

Trip Leaders

[Fall 2009 – Summer 2010]



ENCOUNTOUR
ENCOUNTER YOUR WORLD

www.encountour.com

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Encountour's Mission Statement

To offer extraordinary travel experiences that enable participants to appreciate the world we share.

About Encountour

Encountour is a volunteer and adventure travel company that exposes North American college students to the developing world. We challenge the current college break "party" tradition by offering alternative trips that enable student participants to engage with a country's local communities and natural environment.

Encountour has offices both in the United States and in Latin America. In the United States, we work in conjunction with student Campus Representatives and Trip Leaders to raise awareness about unique adventure and volunteer travel opportunities. And in Latin America, we work with carefully screened community driven projects and non-profit organizations to find meaningful volunteer placements. For our adventure travel program, we utilize our in-depth knowledge of the country, its culture and geography, and our local relationships to expose participants to incredible cultural sites and natural wonders.

To learn more about Encountour and our programs, please visit www.encountour.com.

What is an Encountour Trip Leader?

A Trip Leader is a student who works closely with Encountour to organize a trip from their college. A Trip Leader has two primary responsibilities:

- 1) Recruiting other students on campus to join his/her group.
- 2) Acting as a leader on the trip.

Why Should I Become a Trip Leader?

Becoming an Encountour Trip Leader is an incredible opportunity to participate in one of our extraordinary volunteer or adventure trips and to travel for free!

Just as importantly, you will gain valuable leadership experience, forge new friendships, make lasting memories, develop an international perspective, boost your resume, and have awesome stories to share!

Finally, you will not be the only beneficiary. Because of your initiative, students on your campus will have the opportunity to participate in an unforgettable trip. And if you lead a volunteer trip, your group will perform valuable service that will make a real difference in the lives of deserving families and communities in Latin America.

What are the Responsibilities of a Trip Leader?

Once you are selected as a Trip Leader for a winter or spring break trip, you will be given 3 weeks in which to assemble a group (summer trip leaders will be given additional time). During this period, you should plan to spend about 7 to 12 hours per week building interest in your trip. To help you succeed in your efforts, we ask that you be in regular contact with your student Campus Representative (if you have one) and your professional Encountour Campus Coordinator.

After you successfully assemble your group, you will work with our designated travel agent to find the best flights for your group members. We also strongly encourage you to hold a couple informal group meetings so that everyone has a chance to get to know each other before the trip. To ensure that you and your group members are adequately prepared, we will provide you with important cultural, historical, and logistical information prior to your departure.

During your trip, you will serve as your group's student leader. As a Trip Leader, you will have all the same opportunities as everyone else, but you will have a bit more responsibility, and participants will look to you for leadership and support. We ask our

Trip Leaders to help mobilize their group during activities and to maintain a positive group dynamic by making sure that everyone feels included and comfortable.

What's the Difference Between a Trip Leader and a Campus Rep?

Encountour works with student Trip Leaders and with Campus Representatives. Campus Reps help us select Trip Leaders on their campus and support these Trip Leaders throughout the trip recruitment process. The Campus Rep thus occupies a marketing and management role. Trip Leaders are responsible for recruiting participants, helping to build group bonds before the trip, and serving in a leadership capacity during the trip.

If there is a Campus Representative present on a particular campus, they will work closely with their Trip Leaders throughout the process of recruiting a group. Trip Leaders will do most of the legwork to recruit their specific group, but they can count on their Campus Rep for extra support. **Please note that we do not have Campus Reps at every college, so Trip Leaders from any of these schools should work directly with Encountour's Campus Coordinator.**

If your college does not yet have a Campus Rep, then you may apply to fill this position, or you can apply directly to be a Trip Leader. If you are interested in receiving more information about the Campus Rep position, please visit the [Student Leaders](#) section of our website.

How Will I Be Supported?

While Recruiting Your Group

Once you are selected as a Trip Leader, we will support you every step of the way.

First, we will provide you with a comprehensive strategy to recruit a group on your campus—this includes a detailed calendar of objectives to meet during your 3-week recruitment period. We also provide email templates addressed to administrators, campus organizations, and friends—email is a terrific way to reach a ton of people with a minimal amount of effort! We'll also set you up with a template Facebook group, campus flyers, mini-flyers, table-tents, and Craigslist listings. You have the freedom to use our templates as they are or to tweak them however you see fit.

To help you assemble a group, we'll also reimburse you up to \$50 for whatever you spend on campus advertising. The primary function of this money should be for Xeroxing materials and for pizza at an information session, but anything leftover can be used to fund your own creative ideas!

Prior to Your Group's Departure

Once your trip is assembled, our travel agent specializing in group reservations will work with you to find the best flight for your group. Encountour will also send you and your trip participants a comprehensive Volunteer Handbook and tons of other information to help your group prepare for departure.

In Guatemala:

During the trip itself, you will have a dedicated Group Coordinator who will meet you at the airport. The Group Coordinator will provide your group with a detailed country, safety, and cultural orientation, accompany your group during all scheduled activities to ensure that logistics are running smoothly, and serve as a Spanish/English translator.

Additionally, as a Trip Leader, you will be provided with a local cellular phone to use in case you ever have a question or need assistance.

Encountour's permanent presence in Guatemala enables us to offer unparalleled support. Our full-time, local office staff serves as a second-layer of support for any situation that may arise. We also maintain a 24/7 emergency hotline to assist trip participants at any time, day or night.

In Costa Rica:

For all "Community Development" volunteer trips there will be a Group Coordinator who will meet you at the airport. The Group Coordinator will provide your group with a detailed country, safety, and cultural orientation, accompany your group during all scheduled activities to ensure that logistics are running smoothly, and serve as a Spanish/English translator.

The Group Coordinator will remain with your group in the rural community for the week. Encountour will also maintain a 24/7 emergency hotline to assist trip participants at any time, day or night.

What is the Trip Leader's Financial Incentive?

As a Student Trip Leader we want you to have the ability to earn a **free trip AND a free flight! Here's how it works...**

Trip:

Volunteer Trip Leaders and Adventure Trip Leaders earn **\$75** in Trip Credit for each participant who joins their trip. So, if you sign-up 12 volunteers, then you will receive

\$900 in trip credit.

If you do the calculations, this should be just enough to pay for your participation in the trip you are leading!

Flight:

In order to help you pay for your flight, we are also offering **four separate \$100 bonuses** for successfully completing each of the recruitment stages outlined below. These bonuses are very easy to achieve as long as you stick to the deadlines and do a good job leading your group on the ground.

Bonus Payments:

- You can earn the first **\$100 bonus** by 1) confirming your acceptance of the position and 2) completing your excursion form **within 36 hours** of being accepted. Think about that; by filling out a simple form you can already put 100 dollars toward your trip!
- You can earn the second **\$100 bonus** by successfully signing-up all of your participants within your three-week recruitment deadline. You must reach the minimum number of participants before your trip gets confirmed.
- You can earn the third **\$100 bonus** by making sure that your group purchases their flights by the flight deadline.
- The fourth and final **\$100 bonus** can be earned through leading your group in a responsible manner while you are on the ground.*

Excursions:

Trip Leaders also have the opportunity to earn free excursions. You must decide which excursions you will add to your trip before you begin recruiting. If 10 or more participants sign-up and pay for the excursion(s) you choose, **then you get to participate in that excursion for free!**

Trip Leaders **are not required** to submit deposits. If a Trip Leader does not earn enough commission to pay for their entire trip, they must then pay the balance of what they owe by the final payment deadline or drop out and forfeit commission. This is unlikely to happen because there is a minimum participant requirement.

* You will receive each of these payments only if your trip gets confirmed with the minimum number of participants. You will receive your standard trip payment as well as your first three bonuses after the entire group has submitted their final payments. The fourth and final bonus will be provided once you complete your responsibilities on the ground.

Who is Encountour Looking For?

Being an Encountour Trip Leader is extremely rewarding, but it is also a real challenge. We are looking for college students who are self-motivated, responsible, passionate, and fun-loving individuals. The ideal Trip Leader would also have some leadership and international experience under his or her belt. Patience and enthusiasm for cultural-exchange are very important. Most importantly, we're looking for someone who is eager to broaden his or her horizons and experience some serious personal growth in the process.

Choosing Your Trip & Excursions

Please review the [Our Trips](#) page of the Encountour website to learn about each of the trips and excursions that we offer. You will rank your trip preferences when you submit your online Trip Leader Application.

In order to ensure the quality of our programs, we maintain strict capacity limits for each of our trips. If you are selected as a Trip Leader, we will do our best to honor your stated preferences, but this might not always be possible. The earlier that you submit your application the higher the chance is of you getting your first choice!

We will confirm your trip selection when you are notified of your acceptance as a Trip Leader. At this time, we will also provide you with information about the one-day / two-day excursions. As the Trip Leader, you will decide which excursions to add to your trip. Because groups need to stay together while they are in Central America, participants in your group will be required to sign up for the excursions that you select. We will provide more detailed information about excursions once you have been selected as a Trip Leader.

Now What?

If you have any further questions about the Trip Leader position, please feel free to shoot us an email: studentleaders@encountour.com or give us a call at (800) 899-3789.

To Apply, visit our website at www.encountour.com/TL.html

Applications are already rolling in, so please submit yours A.S.A.P.—we want to make sure that you have your shot at joining our team!

Thanks for reading, and good luck!