



Dear (*Insert Name*)

I have recently been offered a 3 month internship where I will be volunteering with Project Wave of Optimism (Project WOO /Ola de Optimismo), located in Playa Gigante, Nicaragua. Since 2006, Project WOO has been working full-time with Gigante to ensure that surf tourism (and the development it brings) is benefiting the whole community; WOO works directly with local members of Gigante to facilitate strategic thinking about potential improvements while providing opportunities for cultural exchange between the local and tourist communities.

Playa Gigante is a small fishing village located in the Rivas province on the Pacific coast of Nicaragua. Currently about 200 families call it their home; the majority of these families are surviving at poverty level, with the accompanying health, social and educational disadvantages that this often brings. Gigante is a fast changing community, as surf tourism has consistently increased over the years. While the tourism can bring in much needed money and business opportunities, it also presents challenges and problems that can threaten a poor community like Gigante. In other similar communities undergoing such fast development we have seen overdevelopment, displacement of local residents, insufficient structure to handle excess waste (and accompanying environmental problems), and other issues arise.

My volunteer role at Project WOO will be living in the community and supporting their current programs. All of these programs were identified and are supported by the local community. Additionally, they are led by a locally nominated committee to see it through.

**WOO Projects Include:**

- ***The WOO School Bus*** (the only public transport in and out of Gigante) that transports local youth to high school in Tola (18Km away). Gigante saw an 80% increase in school attendance when the bus project began almost 6 years ago.
- ***Gigante Community Health Center*** (which first opened April 2014) WOO employs two local women- one doctor and one office administrator, and supports the development of community led, public health programs.
- ***The Gigante Youth Club*** whereby local teens are actively empowered and engaged in the community development process through a variety of opportunities and activities.
- ***The WOOster Surf Club*** teaches local youth how to surf and allows them the opportunity to participate in our 'Earn a Board' program.
- ***The Gigante Immersion Experience*** supports volunteers who want to live with local families, offering an in depth cultural exchange while providing a small income the participating families.
- ***Gigante English Program*** provides a full time English teacher who is responsible for teaching English in the local school and to adults in Gigante, thus increasing their opportunities for employment or business in the growing tourism market.
- For more background on WOO and their projects, check out their website ([www.projectwoo.org](http://www.projectwoo.org)) and on Facebook to find out about the project.

**What You Can Do....**

In addition to my contribution of time and skills, Project WOO has asked me to fundraise \$750 for the development and support of all programs within the local community.

I am writing to ask you to contribute any amount of money towards WOO's community projects. My goal is to raise \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

This money, as well as my time and effort during my (AMOUNT OF TIME) in Nicaragua, will go directly into the WOO programs that serve the community of Gigante. ***Every little bit helps.*** Your donation allows us to buy materials for English classes, purchase medical equipment for the GCHC, employ our local doctor, pay our homestay families, and much more.

**Project WOO is a 501c3 organization, and all donations are tax deductible.**

**How to Donate?**

- Visit the Project WOO website and click the "Donate Now" button on the right hand side of the screen **(please specify that it is in support of 'YOUR NAME'S VOLUNTEER TRIP', so I can count it towards my goal).**
- Send a check directly to:  
Trent Gordon  
Executive Director Project WOO USA  
780A Sanches St.  
San Francisco, CA. 94129

**(please specify that it is in support of 'YOUR NAME'S VOLUNTEER TRIP', so I can count it towards my goal).**

I am so looking forward to this experience. I (and Project WOO) want to personally thank you for your support. Please feel free to contact me with any questions. Or feel free to contact Project WOO directly at [lbisceglia@projectwoo.org](mailto:lbisceglia@projectwoo.org). Thank you again, and I look forward to sharing my experience during and after my time in Gigante.

Best,