

Community Development Intern in Guanacaste, Costa Rica

I am thrilled to have been selected as a Community Development intern with the non-profit organization, Abriendo Mentas in Guanacaste, Costa Rica. Abriendo Mentas translates as “opening minds” and the non-profit focuses on empowering the local community through various workshops and classes. Specifically, the organization aims to empower residents to become active, self-sufficient members of their communities. They do this by teaching professional skills including English language and technology classes, with a very strong emphasis on education.

They also run a program called Mujeres Activas de Potrero, which is a workshop where women use sewing and other arts and crafts skills to create various hand made items, which are sold in the SHOP, a storefront near the Abriendo Mentas office. The program helps women to gain confidence and to learn valuable skills, which empowers them economically. Overall, Abriendo Mentas is very dedicated to the local community, and is focused on helping the local residents to thrive, especially amid the growing tourist sector.

In my role as the Community Development intern I will specifically be working in the village of Brasilito. The local population in Brasilito is very impoverished and many people even lack running water or electricity. In my role I will be assisting the Project Director with various aspects of coordination, evaluation and general support.

Particularly, I will be working to:

- Collect and maintain data regarding the program and complete reports and evaluation in conjunction with other team leaders.
- Help to coordinate various events within the organization.
- Perform outreach to gain support and build alliances with various outside organizations.
- Assist with development projects and help to create a structure for current projects.
- Manage volunteer coordination by responding to inquiries and assisting with interviewing potential volunteer candidates, as well

as logistics such as housing, transportation and orientation for volunteers.

- Act as a role model for other volunteers.
- Assist with professional development trainings.
- Volunteer with other aspects of the program as needed, such as English classes, fundraisers and field trips.