Abbey School in Rhode Island, has led students on short-term trips in the past. The Abbey has a fairly traditional curriculum with an emphasis on humanities and theology and has a very minimal community service requirement. Mr. Guerenabarrena explained that he is looking for a program that engages students in service-learning while offering additional enhancements to the standard curriculum.

Project GAYA seeks to meet this need and offer a program that gives students an opportunity to engage in more than just the study of a new language or culture. As it assumes a greater level of capability and expectation of youth to be involved in creating a sustainable society, it is a model for the type of education that the future requires.

Organizational Needs

As a young, energetic organization with strong leadership and vision, FundaOGI must increase and diversify its revenue sources in order to continue to support its mission. Income generated through Project GAYA program fees will be reinvested into other FundaOGI programs, allowing the growing organization to increase its reach and scope. The additional income will be used to support the organization's work locally, by contributing to a scholarship fund that makes participation in other FundaOGI programs accessible to local youth with few

resources. By developing a long-term relationship with a partner school and increasing the organization's revenue sources, FundaOGI will move forward in its mission of creating a center for local youth development and training and bringing forth a model for youth and community engagement and development that can be replicated in other countries throughout Central America.

The information gleaned from the needs assessment supported the idea that a study abroad program developed and provided by FundaOGI could meet the needs of the relevant parties. The program could offer a new opportunity for secondary students, a unique and relevant curriculum, and include a service-learning component, and at the same time offer financial support to a mission-driven organization. The following sections outline the goals, objectives, and details of the proposed program.

Goals and Objectives

Goals and Objectives for the Program

The goal of the program is to contribute to the development of high school youth into empowered global citizens who are willing, able, and eager to contribute to the creation of vibrant, sustainable communities by arming them with the necessary tools to become agents of positive change.

The program has the following objectives:

- To increase the critical thinking capability of all program participants as they engage with socioeconomic issues in their community and globally.

- To increase participants' awareness and understanding of global issues related to human rights and environmental justice.
- To increase participants' skills and confidence in leadership, communication, and collaboration.
- To establish an annual study abroad program between a U.S. secondary school and FundaOGI.
- To create a new source of revenue that will allow for the growth of FundaOGI programs and the growth of the scholarship fund that provides need-based scholarships for local youth to participate in FundaOGI programs.

Goals and Objectives for Students

Through participation in the program, students will be empowered to see themselves as architects of their own realities, capable of creating positive social change on both a local and global level.

The objectives for student learning are:

- To increase knowledge and understanding of global issues around human rights and environmental conservation.
- To develop increased skill in leadership, communication, and collaboration.
- To relate the impact of individual decisions and actions to larger global issues.
- To develop an increased understanding of Costa Rican cultural and social realities.
- To apply new skills and knowledge through a service-learning project in collaboration with a Costa Rican community.

- To continue to engage in discussion around the program topics and with their peers through the Virtual Forum after the program has ended.

Program Description

Project GAYA is a two-week study abroad program that will allow U.S. secondary students to further their understanding of critical global issues through the lens of another culture. The first week, students will participate in workshops centered on four themes: Human Rights, Environmental Education, Social Entrepreneurship, and Leadership Skills. The program utilizes dynamic and interactive activities, engaging multi-media presentations, and dialogue to examine social and environmental issues in Costa Rica. Students will also explore their own strengths as leaders and the role they play as individuals in shaping society. The workshops will be complemented with excursions to local sites of interest, which will allow students to gain first-hand experience with the issues, deepening their understanding. During the second week, students will participate in a service-learning project through which they will utilize communication, leadership, and teamwork skills and engage actively in community service.

Located in the heart of Central America, Costa Rica provides an ideal location for such an intercultural experience for young people. A long tradition of democracy and economic stability, combined with rich biodiversity, has made Costa Rica one of the top destinations for study abroad. According to the most recent Open Doors report, in 2009-2010, 6,262 students from the U.S. studied abroad in Costa Rica, making it the second most popular destination for study abroad in Latin America and the 10th most popular worldwide (Open Doors, 2011). As one of the most bio-diverse countries in the world, Costa Rica has become a leader in environmental research and conservation. In addition to providing a safe and manageable environment for

secondary students, Costa Rica will provide a non-Western location that will allow students to better see the contrast between their Western values, assumptions, and beliefs and challenge themselves in a safe environment.

FundaOGI is currently in the planning phase for the program. The program timeline is as follows.

Project GAYA Timeline	
Date	**Event**
March – May 2012	Potential partner schools contacted, program proposed
June 2012	Partner school selected
September 2012	Program details finalized with school administration
October 2012	Program announced to students; meeting held on Skype to promote program
January 2013	Application deadline
February 2013	Applications reviewed, students selected
January – June 2013	Program planning – hotels booked, trips booked, activities planned
May 2012	First pre-departure meeting with students on Skype
June 2013	Second pre-departure meeting with students & parents on Skype
July 2013	Program takes place in Costa Rica
End July – August 2013	Program evaluation and debrief

FundaOGI seeks to work with a diverse group of approximately 20 high school students from various backgrounds with a wide range of strengths and skills. The organization believes that each individual brings unique experience and perspective and that by learning to share, listen, and collaborate, youth will be empowered to unite to successfully take on many challenges. The following diversity statement was developed with this idea in mind.

Diversity Statement

Diversity enriches the human experience. FundaOGI believes in the celebration of diversity of all types and does not discriminate based on race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, or disability. Through its programs, FundaOGI hopes to encourage the development of tolerance, sensitivity, and inclusiveness in all participants. It is through the acknowledgement, exploration, and understanding of our differences that we will be able to truly know each other and to work more efficiently together to create a more peaceful, just, and sustainable world.

Curriculum

The Project GAYA curriculum sets the program apart from other education abroad opportunities that are offered for secondary students. As Lejneick's (2009) research found, many study abroad programs for secondary students focus on language learning and exposure to a new culture, merely skimming the surface of potential learning. Other programs engage students in community service, but may not offer opportunity for deeper critical analysis and reflection. Educator Tim Kipp laments the tendency, especially at the secondary level, "to underestimate a student's ability to engage in real, significant work for social change" (Kipp, 2004), an approach that he believes is actually disempowering for youth.

The Project GAYA curriculum has been purposefully developed not only to expose students to social realities but also to promote the development of a critical consciousness about these issues, which is a necessary precursor to critical action (Freire, 1981). FundaOGI's educational philosophy utilizes a non-formal approach to engage students in democratic, participatory education through high-energy, hands-on activities. The curriculum draws on

Freire's belief that an educator should engage in a collaborative dialogue about concrete situations with students (Itin, p. 92). Not only does this approach even out the power structure that exists between "educator" and "learner" in most traditional educational settings, it also gives students a voice, a key to empowerment, and puts them in control of their own learning process (Freire, 1981). Additionally, educators have found that structured dialogue strengthens a program by "deepening self-reflection, compassion, a sense of empowerment and capacities for social action" (Ungerleider, 2010). The Project GAYA curriculum uses site visits to engage students directly with the theme, and afternoon workshops build on understanding through the use of dialogue, group games and activities, videos and multimedia presentations. The curriculum is based on the following methodology:

Active, Experiential Learning

FundaOGI engages participants with activities that require them to utilize knowledge from their own experiences and that stimulate cooperative learning and problem solving. Through visits to national parks, communities, and adventure activities, students will be constantly moving and interacting with and exploring the local environment. Students will work in small groups and pairs on challenging activities, from analysis of a real-life conflict to a simulation that requires decision-making and cooperation.

Critical Thought and Analysis

Participants will develop a critical vision of multiple perspectives and be able to question context, situational influences, and the consequences of their actions. This analysis will be encouraged through dialogue about what students have seen and experienced on the excursions

and through activities that provoke thinking from another point of view. For example, in the human rights workshop, students will be assigned a role and asked to consider what rights that person or group has and should have. The conversation will move from the hypothetical characters to reality and the actual individuals or groups that are denied rights in current society. Students will be encouraged to question rather than accept.

Connection between the Local and the Global

Students will learn about regional (particularly within Central America) and global socioeconomic realities, and connect these to their own local realities. For example, the environment workshop will focus on the history and causes of climate change and some of the global initiatives that have taken place to address it, including conservation efforts in Costa Rica. The workshop will also focus on measuring our own carbon footprint and how the individual choices one makes can have a negative or positive effect on the environment.

From Dialogue to Action

The program will inspire youth to move from dialogue into planning for action, community involvement and change in both their day-to-day activities and lives within the larger community. Participants will gain skills in identifying social needs and will be empowered to build solutions and take action.

Dialogue is an excellent tool for building a sense of social empowerment in young people and also for building capacities for leadership (Ungerleider & Deibec, 2010). Yet, as Brunold (2006) states, awareness is usually not enough and promoting a shift in values that leads to a change in action is much more difficult to evoke. Drawing on Kolb's (1984) experiential

learning cycle, experimentation through activities that simulate real life situations and the in-depth processing of the learning that is derived from it, will empower students to apply these skills and techniques in their daily life.

Orientation

Participants will begin the program with an orientation held at the hotel upon arrival in Costa Rica. Icebreaker activities will introduce participants to FundaOGI's approach to youth development and to the two leaders who will facilitate the program. In addition to covering the program schedule, logistics, and health and safety measures, students will discuss the norms and expectations that FundaOGI holds for participants of all its programs. In addition, the group will establish group norms to which they will be expected to adhere for the duration of the program. Individually, students will complete a knowledge, skills, and attitudes self-assessment tool where they will identify where they fall on a scale. Students will return to this tool the end of the program to see how they have shifted in these areas. The self-assessment will also be used as an evaluation tool to assess whether or not the program achieved its stated goals for leadership and communication skills development. Students will also develop learning goals that will focus their learning and help them begin to reflect individually.

Thematic Workshops

For the first week of the program, participants will engage in daily facilitation of one of the fours modules of the Project GAYA curriculum: human rights, environmental justice, collaborative leadership, and social entrepreneurism. For each of the four themes, FundaOGI has developed a manual, which will be translated into English and distributed to all participants.

Each module's activities include experiential learning activities, peer-to-peer dialogue, and guided reflection. In each module, activities are designed to sequentially move students from an examination of the issue on a macro-level, looking at the underlying causes and historical context, to a micro-level. The micro-level focuses on the individual's role in making decisions and actions that positively impact others. The following provides a brief description of the approach to each topic:

Human Rights

Students will begin the human rights workshop with a visit to La Carpio, a community outside of San Jose comprised mainly of Nicaraguan immigrants who fled their country due to natural disaster, civil war, and extreme poverty. Because the majority of these immigrants do not have proper documentation to work legally in Costa Rica, they are relegated to jobs outside of the formal sector, earning much less than an average Costa Rican worker (Li, 2010). Students will be able to witness life in a poverty-stricken community and to understand the challenges that this population faces, not only in meeting their daily needs, but also in access to education, health services, and housing.

In the afternoon workshop, group activities will engage students in discussion of human rights that questions what exactly are rights and who has them? Students will be assigned various characters and tasked with creatively thinking about human rights from that character's perspective before coming together as a group to create an "Intergalactic Declaration of Human Rights." A presentation and video on global efforts toward the preservation of human rights will show students that there are people around the world fighting for human rights.

This component of the curriculum also addresses negotiation skills development, helping participants to answer the question, "What can I do to improve a situation when something isn't going right?" Through this module students will develop the ability to uncover a peaceful solution to problems, find common ground with others, and improve their active listening and dialogue skills.

Environmental Justice

The FundaOGI environment manual tells students the importance of understanding the undeniable connection between humans, health and the environment and that the best way to coexist is to "live a life in intimate connection, harmony, and balance with it" (FundaOGI, Environment Manual, 2010). Brunold (2006) agrees that "the natural environment can only seem precious to those who know it and who have some direct experience of it." Thus, the environment workshop begins with a visit to INBioparque, an ecological park developed by the National Institute for Biodiversity to expose visitors to the value of biodiversity in an effort to promote its conservation and improve the quality of life of human beings. On a guided tour that will lead them through representations of Costa Rican climates, they will also observe many native plants and animals. The interactive tour ends with a presentation on protected areas and conservation efforts in Costa Rica.

The afternoon workshop will help students understand the bigger pictures of climate change and global warming. In the workshop, students will discuss the definition of climate change and learn about its history, causes, and effects on global systems and areas such as health, food production, and availability of water. As with the entire curriculum, participants will look at environmental issues on a global level and discuss global initiatives and efforts, including the

Kyoto Protocol and the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro. Following the education for sustainability movement, which recognizes the importance of individual choice and its impact on others, students will analyze climate change on a local and even personal level. Activities will help students analyze the ecological footprint created by consumer habits and the needs of industrialized nations, "who are considered to be the main source of environmental and developmental degradation" (Brunold, 2006, p. 229). Students will also develop strategies for how they can contribute to conservation efforts.

Collaborative Leadership

The leadership component of the curriculum allows students to analyze various leadership styles and to understand that there are many different ways in which to be a leader. Through discussion of the many characteristics of a leader, students will come to recognize what characteristics they possess as leaders. The workshop focuses on collaborative leadership, which encourages the idea that with individuals contributing their unique strengths the group can accomplish more than if one person was in charge. The activities cover the personal characteristics that leaders should possess such as enthusiasm, charisma, empathy, tolerance, and assertiveness, as well as social and professional skills, such as diplomacy and tact, effective communication skills, decision-making ability, and conflict resolution skills (FundaOGI, Leadership Manual, 2010). The workshop emphasizes the use of dialogue in collaborative leadership and conflict resolution skills. Students will learn to analyze conflicts and accept and receive critical feedback. Students will practice collaborative leadership skills in multiple ways throughout the program, including a white water rafting trip, and working in teams on the service-learning project and to manage the campsite.

Social Entrepreneurship

This module emphasizes the importance of the entrepreneurial process for economic growth and the social, cultural, and political development of a country, city, or community (FundaOGI, Social Entrepreneurship Manual, 2010). Entrepreneurship education teaches young people entrepreneurial skills so that they start early to be responsible for their own professional development and possess the skills they need to create their own companies, projects, or organizations. The curriculum teaches students to make the best use of resources and opportunities around them and to work collaboratively with each other.

The first activity introduces the theme and has students brainstorm about their understanding of the word 'entrepreneur.' What connotations does the word 'social' provide? What is the difference between an entrepreneur and a social entrepreneur? After students discuss their ideas, they will watch a short video clip that addresses these questions. Students will then break into groups to look at a few case studies of social enterprises. They will discuss, What problem did this social entrepreneur identify? What was the solution they proposed to solve this problem? The following activities will further explore the qualities of a social entrepreneur and the potential of social entrepreneurship as an agent of change. The activities will emphasize the importance of creativity, innovation, and collaboration in seeking solutions to problems. The workshop provides participants a practical use of skills development and promotes the understanding that a socially responsible approach to business and development can be a key factor in the improvement of communities.

In the final activity of the module, students will learn about the basics of creating a project that stems from a particular idea, dream, or need. The activity emphasizes the importance

of having an action plan to support the creation of the project, and that the more detailed the action plan, the more viable the project.

Service-Learning

The service-learning component of the program is an essential part of moving students from the theoretical to the actual. It will serve as a culmination of the learning that took place in the workshops and as a model for project development and implementation. As Kipp (2004) notes, "A student's exposure to a meaningful service project is typically their first attempt at public action and opens the door to the culture of social responsibility" (p. 101). This approach, says Kipps, "uses the community as a text and a context for teaching social responsibility" (2004, p. 101).

The service-learning program will be developed according to standards outlined by the state of Florida, which since 1991 has supported the incorporation of service-learning from K-12 and beyond for its demonstrated success in meeting learning outcomes and increasing student civic engagement (Florida Department of Education, 2009). According to these standards, successful service-learning programs address the following components:

1. Link to Curriculum
2. Meaningful Service
3. Youth Voice
4. Reflection
5. Partnerships
6. Diversity
7. Progress Monitoring
8. Duration and Intensity

Students will engage in an indirect service-learning project, which the Florida DOE describes as "projects with benefits to a community as opposed to specific individuals (i.e.,

environmental, construction, restoration, town histories, food and clothing drives)" (p. 5). Such projects promote the development of the following social, emotional, and civic skills: developing cooperation and teamwork skills, big-picture learning, organizing, prioritizing, project-specific skill development, and applying different learning styles (Florida DOE, 2009). The project will address each of the standards above, taking care to ensure that the project stems directly from community needs, can be accomplished in the four and a half days, and is connected to the Project GAYA curriculum.

The project will take place in an indigenous community where students will work directly with community members. Prior to the program, FundaOGI staff will work to identify the community and the specifics of the project, which will be determined collaboratively with the community. Best practices in service-learning programming dictate that community service projects are most effective when they stem from needs identified by the community itself and are carried out in partnership with that community.

Another essential part of a transformative service-learning experience is the realization of learning through critical reflection of the experience. As Dewey put it, "To reflect is to look back over what has been done so as to extract the net meanings which are the capital stock for intelligent dealing with further experiences." (Dewey, 1997, p. 87). Evening reflection sessions will be a critical component of the service-learning experience and will allow students to process what they are experiencing in order to derive greater meaning and understanding.

During the week, the group will camp, and students will divide themselves into small groups that will be responsible for daily organization, cooking, and clean-up to ensure smooth functioning of the campsite. This set up will practice the teamwork and collaborative leadership theory and skills gained the week before.

Student involvement and voice will be emphasized throughout the program, and students will be encouraged to offer suggestions and strategies and to openly express their opinions and ideas. Students will also be involved in the evaluation of project's effectiveness.

Re-entry

Kinsella, Smith-Simonet, and Tuma (2007) suggest that a re-entry seminar is an essential component of any study abroad experience. In order for the learning that results from an experiential program abroad to be fully realized, "there must be a structured means through which students bring the experience 'home' and apply what they have learned to their everyday lives" (p. 182). While FundaOGI staff cannot travel back home with the students to ensure that this happens, the final afternoon of the program will be spent preparing students to return to their home communities. In the session, students will reflect on what they have learned over the two weeks and what skills they have developed. Most importantly, they will brainstorm ways in which they might use their skills in order to improve their own communities. FundaOGI suggests that students apply their learning through the identification, design, and implementation of a community-based project on a topic of their own choosing back in the U.S. While the project would be overseen by the students' teachers, FundaOGI staff will be available to serve as resource.

In addition, FundaOGI has created a Virtual Youth Forum that will allow for continued discussion of social issues and will provide a tool for participants to maintain contact with each other and with future Project GAYA participants. FundaOGI will use the Forum to post discussion topics and prompts to actively engage participants even after the program is over. As

more student groups participate in Project GAYA, the online community will grow to include youth from many different countries and communities.

Staffing Plan

The program staffing plan includes two program leaders and four workshop facilitators, all of whom work with FundaOGI on a regular basis. Two chaperones from the partner school will accompany the group and be on-site with the program as well.

Program Leaders

Two FundaOGI staff members will serve as Program Leaders to co-facilitate the Project GAYA program. The leaders will plan and co-lead the orientation session, accompany students on all activities and excursions, participate in all workshops, lead the service-learning project, and be responsible for the overall success of the program. Both program leaders will be responsible for the health and safety of the students. One leader will be male, the other female. One leader will be a native English speaker, the other a native Spanish speaker. The co-leadership structure will model collaborative leadership, one of the program's themes. In addition, it will allow for one leader to leave the group to attend to any student issue or emergency should the occasion arise. Both leaders will be involved in the evaluation of the program as a whole.

The Primary Program Leader will have responsibility for oversight of the entire program. FundaOGI's Executive Director, a trained psychologist with extensive experience in youth program development and facilitation will fill this role. He is also a Masters candidate in Human Rights and Peace Education at the National University of Costa Rica. The primary program leader's responsibilities include the planning and coordination of all in-country logistics prior to

the program. He will serve as the primary liaison with Caribe Tours to coordinate details related to hotels, transportation, and excursions. He is also responsible for the workshop curriculum development and will serve as an advisor to the workshop facilitators in the development of their curricula. he will serve as one of the four workshop facilitators and will facilitate the Human Rights workshop.

The Assistant Program Leader will assist the primary program leader in facilitation of the program in country and will serve as a liaison to the partner school to manage all pre-departure details. She is an International Education Masters candidate at SIT Graduate Institute with experience in the organization and facilitation of short-term international study abroad programs for American students. As a native English speaker, she will be able to assist with translations, if necessary.

Facilitators

A facilitator with expertise in his/her field will facilitate the activities for each of the four program themes. The facilitators have extensive experience working with youth programs as FundaOGI staff and youth mentors. Each workshop facilitator will be responsible for the development of the curriculum and activities related to his/her area of expertise. They will facilitate that day's activities, engaging youth in experiential learning and critical analysis of the topic. Throughout the day, they will monitor group engagement and address student needs if and when they arise. At the end of the workshop, they will facilitate an evaluation session with the students pertaining to that day's activities. They will also be involved in the evaluation of the program as a whole.

Program Marketing

FundaOGI seeks to develop a relationship with a U.S. secondary school and is in the process of identifying a suitable partner. The right school will share the values of youth empowerment, education for sustainability, and civic engagement. As such, the marketing approach is very targeted. Currently, the organization is utilizing the connections of staff, funders, consultants, and friends to identify and approach various schools. The program will be marketed as a unique intercultural experience that will expose students to social and cultural realities, encourage development in communication and leadership skills, and empower them to become positive change makers in their communities. It is hoped that a suitable partner will be identified by late spring or early summer 2012, with program planning taking place over the summer and fall. If successful, the partnership will be grown and deepened over several years.

Once a partner school is selected, the program will be marketed to students. FundaOGI will rely on school staff and faculty to promote the program via flyers and announcements. An informational meeting will be held for interested students during lunch or after school. A more formal informational meeting will be held with parents and interested students in the evening. At both of these meetings, FundaOGI staff will be available via Skype to give an overview of the program, provide background information and answer any questions that students or parents may have.

Student Recruitment and Admissions

While the program does not have strict admissions requirements in terms of a minimum GPA or prerequisite courses, FundaOGI seeks participants who have a true desire to learn about leadership, conservation, and community development and will actively participate in and

contribute to program activities and discussions. Therefore, in order to be accepted into the program, students must demonstrate this interest. On the application form, which can be found in Appendix A, students will be asked to address their motivation for participation in the program. This section of the application may be addressed either in writing, as an essay, or students may opt to create a short video using a camera, phone, or computer that can be uploaded to the organization's YouTube page or emailed directly to staff. Creativity in addressing this point is encouraged.

Because all workshops and activities will be conducted in English, Spanish language ability is not required. The hope is to open the program to as many students as possible, and given its focus on human rights, the environment, and collaborative leadership, it is more important that students possess an active desire to engage with these topics.

Program Logistics

FundaOGI has a partnership with the travel agency Caribe Tours, who will provide logistical support for the entire program. Caribe Tours will manage all of the hotel and meal arrangements, transportation to all activities during the program, and arrange for guided tours and entrance to all excursions. The two program leaders will accompany the group throughout the program, with facilitators joining the group for their workshop and related activities. All FundaOGI staff will provide support for the service-learning project. As part of the arrangement with Caribe Tours, the two U.S. chaperones travel for free.

For the first week, the group will stay at the Hotel Monte Campana, located near the FundaOGI office in Heredia, Santo Domingo, about 20 minutes from the San Jose airport. Workshops will be held in the hotel's function room, and all meals will be provided at the hotel

as well. In accordance with Costa Rican tradition, most meals will include rice, beans, salad, vegetables and an option of meat (chicken, beef, pork, or fish). Vegetarians and or students with allergies or other dietary restrictions can be accommodated; students should simply notify program staff in advance.

Caribe Tours has arranged for airport transfers and in-country travel to and from activities in a chauffeured 28-passenger mini-bus. During the first week, each morning will involve a trip to a local site that is relevant to the afternoon workshop. After the four workshop days, the group will embark on a day-long white water rafting excursion followed by a two-night trip to the Arenal Volcano National Park where students will have the opportunity to tour an active volcano and explore the rainforest and canopy via hanging walkways and a zipline. From Arenal, the group will be transported to the community where the service-learning project will take place. During the second week, the group will camp at a location convenient to the service-learning project. FundaOGI will provide all necessary equipment including tents, sleeping bags, cooking equipment, food, and water. The group will organize into work groups and will practice collaborative leadership and teamwork skills in the daily management of the camp. FundaOGI staff will supervise all cooking and use of fire, following proper safety precautions. The group will return to the Hotel Monte Campana for the final night and return to the U.S. the following day. Below is an outline of the program schedule. Please see Appendices F and G for a more detailed program schedule and itinerary.

	Sunday	**Monday**	**Tuesday**	**Wed.**	**Thursday**	**Friday**	**Saturday**
Week One	Arrival, Orientation	Workshop: Human Rights	Workshop: Environment	Workshop: Collaborative Leadership	Workshop: Social Entre'ship	White Water Rafting	Canopy Tour/Zipline
Week Two	Arenal Volcano and Lake	Service Project	Service Project	Service Project	Service Project	Community Celebration Re-entry, Reflection, Evaluation	Departure

Health and Safety Plan

The health and safety of the students is the program's top priority, and the following policies and procedures will be followed to ensure that all participants remain safe and healthy for the duration of the program. While FundaOGI has run many programs for local youth, this will be the first program for international students, and careful attention will be paid to establish effective policies. In the development of these policies, staff consulted the Center for Global Education's Safety Abroad First – Educational Travel Information (SAFETI) Clearinghouse, particularly *Best Practices for Student Safety Support Systems,* and NAFSA's recommendations for maximizing study safety abroad. Careful planning and preventative measures are key factors in ensuring student safety, and NAFSA recommends the use of disclosures for student health or behavioral issues, development of student conduct codes, and requiring all participants to have appropriate insurance as key parts of health and safety measures (NAFSA, 2005). Per NAFSA's recommendations, FundaOGI will take the actions explained below.

Staff Training & Preparedness

Staff training is essential to an effective health and safety plan. Prior to the program, all staff will be trained on the policies so that everyone involved in the program is aware of and understands what should happen should there be a health or safety issue.

During the program, the program leaders will always have on hand a complete first aid kit, medical forms, insurance information, and emergency contact names and numbers for each participant, and the numbers, addresses, and directions to the closest health care facility or hospital. They will always carry a fully-charged cell phone in case emergency assistance is required.

Medical Disclosures

Prior to the program, students will be required to submit a medical history form that has been completed by their primary care physician and indicates that the student is up to date on all vaccinations and is healthy enough to participate in the program. Any pre-existing conditions, medications, allergies, and mental health issues should be disclosed, as it is extremely important for program to be aware of this information. The information disclosed on these forms will be shared only with program staff and will otherwise remain confidential. As students are minors, two release forms signed by a parent or legal guardian will be required. The travel release form indicates parent/guardian approval for their child to travel to Costa Rica under supervision of school chaperones and to participate in the program facilitated by FundaOGI. The medical release form authorizes the students to receive medical care from local practitioners and emergency medical staff, should a medical situation necessitate it.

Student Awareness

The CGE's SAFETI protocols say one of the biggest factors in assuring student health and safety is to inform them of the factors that contribute to risk and what they can do to reduce them. FundaOGI will develop a Student Handbook to be distributed to participants upon acceptance into the program that will include information on health and safety policies. The policies will be covered at the pre-departure meeting held on Skype and also at the on-site orientation in Costa Rica. These policies will include:

Behavior – Participants are expected to be self-responsible and act appropriately at all times. This includes listening to and following all instructions from program leaders and faculty chaperones.

Communication – Students are expected to let staff know immediately if they are not feeling well or if they experience any type of health or safety issue.

Culture & Customs – It is important to understand local culture and customs in order to avoid frustration resulting from a misinterpretation of an action.

Travel – During travel, groups are more susceptible to theft as they draw great attention and are an easy target. It is essential to be aware and extra cautious during group travel.

Belongings – Participants should always be aware of their belongings. Students should not bring expensive items that they would not want to lose.

Drug and Alcohol – The use of illegal substances is absolutely prohibited. Because students are minors, the use of alcohol is prohibited as well.

Curfew – As the program schedule is extremely busy and each day requires the utmost energy and active involvement, students will be expected to be in their rooms by 11:00pm each night.

Service-Learning

There will be a separate orientation on site prior to the service-learning project that will cover any and all safety precautions that students must follow during the project. Depending on the specific activities and division of labor, students will be briefed on the use of tools, equipment, and/or materials. During the service-learning portion of the program, the group will be camping. Staff will supervise students in the set-up of the site and all cooking of meals. Students will be expected to:

- Go places in pairs
- Let a staff member know if and when they need to leave the tent area
- Be cautious around fire

If a student does not adhere to the health and safety policies, they will first be issued a warning. They will also speak to the program leaders to discuss the situation and any underlying issues or problems. Upon a second infringement, the student will be sent home at their expense.

Students will receive a card with important contact information for local staff and emergency medical services and are expected to carry this card with them at all times. Parents will also receive a copy of important contact information in the case that they need to contact a student or staff member.

In addition to these safety protocols, students will be covered by a customized group travel insurance policy, which is included in the program fee. The policy covers emergency care and emergency medical evacuation while in country and is intended to supplement the students' primary insurance policy. Students should bring proof of their primary insurance with them on the program should it be needed. Please see Appendix D for an overview of the travel insurance policy offered through the program.

Emergency Response Plan

While Costa Rica is the most stable and peaceful country in Latin America and students will be constantly supervised by the program leaders and faculty chaperones, unexpected events can occur. FundaOGI has developed an emergency response plan that outlines all actions that will occur in the event of an emergency. The plan follows NAFSA recommendations for effective crisis management in education abroad and draws largely on SAFETI's emergency

response protocols. All staff involved in the program will be trained on the emergency response plan prior to the program so that in the event of an emergency, all parties will understand:

- What constitutes an emergency?
- What actions should happen?
- Who has the ultimate authority to make decisions?
- Who needs to be informed and when?

An emergency is "something that poses a genuine and sometimes immediate risk to, or that has already disturbed, the health, safety, or well-being of participants" (Brockington, 2006). The emergency may be real or perceived, but in both cases an appropriate response is required.

Chain of Command

Decision making in an emergency situation will follow the chain of command as outlined in Appendix E. The primary program leader will have final decision-making authority in the event of an emergency. The secondary program leader falls next in the chain, with the two faculty chaperones falling third. These individuals will be with the students at all times on-site and will likely be the first responders to any emergency. Each of these individuals will have copies of the emergency action plan and all important phone numbers on hand at all times.

Emergency Response Team

In the event of an emergency, the emergency response team will include:

- FundaOGI program staff (program leaders, facilitators)
- Faculty Chaperones
- School Administrators (principal, vice principal, school counselors)
- On-Site Emergency Responders
- Embassy officials (if necessary)

Emergency Protocols

The following protocols were adapted from SAFETI's Education Abroad Emergency Protocols.

1.) In the event of a health or safety emergency, the Program Leaders' first responsibility is to safeguard the safety and wellbeing of program participants. The leader should do whatever is necessary to assure this, whether this means obtaining prompt and appropriate medical attention, Embassy intervention, or police protection.

2.) When all has been done to assure the participants' wellbeing, the Leader will contact the School Administrator (Principal) to brief them on the situation.

3.) In a medical emergency, one of the program leaders will accompany the student to an appropriate health care provider. If the medical emergency is critical, parents and administrators will be contacted by the faculty chaperones immediately.

4.) During an on-going crisis, the leader will keep school administrators informed on a regular basis, daily or as need dictates.

Evacuation

Emergency protocols for evacuations necessitated by a natural disaster call for a pre-established meeting location and readily available transportation. The predetermined meeting place will be the Hotel Monte Compaña. An alternative location is the FundaOGI office in Santo Domingo. Transportation of participants will be provided by Caribe Tours.

In all situations of stress or crisis, whether the incident involves only one or multiple students, the well-being of the other students, both physical and mental, will be monitored and attended.

Communication

Communication is vital both during and following a crisis situation. All staff, administrators, and parents will receive a copy of the emergency phone plan, which outlines the lines of communication in the event of an emergency and lists all relevant phone numbers. Should an event occur that requires communication with the public or media, FundaOGI's Excecutive Director will serve as the spokesperson for the organization.

Reporting

Program leaders will make detailed notes about the emergency situation, including time, place, and chronology of events, to ensure accurate reporting of all events to necessary parties. Program staff will write a detailed report of the incident that will be kept on file. They will assist students in filling out any insurance claims, reports, or forms.

In accordance with good practices for education abroad programs, a portion of the program budget has been allocated for contingencies so that funds will be available in the event of a health or safety emergency.

Program Budget

The program budget reflects the organization's aim to provide a quality program that offers students a valuable experience while keeping costs reasonable. The total operating cost of the program is $39,000. The program fee of $2,200 per student covers accommodation, meals, transportation, entrance fees, guides, airport departure tax, and two teacher chaperones who will travel without cost. The cost also includes a donation of $1,000 that will be given to the community where the service-learning project will take place. Based on the projection of 20 participants, there will be a profit margin of $5,000 to be put toward the FundaOGI scholarship fund and the implementation of other programs. As a non-profit organization, the revenue generated through the program will be reinvested into other projects and programs that support the organization's mission of empowering youth locally and globally. The budget does not include airfare from the U.S. to Costa Rica, which will depend on the departure airport. For reference, the average cost of a round-trip flight from Boston to San Jose is approximately $500 USD. The complete budget and accompanying budget notes are below.

Project GAYA Budget

Expenses	Fixed Costs		Variable Costs			Total USD

Administrative Costs	Salary		# of Staff	# of Days		
1. Program Leader	200		2	14		2,800
2. Workshop Facilitators	300		4	1		1,200
3. Website - Virtual Forum	1,500					1,500
4. Office Rental, Utiiities, etc.	2,000					2,000
Administrative Costs Total						**7,500**

Program Costs	Cost (fixed)	Cost (variable)	# of Days	# of Units	Unit	
5. Hotel - Lodging		80	9	10	Rooms	7,200
6. Camping Equipment and Supplies	600					600
7. Meals		40	14	24	Participants	13,440
8. Workshop Materials	100					100
9. Translation of manuals	100			4	Manual	400
10. Insurance		2	14	20	Participants	560
11. Medical Supplies	40					40
12. Airport Departure Tax		26		22	Participants	572
13. Donation to Service-Learning Proje	1,000					1,000
14. Contingency Fund				0	Total Program Cost	1,320
Program Costs Total						**25,232**

Excursions and Cultural Activities						
15. INBio Park tour		44		20	Participants	880
16. White Water Rafting		99		20	Participants	1,980
17. Arenal Volcano Park		53		20	Participants	1,060
18. Canopy Tour and Zipline		35		20	Participants	700
19. Transportation		150		7	Days	1,050
20. Evening Cultural Activities		30		20	Participants	600
Excursions Costs Total						**6,270**

Expenses Total	**39,002**

Revenues	Cost to Student		# of Students			
Program Fee	2,200		20			44,000

Total Revenue	**44,000**

Total Profit						
Total Revenues						44,000
Program Expenditures						39,002

TOTAL PROFIT	**4,998**

Assumptions	
# Days	14
# Nights	13
# Students	20
Chaperone	2
Group Leader (local)	2
Total Participants	24

Budget Notes

The following budget notes outlines all costs associated with the planning and delivery of the Project GAYA Program.

Administrative Costs

1. *Program Leaders* – The in-country Program Leaders, the Executive Director of FundaOGI and one other staff member, will be paid for planning and execution of the program. The Executive Director will be responsible for all oversight of the program, including the organization of logistics, workshops and facilitators, activities and visits, the service-learning project, and program evaluation.
2. *Workshop facilitators* – Each workshop facilitator will be paid for the development, delivery, and evaluation of the workshop in their area of expertise, as well as accompany the group on any activities related to their workshop.
3. *Website Maintenance* – The cost to maintain the website, which hosts the Virtual Youth Forum that participants will utilize both before and after the on-site program.
4. *Office Rental, Utilities* – The FundaOGI office is house on the second floor of a building in Santo Domingo and rent is paid monthly. Utilities include electricity, water, phone, fax, and internet.

Program Costs

5. *Hotel* – During Week 1, the group will stay at the Hotel Monte Compana, in Santo Domingo close to the FundaOGI office.
6. *Camping Equipment and Supplies* – The foundation will rent the necessary equipment for all participants including tents and sleeping bags.
7. *Meals* –Breakfast, lunch and dinner are provided at the hotel for all the days that the students will stay there. During the service-learning project, FundaOGI will provide food and water that will be made at the campsite.
8. *Workshop Materials* – Includes all materials needed for the workshops such as pens, paper, and photocopies.
9. *Translation of Manuals* – FundaOGI has created workshop manuals for all of their workshops that will be distributed to each program participant. These manuals were originally written in Spanish and must be translated into English for the program.
10. *Group Insurance Plan* – The group will be covered by a group insurance plan, administered by CMI Insurance, a division of FrontierMEDEX. The cost is $2 per day per participant for the 14 days of the program and included emergency medical expenses, emergency reunion, and repatriation of remains.
11. *Medical Supplies* – FundaOGI staff will have an up-to-date, well-stocked first aid kit on hand at all time.

12. *Airport Departure Tax* – There is an airport fee of $26 USD per person upon leaving San Jose.
13. *Donation to Service-Learning Project* – The program will donate $1,000 to the community where the service-learning project will be completed.
14. *Contingency Fund* – 3% of the total program cost will be reserved in the case of emergency and will be used to cover immediate expenses such as taxis, medical expenses, and passport replacements.

Excursions and Cultural Activities

15. *INBio Park Tour* – This half-day tour includes pick up and transport to and from the park, a guided tour with interactive activities, and lunch.
16. *White Water Rafting* – Cost for a full day rafting trip that includes professional bilingual guides, transportation to and from the Operations Center, rafting equipment, breakfast, hot lunch at our Operations Center with comfortable open dining area and spacious changing rooms and showers.
17. *Arenal Volcano Trip* – Students will spend two nights in La Fortuna at the Hotel San Bosco.
18. *Canopy Tour and Zipline* – Costs for participation in these activities per student.
19. *Transportation* – Transfers for all excursions and trips are included in the price provided by Caribe Tours. The group will travel in a 28-passenger minibus.
20. *Evening Cultural Activities* – Entrance to a local music performance, theatre performance, and museum.

Evaluation Plan

FundaOGI will utilize a number of formative and summative assessment methods and tools to gauge participant learning, engagement, and satisfaction as well as the success of the program in meeting its stated goals. Assessment methods will be used to assess not only workshops and activities, but also the group cohesiveness and rapport. Methods of assessment and evaluation will include appreciative inquiry feedback sessions, observation, and written surveys.

Evaluation of Students

The evaluation process, both during and after the program, will measure whether the stated goals were achieved for student learning. As the goals of the program include empowerment and the development of critical thinking, communication, and leadership skills the evaluation will measure students':

- Level of active participation in discussions and activities
- Ability to listen to others and to engage with new perspectives
- Ability to work collaboratively with fellow group members
- Awareness and understanding of program themes demonstrated through knowledgeable comments during discussions

In addition, FundaOGI will measure students' demonstration of each of the following skills, which are associated with successful leadership skills.

- Respect
- Pro-activeness
- Self-awareness
- Effective communication
- Creativity
- Results-oriented
- Negotiation
- Inclusion and observation of others
- Flexibility
- Resilience

"Since the student's empowerment is one of the goals of experiential education, students should be encouraged to reflect upon the way in which they learn best, participate in setting learning objectives, and take responsibility for their learning process by sharing in the assessment of their learning" (Christie, 1993). Students will return to the self-assessment tool completed during the orientation and compare their initial scores for each category with their scores at the end of the program.

Post-program, responses to questions posted on the Virtual Forum will also be used to gauge student engagement even after they return home. Student engagement will be assessed in an on-going manner throughout the program, through observation and regular check-ins with the students. At the end of each of the workshops, the facilitator will engage students in an interactive feedback session where students will identify which aspects of the session were unclear, most engaging, etc. Students will be encouraged to reflect on what they have learned, how they have changed, and what they will take away from the program.

Evaluation of Program

Evaluation of the program will include an assessment of each of the workshops and the program as a whole. After each workshop, the facilitator will utilize one of the evaluation methods that FundaOGI has developed to get feedback from students. Students will provide feedback on the following for the day's activities:

- Moderation style
- Treatment of the theme
- Organization of the day
- Group work
- Met expectations

The facilitator for each workshop will utilize student responses from the feedback session and their own perceptions of how the workshop went and will summarize this in a short report. At the end of the entire program, the program leaders will facilitate a reflection session and will use an interactive approach that will allow students to express what they considered to be highs and lows of the program, what they enjoyed the most and least, and to provide any suggestions for future programs. Participants will also complete a written evaluation survey (see Appendix H). Following the program, FundaOGI staff will meet as a whole to discuss both the individual workshops and improvements for future programs. The faculty member or chaperones of the

partner school will also complete a written survey and will meet with the program leaders to discuss how the program went and any changes they recommend.

Conclusion

Through the implementation of Project GAYA, FundaOGI seeks to contribute to the formation of a better world through the education and empowerment of its youth. As our world becomes increasingly complex with escalating environmental crises and abuses of human rights, youth need not only to be educated about the historical and social contexts of these issues, but to be empowered to become change makers armed with successful approaches to actively address them. The program provides an answer to environmental educator Susan Santone's question: "What kind of education do we need to create the future we want?" (2004, p. 61). Following the goals of the EFS movement, Project GAYA offers an approach and curriculum that link social, economic, and ecological systems…foster respect for all people; and nurture creativity, compassion, and cooperation (Santone, 2004, p. 61). In a world that is globally-minded, in order to become effective citizens, students must develop a greater understanding of the inter-connectedness of our world and its systems.

The field of international education, including the increase of both short-term and long-term study abroad programs, seems to be expanding to meet this need, in part, by providing opportunities for students to explore other cultures and engage in social issues. Still, the majority of these opportunities exist primarily for college students. Over 270,000 university students studied abroad in 2009-2010 (Open Doors, 2010), yet as Lejneik's (2009) research revealed, "study abroad programs are the exception, rather than the norm, at the secondary level." Project

GAYA offers a unique study abroad program for secondary students that assume a great level of responsibility and capability for shaping our future.

Every new program design comes with its own set of challenges. In undertaking this particular program, I found one of the biggest challenges to be the development of the program without the input of an identified partner school. Depending on the school, there may be a desire to put emphasis on a certain area, such as environment or leadership. There may also be opportunity to connect directly with the school's curriculum, which was a desire expressed by teachers in Lejneick's (2009) research. If the program were to be tied to the curriculum and credit bearing, additional individual work may be required.

As I learned through my experience with ProWorld, planning service-learning programs in partnership with a local community raises many challenges for program staff. Often it is difficult to determine specifics far in advance, which can be frustrating for organizers. What is essential is to make students and teachers aware and involve them in a discussion of cultural differences that impact the organization of a project so that misunderstanding of the situation does not lead to further frustration. Community involvement and reciprocity is also a fundamental aspect of a service-learning program, and as FundaOGI is still considering potential communities and partners, I did not include specifics of the community. It will take time to find an appropriate project and community, but it will be worth the effort.

Re-entry is another area of challenge for the program. As Kinsella, Smith-Simonet, and Tuma (2007) discuss in their chapter on Orientation and Reentry for short-term programs, a re-entry seminar (or even better, multiple meetings post program) that help students to further connect all of the learning that they experienced short-term program to their home life is important. I believe that by working with the partner school to identify teachers that will

accompany the group, connect to their curriculum, and hopefully facilitate further re-entry processing once the group has returned would be extremely beneficial to the program.

FundaOGI seeks to become a model center for youth education and training and is strategically aligning itself both within the region and internationally. With a passionate and dedicated staff with experience connecting to local youth, the organization seeks to reach new audiences and is poised to provide the type of relevant and engaging program that young people from the United States may not otherwise experience. The program seeks to stimulate social action by providing information, encouraging discussion and the exchange of ideas and perspectives. The design is inspired by Paulo Freire and his concept of praxis, which he described as reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (Freire, 1981). FundaOGI believes that young people play a key role in this transformation and through the program, hopes to provide them with tools and inspiration to be active leaders in their communities and the world.

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APPENDIX A: APPLICATION FORM

FUNDAOGI

Project GAYA
Application Form

Student Information

Name: _____
Address: _____
Email: _____
Phone: _____
DOB: _____

Emergency Contact Information

Name: _____
Relation to Student: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Background Information

Year in school: _____

Level of Spanish:	Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced
Reading	☐	☐	☐
Writing	☐	☐	☐
Listening	☐	☐	☐

The following questions may be answered in written form, in a one-page essay, or you may choose to create a short video (no more than 10 minutes) that addresses the questions in a creative form.

What interested you about this program?

What are you hoping to learn by participating in the program? What expectations do you have?

What are your interests, hobbies, skills?

What do you consider to be your strengths? Are there any areas in which you would like to improve?

¡GRACIAS!

APPENDIX B: PARENTAL CONSENT FORMS

Student Name: _____

PERMISSION TO TRAVEL

I, _____, the parent/legal guardian of, _____ give my permission for my under-age son/daughter to travel to Costa Rica to participate in the PROJUPAS International Program through the Fundación Operación GAYA Internacional, under the guidance of the designated staff chaperones.

Name (print): _____

Name (signature): _____

Date: _____

MEDICAL RELEASE AUTHORIZATION

I, _____, the parent/legal guardian of, _____ authorize Fundación Operación GAYA Internacional, and the staff chaperones, to seek medical attention on behalf of the student named above in the event of sickness, accident, or other emergency during the program. I also authorize any physician to release any information acquired in the course of examination or treatment. This authorization shall be valid for the entire duration of the PROJUPAS International program.

Name (print): _____

Name (signature): _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX C: MEDICAL HISTORY FORM

MEDICAL FORM

Note: The information provided below will be shared with FundaOGI program staff and, in the case of necessity, with medical care providers and physicians in Costa Rica.

A licensed physician who is not related to the student must complete this form. Student and parent signatures are required at the end of this form (next page).

Student Name: _____ Date of birth: _____

Height: Weight: Pulse: B/P:

Does the student have any abnormalities concerning height, weight, blood pressure or pulse?
□ Yes □ No *If yes, please explain:*

Is the student currently taking any medications or injections? □ Yes □ No
If yes, identify the medications, reasons for usage, dosages, and frequency:

Does the student have any health conditions that may partially or fully restrict his or her participation in various Program activities (e.g. walking or traveling for extended distances, swimming or other athletics)? ☐ Yes ☐ No *If yes, please explain:*

Does the student have (or has ever had) any of the following ailments, conditions, or problems associated with:

Allergies	□ Yes	□ No			
Appendicitis	□ Yes	□ No	Measles	□ Yes	□ No
Asthma	□ Yes	□ No	Mumps	□ Yes	□ No
Bones or joints	□ Yes	□ No	Poliomyelitis	□ Yes	□ No
Cardiovascular system	□ Yes	□ No	Respiratory system	□ Yes	□ No
Chicken Pox	□ Yes	□ No	Rheumatic Fever	□ Yes	□ No
Cough (persistent, recurring)	□ Yes	□ No	Rubella	□ Yes	□ No
Diabetes	□ Yes	□ No	Seizures	□ Yes	□ No
Digestive System	□ Yes	□ No	Sleepwalking	□ Yes	□ No
Headaches, persistent	□ Yes	□ No	Tuberculosis	□ Yes	□ No
Hepatitis	□ Yes	□ No	Other: _____		
If yes, type: _____			_____		

If you answered "yes" above, please identify type, severity, treatment, medication taken, dosage, and frequency: _____
_____
_____

Has the student had the following immunizations? Please specify the month and the year:

	Month/Year	Month/Year	Month/Year	Month/Year
BCG				
Diptheria				
Hepatitis				
Measles				
Mumps				
Polio				
Pertussis				
Rubella				
Tuberculosis*				
Tetanus				

*Which type? _____ Date _____
Result (+ / -) _____
If positive, was chest x-ray done? □ Yes □ NoDate _____
Result (+ / -) _____

Has the student ever consulted a psychologist, psychiatrist or any other specialist for an emotional disorder? □ Yes □ No

Does the student have a history of, or present evidence of, emotional trauma, instability, depression, or any disorders?

Will the student be in need of any medication while on the program? □ Yes □ No
If yes, identify the medication, reasons for usage, dosages, and frequency:

Note: If the student will need any medications during the Program, make sure that he or she brings along an adequate supply of these medications. We also highly recommend bringing a copy of the original prescription – in the event of loss this may expedite replacement.

Please use the space below for any additional information you would like to provide. If the student has a medical condition that may suddenly deteriorate and require immediate treatment, and especially if this may lead to a life-threatening crisis, it is vital that you provide us with the following information: the symptoms of a possible crisis or deterioration; the immediate steps that need to be taken by our staff; the immediate treatment and medications that need to be provided; and the probability and past frequency of such crises and conditions. Use an additional sheet of paper if necessary.

I certify that an appropriate physical examination of the student has been given and all important recent medical information has been included in this form, that nothing relevant has been omitted, and that the student is able to participate in the program from a medical perspective

Physician Signature: _____
Physician Name: _____
Physician Address:

Student Signature: _____
Date: _____

Parent / Guardian Signature: _____
Date: _____

If any medical ailment, accident or other relevant event occurs after this application is completed and before the beginning of the Program, you are asked to immediately notify us about it.

APPENDIX D: INSURANCE POLICY OVERVIEW

Global Group High School Exchange
Accident and Sickness Insurance Plan

Students participating in the Project GAYA Program through the Fundación Operación GAYA Internacional will be covered by a group insurance policy purchased by FundaOGI specifically for medical and travel emergency coverage during the program for all participants and chaperones. The Global Group High School Exchange (GGHSE) policy, offered by CMI Insurance Company and FrontierMEDEX, is designed specifically for outbound American students and provides medical and emergency assistance. The following provides an overview of the coverage provided through the GGHSE policy.

Cost per Participant	$2 per day
Number of Program Days	14
Deductible	None
Medical Benefit	100% of covered expenses, up to $500,00 per sickness or injury
Emergency Medical Evacuation Benefit	100% of covered expenses
Emergency Reunion Benefit	$12,500 maximum benefit
Repatration of Remains Benefit	100% of covered expenses

Period of Coverage
Coverage begins at 12:01am the day that participants depart the United States and ends at 11:59pm the day they return.

Medical Expense Benefit
The policy covers 100% of the following medical expenses, up to $500,000 per sickness or injury. Expenses covered:

1. Expenses made by a hospital for room and board, general nursing and other services inclusive of charges for professional service and with the exception of personal services of a non-medical nature, provided, however, that expenses do not exceed the hospital's average charge for semi-private room and board accommodation.
2. Expenses made for diagnosis, treatment and surgery by a doctor.
3. Expenses made for the cost and administration of anesthetics.
4. Expenses for x-ray services, laboratory tests, medical services and supplies (includes blood and blood transfusion, oxygen and its administration).
5. Expenses for physiotherapy, if recommended by a doctor for the treatment of an Injury or Sickness, and administered by a licensed physiotherapist. Chiropractic care is limited to 80% of eligible charges up to $35 per visit and a maximum of 10 visits per Injury or Sickness.
6. Expenses for prescription drugs including dressings, drugs, and medicines prescribed by a doctor. The Company will pay 100% of the inpatient expenses incurred, and 50% of outpatient expenses incurred.

7. Charges for Dental expenses resulting from an accident and dental expenses for emergency pain relief treatment to sound, natural teeth: limit $100 per tooth, $500 overall maximum limit.
8. Expenses for treatment of mental and nervous disorders. Benefits are payable: a) up to a $300 maximum for outpatient treatment, and b) 50% of covered expenses for inpatient treatment up to a maximum of 10 days. Expenses incurred by a hospital for room and board; diagnosis, treatment, and surgery by a doctor; x-ray services, laboratory tests, medical services and supplies.

Emergency Medical Evacuation Benefit
The company will pay emergency medical evacuation benefits for 100% of covered expenses incurred for the medical evacuation of a covered person. Covered expenses:

1. Medical Transport: expenses for transportation under medical supervision to a different hospital, treatment facility or to the Covered Person's place of residence for Medically Necessary treatment in the event of the Covered Person's Medical Emergency and upon the request of the Doctor designated by FrontierMEDEX in consultation with the local attending Doctor.
2. Dispatch of a Doctor or Specialist: the Doctor's or specialist's travel expenses and the medical services provided on location, if, based on the information available, a Covered Person's condition cannot be adequately assessed to evaluate the need for transport or evacuation and a doctor or specialist is dispatched by FrontierMEDEX to the Covered Person's location to make the assessment.
3. Return of Dependent Child(ren): expenses to return each Dependent child who is under age 18 to his or her principal residence if a) the Covered Person is age 18 or older; and b) the Covered Person is the only person traveling with the minor Dependent child(ren); and c) the Covered Person suffers a Medical Emergency and must be confined in a Hospital.
4. Escort Services: expenses for an Immediate Family Member or companion who is traveling with the Covered Person to join the Covered Person during the Covered Person's emergency medical evacuation to a different hospital, treatment facility or the Covered Person's place of residence.

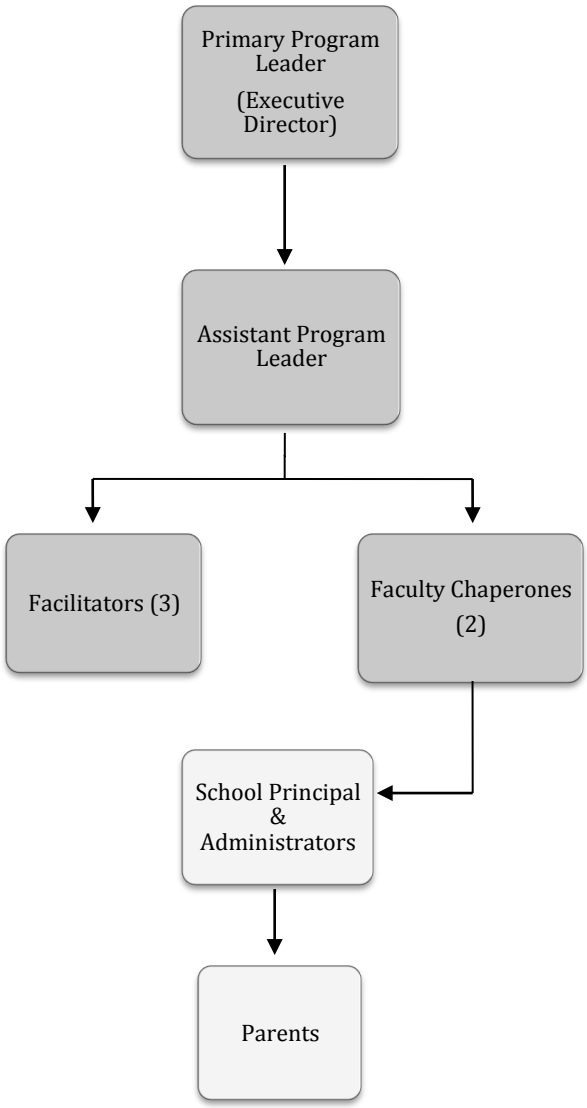
Emergency Reunion Benefit
In the event the Insured has either been: 1) confined in a Hospital for at least 24 consecutive hours due to a covered Injury or Sickness, where the attending doctor believes it would be beneficial for the Insured to have a Family Member at his or her side; or 2) the victim of a Felonious Assault, the Company will pay the expenses incurred for travel and lodgin for that family member, up to the maximum benefit of $12,500. Covered expenses include an economy airline ticket and other travel related expenses not to exceed the daily maximum of $300 and a maximum of ten days.

The insurance policy is managed by: CMI Insurance, a Frontier MEDEX Company, P.O. Box 19056, Baltimore, MD 21284. www.cmi-insurance.com

All claim forms and instructions are available at the web site.

APPENDIX E: CHAIN OF COMMAND & COMMUNICATION CHART

The following chart outlines the chain of command and communication process to be followed in the event of an emergency or health or safety incident during Project GAYA.



APPENDIX F: PROGRAM SCHEDULE

FUNDAOGI

Project GAYA
SCHEDULE

Sunday, July 7	Monday, July 8	Tuesday, July 9	Wednesday, July 10	Thursday, july 11
AM: Arrive in San Jose Airport Pick up Lunch Transfer to Hotel 3-6pm: Orientation 700pm: Welcome Dinner with FundaOGI staff	8am: Breakfast in Hotel AM: Workshop HUMAN RIGHTS Lunch PM: Workshop HUMAN RIGHTS/Activities Dinner Evening Cultural Activity	8am: Breakfast in Hotel AM: INBIOparque Lunch PM: Workshop ENVIRONMENT DInner	8am: Breakfast in Hotel AM: Workshop LEADERSHIP Lunch PM: Workshop LEADERSHIP Dinner Evening Cultural Activity	8am: Breakfast in Hotel AM: Workshop SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP Lunch PM: Workshop SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP Dinner
Friday, July 12	**Saturday, July 13**	**Sunday, July 14**	**Monday, July 15**	**Tuesday, July 16**
8am: Breakfast in Hotel White water rafting trip FULL DAY	Arenal Volcano National Park Trip will include a Canopy Tour & Zipline excursion Overnight in La Fortuna	Arenal Lake and Volcano Tour Transport to Community for Service-Learning Project Set-up of Campsite & Formation of Teams Orientation to Service-Learning Project	Service Learning Project Evening Reflection	Service Learning Project Evening Reflection
Wednesday, July 17	**Thursday, July 18**	**Friday, July 19**	**Saturday, July 20**	
Service Learning Project Evening Reflection	Service Learning Project Evening Reflection	AM: Community Celebration Transport back to Santo Domingo PM: Reflection & Evaluation 7pm Despedida Dinner	AM: Depart	

APPENDIX G: PROGRAM ITINERARY

FUNDAOGI

Project GAYA
ITINERARY

Day 1: Depart U.S. Arrive San Jose, Costa Rica. The group will be met by FundaOGI staff at the airport. Transfer to hotel and orientation. Welcome dinner with FundaOGI staff at local restaurant.

Day 2: Students will hit the ground running with the Human Rights workshop, which will include discussions, dialogue, and interactive activities. Following dinner at the hotel, students will attend an evening cultural activity that occurs monthly in the area.

Day 3: Today students begin focusing on the environment with a visit to INBio Park, an ecological park developed by the National Institute for Biodiversity to expose both locals and visitors to the value of biodiversity in an effort to ensure its conservation and improve the quality of life of human beings. The tour begins with a short video presentation about biodiversity in Costa Rica before leading visitors along a series of trails with representations of different types of Costa Rican forest: Rainforest, Pre-Mountainous Forest, Wetlands and Dry Forest. From a safe distance, students will observe its residents including poison dart frogs, butterflies, iguanas, sloths, caimans, birds, turtles and snakes, and many others. Students will return to the hotel for lunch and the afternoon workshop focused on Environmental Justice, through which they will begin to engage more deeply with environmental issues.

Day 4: On Day Four, students will look at the characteristics of leadership and their role as a leader in society. Through the activities and dialogue, students will explore their strengths and weaknesses and ways in which they can work together toward a common goal. The all-day workshop will be followed with dinner and an evening cultural activity.

Day 6: On the fourth and final day of workshops, students will look at the role of socially responsible business, and the ways in which businesses, community organizations, and municipalities can work together to create healthy communities. As part of the day's activities, students will visit local business and talk to local community leaders.

Day 5: To put teamwork and leadership skills into practice, the group will embark on a day-long white water rafting excursion on the Pacuare River. The tour company Rios Tropicales offers white-water rafting trips that focus on team building, with activities included along the way. Located on Costa Rica's Atlantic slope, the Pacuare River borders the Talamanca mountain range, home to native Cabecar Indians and an incredible variety of wildlife, including parrots, toucans, deer, jaguars, ocelots, monkeys, butterflies, and more. The trip includes an early

breakfast, transport to and from the Operations Center, rafting equipment and safety lesson, lunch, and hot showers at the end.

Day 7: On Days 7 and 8, students will embark on an over night journey to Arenal Volcano National Park, one of the top destinations in Costa Rica. There they will visit an active volcano and nearby lake, venture on hikes along treetop walkways and zipline through the lush jungle. Built-in discussions and activities will connect the experience to the workshop activities and themes.

Day 8: The group will be transported to the community where they will complete the service-learning project. They will divide into work groups and set up the campsite. In the evening a group meeting will be held in order to provide an introduction and overview to the coming week's service learning project.

Days 9-12: This week will be spent working with the local community on a service project. In the evenings, discussion and reflection sessions will be held after dinner to process the experiences of working in the community and to begin to think ahead to how students can apply this new knowledge and tools to improve their own communities.

Day 13: The community will host a celebration to acknowledge the success of the project. In the afternoon the group will return to Santo Domingo for a final reflection, evaluation session, and farewell dinner.

Day 14: In the morning, the group will be transported to San Jose airport for return to the U.S.

APPENDIX H: EVALUATION FORM

FUNDAOGI

Project GAYA
EVALUATION FORM

Thanks for taking the time to complete this evaluation! Your feedback is really important and will help us improve the program for future students. All comments are greatly appreciated.

1. Overall experience

Participating in the program increased my:

	Highly Agree	**Sort of Agree**	**Neutral**	**Don't Really Agree**	**Definitely not**
Understanding of global issues					
Understanding of myself as a leader					
Confidence in my own leadership abilities					
Ability to communicate effectively with others					
Ability to work as a member of a team					
Understanding of how individual actions can have a global impact					
Understanding of Costa Rican cultural and social realities					
Understanding of how to make an impact in my own community					

2. Workshops

Please evaluate the quality of each of the workshops.

	Excellent	**Above Average**	**Average**	**Below Average**	**Poor**
Human Rights					
Environmental Justice					
Collaborative Leadership					
Social Entrepreneurship					

Comments or Suggestions for Improvement:

3. Service-Learning

Please evaluate the service-learning project according to the criteria below:

	Excellent	**Above Average**	**Average**	**Below Average**	**Poor**
Organization of the project					
Orientation to the project					

Comments or Suggestions for Improvement:

4. Excursions

Please rate each of the excursions you participated in during the program.

	Excellent	**Above Average**	**Average**	**Below Average**	**Poor**
INBio Park					
White Water Rafting					
Arenal Volcano					
Canopy Tour					
Ziplining					

Comments or Suggestions for Improvement:

5. Accomodation and Food

Please rate the following:

	Excellent	**Above Average**	**Average**	**Below Average**	**Poor**
Hotel Monte Campana					
Hotel San Bosco					
Meals at Hotel Monte Campana					
Meals during S-L project					
Transportation to/from activities					

Comments or Suggestions for Improvement:

6. Health and Safety

Please rate the following:

	Excellent	**Above Average**	**Average**	**Below Average**	**Poor**
The program-provided health insurance					
The supportiveness of program staff in the event of medical or safety emergency situation					
Your level of comfort with safety to, from, and during excursions					
Your level of comfort with safety during the service-learning project/camping					

Comments or Suggestions for Improvement:

5. Staff

Please rate the program staff according to the criteria below:

	Excellent	**Above Average**	**Average**	**Below Average**	**Poor**
The program leaders' support of individual needs					
The program leaders' overall performance					
Facilitators' level of expertise					
Facilitators' skill in facilitation of their workshop					

Comments or Suggestions for Improvement:

Do you feel that you have changed or grown during the program? If so, how?

What was a highlight of the program for you?

Over the past two weeks, what do you think has impacted you the most? What do you think you will remember the most?

What will you take away from the program? What is the biggest learning that you had?

Any other comments or suggestions?