



Service Learning Trips Brochure

*An ethical, purpose-driven model for
global health service.*

2026-2027



OUR MISSION

Who We Are

MEDLIFE is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that partners with low-income communities in Latin America and Africa to expand access to healthcare, education, and safe housing.

Our goal is a world free from the constraints of poverty. We pursue it by empowering students and volunteers to become lifelong advocates for change — through **Service Learning Trips** and continued engagement in on-campus Chapters.

WHAT IS A SERVICE LEARNING TRIP?

A Service Learning Trip is a one- to two-week field education program in Peru, Ecuador, Tanzania, Guatemala, or Costa Rica. You'll work hand-in-hand with a local community on mobile medical clinics, development projects, and public health education. Through guided learning walks and hands-on experiences, you'll explore the root causes of poverty, learn directly from local communities, and discover what real partnership looks like from the ground up.





MORE THAN A MISSION TRIP

Short-term medical missions and voluntourism have been fraught with ethical problems for decades

MEDLIFE was founded to do better

Listen to community needs ●

Reason through the ethics ●

Act responsibly ●



OUR STANDARD

What a Service Learning Trip Should Never Be

1. Duffel Bag Medicine

Untrained volunteers should never “practice” on patients. People deserve real, good care — not just something better than nothing.

2. White Saviorism

Outsiders should not tell a community what's wrong without listening first. We respect each community's history and culture.

3. One-Way Benefit

It's not fair when students gain skills, but the community only gets short-term, low-quality care in return.

4. Extraction

A community is not just a place to get service hours or photos. Real partnership means giving back, not just taking.

5. The Golden Ticket Myth

One week of service does not guarantee a spot in medical school. It's the start of something bigger — not a shortcut.

WHAT MEDLIFE PROVIDES INSTEAD

Our Founding Principles

1. Listen & Understand History

Learn how a community arrived at its present circumstances before designing any intervention.

2. Find Trusted Leaders

Partner with the leaders a community already trusts, so every project carries real legitimacy.

3. Empower & Organize

Help communities recognize and mobilize resources they already have — labor, knowledge, culture.

4. Find the Real Problem

We find the one problem that, once solved, unlocks progress everywhere else.

5. Leverage Cascading Benefits

We design projects that lead to even bigger benefits down the road.

6. Gain & Sustain Trust

Meet urgent needs first — ethical, responsive action earns the trust that long-term work requires.

OUR PARTNER COMMUNITIES

Where We Work



THE TRIP EXPERIENCE

What You'll Do on Your Trip



1. Community Learning Walk

You will walk through the community with local residents and MEDLIFE staff. You will see how history shaped daily life there — and learn to understand and respect the culture.



2. Mobile Clinics

You will shadow licensed local doctors and nurses at different clinic stations. Local, licensed staff give all the medical care — you will watch, help, and learn, but never replace a trained provider.



3. Development Projects

You will work with local leaders on projects like staircases or water systems. The community picks the project — not the volunteers.



THE TRIP EXPERIENCE

Sample Itinerary

Schedules vary by destination; the outline below reflects a typical eight-day trip.

DAY 0 & 1 Transfer in & Orientation Saturday 6:00 PM - 1:00 AM: TRANSFER IN (this might vary depending on location) Sunday 9:00 AM: Walking Tour 5:00 PM: Welcome meeting & Orientation	DAY 2 Reality Tour Monday 7:00 AM: Breakfast 8:00 AM: Bus to community 8:30 AM - 1:30 PM: Reality Tour Bus to Hotel 6:00 PM: Dinner	DAY 3-5 Mobile Clinic Tuesday 6:30 AM: Breakfast 7:30 AM: Bus to community 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM: Clinic Day 1 Bus to Hotel 5:00 PM: Talk 1 6:00 PM: Dinner	DAY 6 Project Friday 7:00 AM: Breakfast 8:00 AM: Bus to community 8:00 AM - 1:30 PM: Project Project Inauguration Bus to Hotel 6:00 PM: Dinner	DAY 7 GLE (optional) Saturday OPTIONAL TOUR DAY 8 Transfer Out Sunday 3:00 AM - 9:00 PM: Back to Home
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THE TRIP EXPERIENCE

Mobile Clinic: What You'll Help With



1. Triage

Students help collect basic patient information and vital signs, including height, weight, blood pressure, heart rate, and temperature, before guiding patients to the next station.



2. General Medicine

Students shadow local doctors during patient consultations, observe how conditions are assessed and treated, and help guide patients through the clinic.



3. Pharmacy

Students help organize prescriptions and patient records, prepare and label medications under the nurse's supervision, track medications dispensed, and maintain patient flow.



4. Education

Students help keep patients and their forms organized, manage patient flow, and support the education nurse as patients wait for their consultations.



5. OB/GYN

Female students assist with preparing and sanitizing the consultation space, maintaining patient privacy, observing exams, and supporting the gynecologist with basic tasks as directed.



6. Dental & Toothbrushing

Students assist dentists with hands-on support such as organizing instruments, holding lights or suction, preparing materials, completing paperwork, and helping prepare patients.

Upcoming Service Learning Trips (2026-2027)

			Country	Peru		Ecuador		Costa Rica		Tanzania	Guatemala
			Max Capacity	170	120	100	70	50	90	50	60
Season	SLT	Start Date	End Date	Lima	Cusco	Riobamba	Tena	Tamarindo	San Jose	Kilimanjaro	Antigua
Winter	MC	Dec, 26	Jan, 3	✓	✓	✓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Winter	MC	Jan, 2	Jan, 10	✓	✓	✓	☐	✓	✓	✓	✓
Winter	DC	Jan, 2	Jan, 10	✓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Winter	MC	Jan, 9	Jan, 17	✓	✓	☐	✓	☐	✓	☐	✓
Spring	MC	Feb, 27	Mar, 7	✓	✓	☐	✓	☐	✓	☐	☐
Spring	MC	Mar, 6	Mar, 14	✓	✓	☐	☐	✓	✓	☐	✓
Spring	DC	Mar, 6	Mar, 14	✓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Spring	MC	Mar, 13	Mar, 21	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	☐	✓
Spring	MC	Mar, 20	Mar, 28	✓	☐	☐	✓	☐	☐	☐	☐
Summer	MC	Apr, 17	Apr, 25	✓	✓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Summer	MC	Apr, 24	May, 2	✓	✓	✓	☐	☐	✓	☐	✓
Summer	MC	May, 1	May, 9	✓	✓	☐	✓	✓	☐	☐	✓
Summer	MC	May, 8	May, 16	✓	✓	✓	☐	☐	✓	✓	✓
Summer	MC	May, 15	May, 23	✓	✓	☐	✓	☐	✓	✓	✓
Summer	DC	May, 15	May, 23	✓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Summer	MC	May, 22	May, 30	✓	✓	✓	☐	✓	☐	✓	✓
Summer	DC	May, 22	May, 30	✓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Summer	MC	May, 29	Jun, 6	✓	✓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Summer	MC	Jun, 5	Jun, 13	✓	✓	☐	☐	✓	☐	☐	☐
Summer	MC	Jun, 12	Jun, 20	✓	✓	✓	☐	✓	☐	☐	☐
Summer	MC	Jun, 19	Jun, 27	✓	☐	✓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Summer	MC	Jun, 26	Jul, 4	✓	✓	☐	☐	✓	☐	☐	✓
Summer	MC	Jul, 3	Jul, 11	✓	✓	✓	☐	☐	✓	☐	✓
Summer	DC	Jul, 3	Jul, 11	✓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Summer	MC	Jul, 31	Aug, 8	✓	✓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Summer	MC	Aug, 7	Aug, 15	✓	✓	☐	✓	✓	☐	☐	✓
Summer	MC	Aug, 14	Aug, 22	✓	✓	☐	✓	✓	✓	☐	✓

WANT TO SEE MORE?

Try a Multi-Week Bundle

Combine two Service-Learning Trip weeks with a signature excursion — for less than booking each week separately. Contact a MEDLIFE advisor to learn more!



2 weeks bundle

Peru Dual SLT + Machu Picchu

2 weeks · Peru only · Lima & Cusco

- 2 full SLT weeks — one in Lima, one in Cusco
- A full day at Machu Picchu
- Lima → Cusco flight, booked and paid by MEDLIFE



3 weeks bundle

Peru + Ecuador + Galápagos Extension

3 weeks · Peru & Ecuador · Lima, Quito, Riobamba, Galápagos

- 2 full SLT weeks — one in Lima, one in Riobamba
- A full day in Quito, plus a 1-week Galápagos extension
- Both flights booked and paid by MEDLIFE

VOLUNTEER VOICES

What Volunteers Are Saying

“

“I was able to observe a lot of the things I learned in my classes — pharmacology, immunology, anatomy, and human physiology — in clinical settings.”

— Marco, UC Santa Cruz

“

“Visiting the communities was super impactful, and the patients gave me life-long lessons. I met MEDLIFE leaders from around the globe I still keep in contact with today.”

— Sydney, Ohio State University

“

“This kind of trip opens your eyes. It's a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and if you have the chance, you should do it.”

— Varinder, SLT Volunteer & Parent

“

“The best thing about the SLT is that students get to learn leadership and see the world in a way they normally would not.”

— Prof. Clifford Lo, Harvard Medical School

SAFETY & LOGISTICS

Travel Safe with MEDLIFE

● Safety Measures	We follow safety rules the whole trip.
● 24/7 Support	Our team is ready to help, day or night.
● Travel Insurance	You're covered by medical insurance during the trip.
● Expert Trip Leaders	Local leaders who know the area well.
● Accommodations	Safe, comfortable places to stay.
● Transportation	We handle all the rides — airport pickups and travel between cities.
● Cultural Immersion	Time to connect with local people and traditions.
● Pre-Trip Safety Meetings	Meetings before the trip to help you get ready.



What's Included in Your Trip

INCLUDED

- ✓ 8 nights dorm-room accommodation
- ✓ Breakfast everyday. Lunch, and dinner, Monday–Friday
- ✓ Transport to mobile clinics and development projects
- ✓ English-speaking trip leader
- ✓ Safety equipment, including face masks

NOT INCLUDED

- ✗ Flights
- ✗ Tips
- ✗ Pre- or post-trip accommodation
- ✗ Optional excursions
- ✗ Weekend meals



GETTING STARTED

Trip Dates, Pricing & Our Model

MEDLIFE offers trips to Peru, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Tanzania, and Guatemala across winter, spring, and summer seasons. Because availability and pricing change regularly, current dates and donation goals are maintained at medlifemovement.org.

WHY WE CALL IT A “DONATION GOAL”

The cost of a trip supports hiring local staff, ensures follow-up care, sponsors development projects, and funds community pre-workshops and preparation — the infrastructure that makes ethical, sustainable service possible.

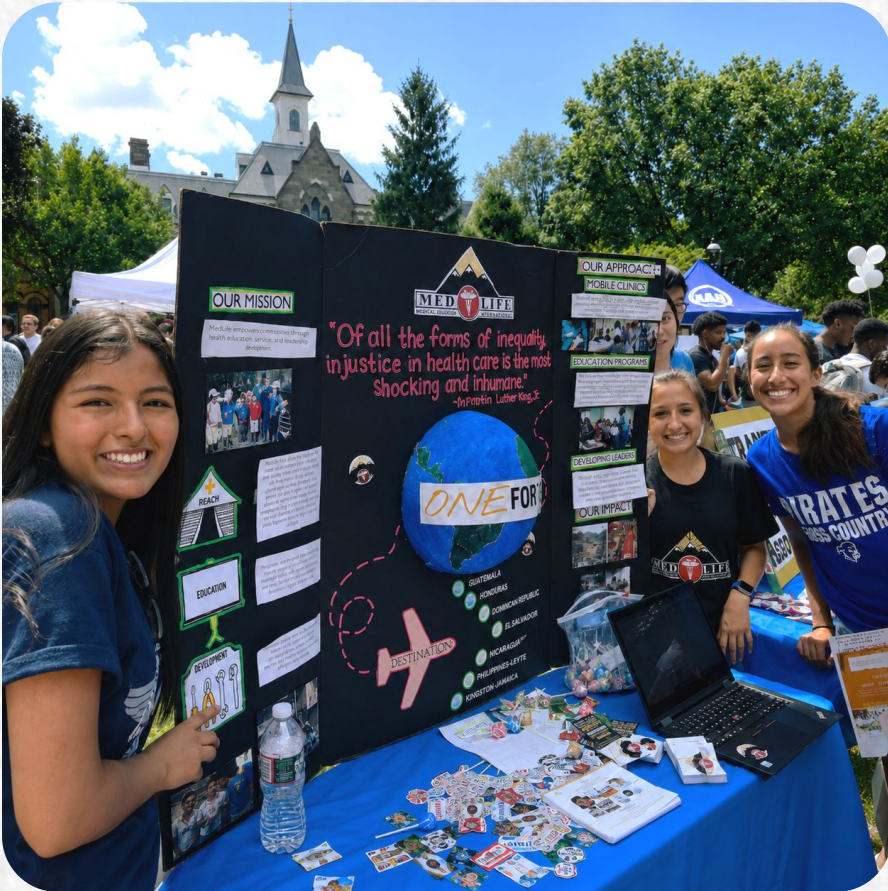
OUR FOUNDING MODEL

Volunteer donations fund MEDLIFE's year-round work — prep, execution, and follow-up for clinics, projects, and workshops. Our Moving Mountains program allocates 100% of its donations directly to programs, projects, and medical treatment.

THE ONGOING MOVEMENT

Beyond the Trip

An SLT is page one. Your Chapter keeps the story going.



WHAT IS A CHAPTER?

A MEDLIFE Chapter is a student-run group at your school. It keeps the movement going all year — through fundraising, education events, and getting the next group of students ready for an SLT.

WHY START ONE

- Practice real leadership — recruit, organize, and lead a team on your own campus.
- Keep serving between trips, not just one week a year.
- Help other students get ready for their first SLT.

CHAPTER FOUNDERS SCHOLARSHIP

Start a Chapter at your school and you could qualify for a scholarship toward your very first SLT.

Learn More & Apply

medlifemovement.org → For Students → Start a Chapter

JOIN THE MOVEMENT

An SLT is page one of a much longer book

*MEDLIFE's vision is a global movement of students
who become lifelong practitioners of ethical service
— physicians, dentists, educators, and community
leaders who carry these principles back to the
communities they call their own.*

medlifemovement.org

