

Maximo Nivel Volunteer/Internship Opportunities



Childcare/Orphanage (*Costa Rica, Guatemala, Peru*)

Maximo Nivel's projects aspire to provide needy children with supportive, nurturing volunteers to work and play with them. Participants work in schools, community centers, soup kitchens, orphanages and daycare programs in poor neighborhoods to get kids off the street and into an educational, loving environment. Participants act as mentors, help children with their homework, prepare and serve food, structure games and craft projects and simply provide care for the children.

Construction (*Costa Rica, Guatemala, Peru*)

Maximo Nivel's construction projects focus on community improvement. This may include building or repairing homes, adding classrooms to schools or structurally improving orphanages. Construction work is physically demanding, including digging, removing dirt, mixing and laying cement, carrying brick, preparing adobe, painting, plastering and various other activities as needed at the site. The projects are led and organized by a local Spanish-speaking foreman that works directly for our institution and helps determine participants' work programs.



Working in a school for Deaf/Disabled Children (*Guatemala and Costa Rica*)

In Costa Rica, Maximo Nivel partners with a large school for mentally and physically disabled children that also has a large deaf population. Participants work as classroom aides alongside regular teachers to help run the classes. In Guatemala, Maximo Nivel works with a school for deaf children. Some knowledge of sign language is extremely helpful in this position, and participants have the opportunity to learn Guatemalan sign (somewhat different from American Sign) while in-country.

Vocational Therapy with Autistic Adults (*Costa Rica*)

Maximo Nivel partners with a center attending to autistic adults in Costa Rica. In an effort to help improve life skills, the center focuses on a series of workshops designed to let autistic individuals better participate in society. Participants in this project will help design and carry out workshops in areas such as cooking, horticulture, knitting, music and art. They may also help with physical therapy or with seminars aimed to help the families of the autistic adults better understand and cope with the condition.





Andean Cultural Immersion (Peru)

This project sends participants out into the Sacred Valley, to a small town approximately 45 minutes from Cusco. With a total population between 60 and 100, participants are immediately immersed in rural village life, including tough conditions and quite a bit of isolation from modern-day conveniences. They live with a family and help out as needed – caring for animals and livestock, helping the family with agricultural work, assisting with local construction projects or working with children at the local school. Though many members of the community are native Quechua speakers, this is a great project to test Spanish skills and push participants' boundaries for a totally new experience.

Teaching English (Costa Rica, Guatemala, Peru)

Teaching English projects allow exploration of day-to-day life of Cusco, Antigua or San Jose while helping aspiring English students improve their language skills. Depending on the placement, participants work alongside a fulltime, professional English teacher that is a non-native speaker, or they run their own classes at small community centers, orphanages and shelters. Most projects are with primary and secondary school children, and work includes teaching grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, speaking, writing and listening. Non-class hours can be spent working with the kids on homework and helping care for them as needed.



Eco-Agriculture (Costa Rica and Guatemala)

Maximo Nivel's eco-agriculture program places participants in a small, coffee-producing community. Work varies by season, but includes all aspects of coffee production and processing. During harvest, participants pick coffee and help with processing and roasting. At other times of the year they may focus more on work within seedling nurseries, planting and maintenance of the coffee fields, or even helping with the marketing of the final product.

Turtle Conservation (Costa Rica)

Participants in the turtle conservation projects work to protect turtle nests from human poachers, help manage sustainable egg-harvesting programs, and assist in hatcheries to ensure the survival of turtle populations. Participants support research and conservation work, conducting night patrols of the beaches, working in the hatcheries, collecting eggs, measuring nests and counting turtles. Participants must be in good physical condition and willing to work 6 days a week, often at night and in the early morning hours.



Zoo Project (Peru)

Participants work at a small zoo in Cusco, Peru, which is run by the local university. The zoo hosts approximately 30-40 visitors daily, mostly children. Work revolves around the day-to-day maintenance of the zoo, including animal feeding, cage cleaning and species conservation research and work. Volunteers may also help host visitors. Professors and students from the zoology and biology departments of the university are often on-site, working with participants.

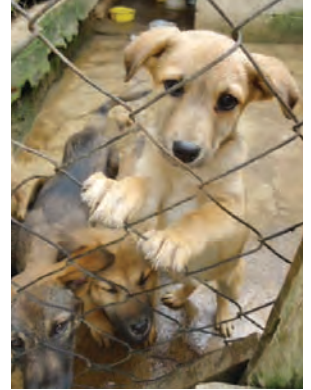


Lake Clean-Up and Conservation (Guatemala)

Participants in this program work with a local NGO near Lake Atitlan, which is about 3-4 hours from Antigua. Volunteers concentrate on three principal areas of work: environmental education, resource management and environmental cleanup. Living in a small community, participants may help educate local schools and women's groups about environmental protection through talks and after-school programs. Work is also done to implement recycling programs, natural fertilization techniques and water treatment in the communities around the lake.

Animal Care (Guatemala)

Maximo Nivel's animal care project works with a large shelter that takes in abandoned and neglected animals to protect them and provide human company, medical treatment and daily care. The shelter houses nearly 300 dogs and almost 100 cats, and depends heavily on the help of volunteers. Participants bathe, brush and walk the animals, provide basic obedience training, clean cages and provide general care for the animals. They may also lead education programs, or help with fund-raising events or spay/neuter programs. This project is great for any animal lover or animal behavior specialist.



Clinics (Guatemala and Peru)

Volunteers work in under-funded clinics and hospitals alongside doctors, nurses, therapists and other medical professionals. Pre-med, first and second year medical students may assist with the following: Triage – taking height, weight and blood pressure, heart rate, temperature; Hospital Wards – making beds, cleaning, talking with patients; Materials – prepping materials, sterilizing equipment; Shadowing – assisting doctors and nurses with procedures as needed. In addition, third and fourth year medical students and licensed professionals may participate in the

following: Topico – cleaning wounds, giving injections and suturing; helping doctors give physicals and take histories.

Working in an HIV home (Costa Rica)

Máximo Nivel partners with two different homes for HIV positive adults in the San Jose area. Both provide a multitude of services for the residents and also run educational programs aimed at both helping the residents develop and improve life skills, and at getting addicts and at-risk individuals off the streets. Participants work with the medical professionals at both institutions, providing patient care, attending the infirmary, building client files and doing other duties as needed.

Ambulance Project (Costa Rica)

Participants work with a private ambulance service, driving around to attend to calls with the paramedics. There is some down-time at this post, as there is not always an emergency, but it is a unique opportunity to get a taste for an EMT's position. Intermediate level Spanish is required for this project.



Working with Disabled Children (*Guatemala and Peru*)

In both Cusco and Antigua, Máximo Nivel partners with projects that run as homes and rehabilitation centers for severely mentally and physically disabled children. Often disowned by families that are either embarrassed by them or simply unable to care for them, most of these children are completely unable to take care of themselves. Participants help feed and bathe the children, as well as participate in daily physical therapy sessions and giving the children individual care. This project is also very fitting for aspiring physical therapists.

Dental Projects and Physical Therapy (*Peru and Guatemala*)

Special projects can be arranged for dentists, physical therapists and students of these disciplines. Dentists and dental students usually work alongside a licensed dentist, either in conjunction with one of the other programs we manage (healthcare or childcare), or in a private practice. They may observe or complete simple procedures. Physical therapists and physical therapy students work in homes and clinics for mentally and physically disabled children, helping with their daily physical therapy routines as well as general care.

Medical & Healthcare (*Costa Rica, Guatemala, Peru*)

Máximo Nivel's medical projects provide participants with the opportunity to work in clinics or hospitals, or with specialized programs providing medical care to disadvantaged and at-risk people. It is important to note that placements and volunteer activities depend on the participant's level of medical experience and Spanish language skills, as well as duration of stay in-country and personality.



Nursing Home (*Guatemala and Costa Rica*)

Even with the strong family system found throughout Latin America, the elderly are often shifted into nursing home for the final stage of their lives. Participants in this project help the elderly adults with their day-to-day needs, eating, bathing and getting dressed. Nursing home residents need help getting around and participants also plan and participate in activities such as bingo and arts and crafts. In some instances, participants may be asked to help with patient check-ups, such as taking height, weight and blood pressure.

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