



PLAY AROUND THE WORLD 2024

Information Sheet

The following provides interested students with some basic information about the course/program and the application procedure. Referees should read this information before filling out the reference form.

Background on the Play Around the World Project

Play Around the World (PAW) is a service-learning academic offering designed to provide a global education, inter-cultural experience to U of A students in the area of physical activity and play facilitation. Multidisciplinary teams of senior undergraduate and graduate students form learning communities and work with agencies in South America (Peru), Southeast Asia (Cambodia and Thailand) Northern Canada, serving children and youth of all abilities. These locations may not be partners every year and travel may be subject to Government of Canada regulations, U of A regulations or in-country situations. Due to the ever-changing pandemic situation, locations and length of placement may vary.

Since 2001, the Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation at the University of Alberta has been selecting, preparing and sending teams of students to work in in global communities, providing opportunities for play and recreation. The program started out in Pattaya, Thailand to assist not-for-profit organizations and projects (street kids projects, orphanages, centers for people with disabilities, and slum projects). Beginning in 2005, a second location was established in Chiang Mai (northern Thailand). In 2010 a third location was added, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. In 2013 PAW jointly started a Pilot project in the Fort Providence, Northwest Territories. In 2014 and 2015 PAW students were based out of four locations in Rayong/Pattaya and Chiang Mai, Thailand as well as Phnom Penh, Cambodia and Fort Providence, NWT, Northern Canada. In 2015 PAW expanded to serve communities in Cusco, Peru. In 2021 due to the pandemic, PAW served in Calgary Alberta at the Vivo Play Project and in 2022 there was a team back in Chiang Mai, Thailand. In 2023 Three PAW Teams served in Chiang Mai and Rayong Thailand, and Phnom Penh, Cambodia respectively. **In 2024 plans are underway to serve and learn in some or all of our partner locations, depending on agreements, global stability, U of A regulations, the pandemic situation and appropriateness of student applicants.**

Details of Experience

Applications are reviewed and selections take place in November each year. There is a significant investment of time during the winter academic term as PAW students will be involved in fundraising, an equipment drive, and team building activities. As an academic offering, there is a weekly winter term class (scheduled at a time that works for all participants and leaders). Travel takes place in May, and students return late July or early August. The total length of the field placement can be up to three months. Leaders (usually students from the previous PAW teams) are selected to help with the preparation of the teams. In addition, the leaders travel with the teams and provide an orientation to the designated city, local amenities, and the projects/agencies for the beginning weeks of the program.

In the past the PAW teams have worked in orphanages, street kids projects, schools for children with disabilities, government schools and drop in recreation programs (depending on city/country). During the first few weeks of the placement, the team leader will familiarize the PAW group with the various agencies and after a needs assessment, the group will begin to plan and deliver activities in play, recreation, sport, dance, and physical activity. This could entail activities such as teaching a physical education class at a school, leading play activities for classroom teachers or non-profit organization, games with children at an orphanage or facilitating a special event or sport focused initiative. Each student takes leadership in one or two areas, and

is mentored by fellow team members in other areas. There is no predetermined curriculum and not everyone works at all the projects. Some of the projects are serving children with impairments and not all organizations are serving 'under-resourced' children.

Although regarded by those involved as an extremely positive experience, students will be faced with many challenges and can almost be guaranteed to encounter some degree of discomfort. For example, it may take time to adjust to the altitude (Peru), climate and time change (Asia) or bugs and limited darkness at night in Fort Northern Canada. Living 24-7 with teammates while being in a different culture can bring out the best and the worst in us. Some people may experience health problems, and others may have a hard time adjusting to a culture different from their own. It is recommended that students read about the health and cultural considerations before applying.

Accommodations:

Depending on location, comfortable but not luxurious accommodation will be provided (apartment, guesthouse, trailer (North) or other rented housing). Accommodation will be safe and accessible to the organizations and close to amenities, groceries, hospitals, etc.

Cost

The approximate cost of the experience is \$5,500 per student. This includes flight, accommodation, visa and a per diem to offset costs of meals and daily transportation. In the past, the team has been able to fund raise 95 – 100% of these costs. Should the total amount not be raised, the per diem amounts will be reduced, and will be the responsibility of the student. Students may be asked to fill in the short fall of funds not raised, for their own experience. **Passports, immunizations, visas and tuition are additional costs that are not reimbursed by PAW.** A mandatory non-refundable non-instructional fee (payment) of \$500 is required when selected applicants commit to the program (December) for initial preparation costs in the winter term (playday training materials and team retreat) and in-country expenses (flight, accommodation, ground transportation, etc).

Academic aspects

Students must register for the two Play Around the World courses (KRLS 440 and KRLS 441- spring/summer registration) or equivalent, or as a practicum in the Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation. The Faculty advisors will register students in the appropriate courses/practicum on Beartracks when spring/summer registration opens. It is recommended that students enroll in the Play Leadership course in winter term (KRLS 421) but it is not mandatory. In addition to attending classes in winter term for the PAW preparation, students do a presentation, playdays, journaling, reflection papers, and a final project. Course work is typically complete by September.

Application for Play Around the World 2024

Application forms are available at www.uab.ca/play Deadline for applications is **November 20th, 2023** and emailed to Mary Ann Rintoul maryann.rintoul@ualberta.ca

Team selection will be determined by the end of November (note – you may not know your assigned location until the new year).

For further information contact:

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www.uab.ca/play