



*Dates listed are the dates in which participants should arrive and depart Accra, Ghana if they are traveling with the group. On these arrival and departure dates, there will be GHEI staff to meet or drop off volunteers at the airport.*

## Serve and Learn Session I: **Prevention of Childhood Disease through Handwashing** Dates: **June 8-24**

*Applicants from all backgrounds and majors are encouraged to apply. No medical experience or prior training is necessary, but an interest or background in public health and/or education would be particularly beneficial for this project.*

### Time Commitment

Volunteers will be expected to dedicate approximately three hours each week for the month preceding departure to research the topic and gather resources for an informal presentation of potential activities upon arrival in Humjibre. Ideas will be circulated and discussed prior to departure, but group planning sessions will be the focus of the first few days in Humjibre. There will also be conference calls prior to departure, which all volunteers are required to attend.

### Background

Basic sanitation remains a problem throughout Ghana that directly and indirectly leads to disease, specifically in young children. For example, diarrheal diseases are responsible for 35% of child deaths, while respiratory infections account for 31%. To put this in context, malaria and AIDS account for 13% and 5% of deaths respectively (World Health Organization, 2001). Improvements in daily sanitation practices by parents and children alike can reduce the risk of such diseases and infections.

While many sanitation problems stem from larger issues, simple behavioral changes, such as handwashing, can have a significant positive impact on the health and quality of life for many. A review by Curtis et al (2003) suggests that handwashing with soap can reduce diarrheal incidence by 42-47%, while work by Rabie et al. suggests a 30% reduction in respiratory infections is possible through handwashing. With the persistence of illnesses associated with poor sanitation practices, there is a strong need for ongoing education and public health outreach designed to address this issue in Humjibre.

Handwashing campaigns have been incorporated into previous health projects in Humjibre with the first two-week volunteer session in 2009 dedicated solely to this topic. In summer 2010, we hope to build on the success of this campaign and follow-up activities done in association with the global Public-Private Partnership for Handwashing.

### Project Description

This is GHEI's second coordinated campaign concentrating solely on handwashing. Thus, volunteers should be aware that although a basic structure was developed for this campaign in 2009, program development is in its early stages. Volunteers will gather resources, discuss specific activities with local staff, and work alongside local staff through implementation. This outreach will take place in coordination with the local schools and focus on behavior change.

## Serve and Learn Session II: **Treatment and Prevention of Child Worms** Dates: **June 26th- July 12th**

*Applicants from all backgrounds and majors are encouraged to apply. No medical experience or prior training is necessary.*

### **Time Commitment**

Volunteers will be expected to dedicate approximately three hours each week for the month preceding departure to research the topic and gather resources for an informal presentation of potential activities upon arrival in Humjibre. Ideas will be circulated and discussed prior to departure, but group planning sessions will be the focus of the first few days in Humjibre. There will also be conference calls prior to departure, which all volunteers are required to attend.

### **Background**

Common intestinal worms threaten the nutrition, growth and development of children. Children are likely to be infected when they stop breastfeeding, and to continually become re-infected throughout their lives. Chronic hookworm infection has been shown to impair physical and intellectual development, reduce school performance and attendance, and limit future productivity and income potential.

In Humjibre and surrounding areas, where sanitation is poor and the majority of small children do not wear shoes, worms are easily spread. Deworming campaigns in local primary schools have been very successful outreach projects implemented by GHEI staff and volunteers in recent years. By providing education and medication for children on a regular basis, this type of outreach helps to both treat and prevent worms and ultimately promotes healthier lives.

### **Project Description**

This is a great opportunity to take part in a public health intervention that has been proven to greatly improve the cognitive and physical health of children. Volunteers work closely with local staff and learn how crucial local ownership and involvement is in this type of intervention. They will work with GHEI staff to coordinate clinics consisting of hygiene education and deworming treatment for hundreds of children.

## Serve and Learn Session III: **Ghana Read and Play: A celebration of childhood literacy.** Dates: **July 19th-August 4th**

*Applicants from all backgrounds and majors are encouraged to apply.*

### **Time Commitment**

Volunteers will be expected to dedicate three hours each week for the month preceding departure gathering resources and organizing activities. There will also be conference calls prior to departure, which all volunteers are required to participate in, to go over both project-specific material and general GHEI information.

### **Background**

Early exposure to rich language experiences and high quality instruction plays a fundamental role in ensuring a child's later success. Children who experience early success in school are far more likely to graduate from high school, pursue higher education and attain jobs.

GHEI runs a variety of education programs for the children in Humjibre including a library, early literacy program and youth education program. GHEI's library provides a focal point for the community to learn

and explore the world of books. Our early literacy program aims to instill an early love of learning for our kids age 5-12, while our youth education program (YEP) serves to supplement the learning of the top students in Junior High School (JHS).

In the summer of 2009, many volunteers spent a portion of their time with the early literacy program, and both the children and volunteers found the experience exceedingly fun and rewarding. The children's enthusiasm translates into meaningful improvement in language ability in a short amount of time. The Ghana Read and Play volunteer session is a new addition to our volunteer programs, and volunteers will play a great role in its formation and direction for future years. Help us promote literacy in our community through a two-week celebration of learning.

### **Project Description**

Volunteers will design and run a two-week celebration of literacy. Specifically, volunteers will create six sessions of storytelling, games, contests etc. aimed at increasing local children's exposure to rich language and learning experiences and conduct two workshops for local educators on library literacy. Volunteers will also help conduct GHEI's yearly Read-A-Thon which rewards children for spending quality time with books at our library.

## **Serve and Learn Session IV: Girls' Empowerment**

### **Dates: August 6th – August 22nd**

*Applicants from all backgrounds and majors are encouraged to apply.*

### **Time Commitment**

Volunteers will be expected to dedicate approximately three hours each week for the month preceding departure to research the topic and gather resources for an informal presentation of potential activities upon arrival in Humjibre. Ideas will be circulated and discussed prior to departure, but group planning sessions will be the focus of the first few days in Humjibre. There will also be conference calls prior to departure, which all volunteers are required to participate in.

### **Background**

Empowering and educating girls are essential elements in the fight against poverty. Educating and empowering one girl has an effect on her family and community; if she is given the opportunity to pursue her education, she is more likely to earn a better income and have fewer, healthier children when she decides the time is right. Without encouragement to pursue higher education and their dreams, young girls are often the first to stay at home and help with the immediate needs of the family versus investing in future opportunities. As girls enter pre-adolescence and adolescence, they develop new relationships with their peers, family members and adults. Strong communication skills and the ability to make good decisions, combined with accurate knowledge, can help ensure that girls have happy and healthy relationships and futures. GHEI has been coordinating female empowerment projects for years and has found that the young girls, in particular, thrive on and benefit from these experiences. Many of the girls have gone on to articulate their goals, apply for scholarships, and find a new sense of pride in themselves and what they can do for their community and immediate family.

### **Project Description**

Volunteers will work with local staff to train girls in leadership and life skills and help them to live healthier lives. This intensive 2-week session with local middle-school aged girls will give them the opportunity to think about their futures and themselves in a new and broader context. Volunteers will meet with the girls daily for the majority of their time in Humjibre and be in charge of executing a "girls' empowerment" camp.