



2009 Alternative Break Participant Application

**Applications due by 4 PM on Monday, September 22, 2008 to:
The Center for Service Learning (CSL), Dewey Campus Center, Room 154**
or mail to: JSC/CSL, 337 College Hill, Johnson, VT 05656
(Please keep this page and the next for your records!)

Dear Break Away Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the Break Away program! The Break Away experience consists of an intensive week-long (or longer, for international trips) direct service experience in addition to pre-break training and post-break activities. Participants will confront a wide variety of important social issues that sometimes go unnoticed in a traditional academic setting. The Break Away program is also designed to promote and encourage group building among JSC students, faculty, and staff. The trips this year cover a wide spectrum of issues concerning our society. You will get to work with many interesting people in unique environments and of course, have fun. Throughout the academic year there is much to be done in preparation for break. We have fundraisers, training sessions, group meetings, and more. With each step along the way, you will be meeting great people who are committed to service and having a good time.

This will be the 19th year of Break Away at JSC. In that time, JSC has sent out 90 trips, involving 887 students, faculty, and staff. In 1995, JSC was awarded the highest honor bestowed by Break Away to a campus chapter, the Alternative Break Program of the Year award at the Break Away national conference. JSC was singled out as exemplary during a year when over 350 colleges and universities involved over 12,000 participants in alternative breaks. The national and JSC alternative break movement has continued to deepen and grow. This year we are planning to send over 60 participants to the sites described in this application.

Please take time when filling out your application; we read it thoroughly. This application is a very important part of the selection process, so include thoughtful reflective responses. If you need additional space, please simply attach the additional pages to the back. Remember, your answers will be confidential and will be reviewed without any identifiers. We are as objective as we possibly can be in this process.

Incomplete applications will not be accepted. Please contact Laura at the Center for Service Learning (extension 1694, email laura.megivern@jsc.edu) if you need any special accommodations. We encourage you to drop by the Center for Service Learning any time to get more information. We thank you for taking the time to fill out this application and we look forward to a fun and successful year of Break Away with you!

2009 Break Away Trips

The purpose of Break Away is to provide year-long social issue-based education and service programs to the JSC community, with an intensive direct service experience during the February or April breaks within the USA, or during January for our extended breaks. This year's trips and issues are:

Disaster Relief – February, Flying

Lately, it seems that when you turn on the news the first thing you hear about is a natural disaster. This is a prevalent problem that is continuing to grow. The nation's costliest natural disaster, Hurricane Katrina, killed more than 1,600 people, destroyed 200,000 Gulf Coast homes, and displaced about 1 million people. After the three year anniversary, some things have improved, but many citizens are still homeless. This year, we will educate ourselves about the different types of natural disasters, global warming, community crisis, governmental action, and much more. We plan to help in the re-building of communities, (homes, schools, animal shelters, libraries, etc.) and help spread hope through them.

Environment – April, Flying

Our trip is an in-depth direct experience into the world of conservation, education, and sustainability of the environment. We will gain first hand experience in local and world environmental issues with an emphasis on learning about our connection to the natural world: our connection to all the other leaves on the tree.

Hunger and Homelessness – February, Driving

Two million individuals experience homelessness every year in the USA, around 700,000 each night. Hunger and homelessness are huge problems in this country as well as around the world. We'll explore these issues and possible solutions, and serve meals to homeless women and families during our break.

Art and Youth – April, Driving

Every child has an imagination. Yet, every year, schools budgets for art programs and classes are getting cut back. Art in any form, through visual art, dance, music or theatre is an important experience for children to be exposed to from elementary school all the way up through high school. It builds confidence, allows children an outlet for energy and teaches discipline. This break away trip will focus on giving youth the opportunity to be involved in arts of all types.

Environmental Education and Youth at Risk– April, Flying

A young person at risk could be someone involved in gangs, using drugs and/or alcohol, at risk of dropping out of school, or simply at risk for not reaching their full potential. A teenager who doesn't have a sense of belonging or their place in the future is at risk. This trip works with a unique mentoring program that helps youth understand the importance of our environment, visualize a future of possibility that inspires them, offers tools to support young people in reaching for what inspires them.

Orphanage Outreach Teach Corps – January, Flying

The Dominican Republic is a beautiful developing country with a rich culture and history. The government of the Dominican Republic has required that all schools provide English language classes, for purposes of international business and tourism. In rural areas, there is a shortage of qualified English instructors. We will be teaching English in elementary schools and learning about Dominican history and culture.

Note: see the back of this application packet for the required supplemental application for this trip.

<u>2008-2009 Important Dates</u>	
22 September (4 PM)	Applications Due to the Center for Service Learning
3 October	Participants selected and notified (via email)
16 October (7 PM)	All-Participant Gathering (Welcome/ Meet your group!), set group meeting times and locations for the semester
31 October	Deposit Due (\$50-\$150 depending on trip, details at 10/16 meeting)
31 October	BA Scholarship Application Due
15 November	Non-Refundable Policy comes into effect
3 January – 17 January	International Trip

<u>Financial Considerations</u>
<p>Please understand we aim to make Break Away as affordable and accessible to everyone as we possibly can. While we cannot eliminate program costs, we are able to minimize the cost to you, the participants, by undertaking fundraising efforts. If selected to participate in Break Away, you are responsible for actively participating in group and program-wide fundraising efforts, as well as any individual fundraising you choose.</p> <p>Need-based scholarships are available—we do not want the costs to stand in the way of anyone participating in the program. At our all-participant meeting, you will learn more about the Break Away scholarship application process. BA Scholarship Applications are due on October 31.</p> <p>We have a flat program fee structure, with set payment dates. You will receive these payment dates at our first all-trip meeting, <u>October 16th</u>. The fees for 2008-2009 are as follows:</p> <p>Driving Trips (during winter or spring breaks) <u>Total Program Fee: \$350</u> Deposit (due 10/31): \$50</p> <p>Flying Trips (during winter or spring breaks) <u>Total Program Fee: \$750</u> Deposit (due 10/31): \$100</p> <p>Flying Trips (extended break—between semesters) <u>Total Program Fee: \$2000</u> Deposit (due 10/31): \$100</p>

PARTICIPANT APPLICANT QUESTIONNAIRE

1 Name: _____

Local Address:

Phone Number: _____

Email:

OFFICE USE ONLY

Database #
 Photocopy Driver
 Jan
 Feb April

***Email will be a primary means of communication. If you do not check your email regularly (i.e. weekly) please indicate.**

2 Please circle your student status/occupation: Undergraduate Graduate Faculty Staff Other

3 If Student, please circle year in school: First year Sophomore Junior Senior

Major:

Cumulative GPA:

Academic Advisor:

*Please note, a cumulative GPA of 2.0 is required for participation

4 Date of Birth: ____/____/____

5 How did you find out about the JSC Break Away Program? (please check all that apply)

Friend RA Info Session Flyers Email Other (please describe)

Please Rank your Issue/Trip Preferences (1 being most preferred, 6 being least preferred. If there is a trip you would not participate in, do not rank that trip):

Please circle as appropriate...

- 6
- _____ **Art and Youth**
 - _____ **Environment**
 - _____ **Hunger and Homelessness**
 - _____ **Disaster Relief**
 - _____ **Env Education & Youth at Risk**
 - _____ **Orphanage Outreach Teach Corps**

Have you been through JSC's Van Safety Training?

YES NO

Are you eligible to drive a 10-passenger van? (21+, clear driving record—no points or accidents within 3 years)

YES NO

If yes, are you willing to be trained and be a driver for this Break Away trip?

YES NO

Are you available to participate in a trip during:

February 21-28, 2009 (February break)

April 4- April 11, 2009 (April break)

An international extended break from

January 3-17, 2009 (between semesters)



Please take your time answering the following questions. This application is a very important part of the selection process, so include thoughtful reflective responses. Feel free to attach additional pages to accommodate your responses.

Why have you chosen a Break Away trip as an opportunity for volunteer experience?

Your friends ask you (and they will) "What is Break Away?" How do you explain it to them?

What are two things you like about working as a group and two things you find frustrating about working with a group?

What do you consider your greatest strength and one area for growth?

What effects might Break Away have on the community with which you are working?

What effects might it have on you?

It is not uncommon for participants to have some anxieties concerning their Break Away trip, and to wonder what challenges they may encounter. Please describe what you imagine to be your biggest challenge or concern while you are on your trip.

What are some strategies that you would use to deal with stress that may come up in a group?

Break Away is a commitment that is taken very seriously. What are your plans for the upcoming academic year? (Classes, sports, jobs, club, and other commitments) Participants are required to attend a number of pre- and post-trip all-program events, as well as weekly pre-trip meetings (and of course, the trip itself!). Regular pre-trip meetings are schedule in accordance with class and work schedules.

How do you think you will be able to handle all your commitments *and* Break Away?

What would you say are 3 great qualities you have as a person?!

If you could have a personal theme song—a song that would play on a loud speaker any time you entered a room, what would it be and why?

Before turning in this application, please read all statements below carefully, consider them seriously, and sign to indicate your agreement. Thank you!

COMMITMENT:

Being a Break Away participant requires time, energy, and commitment. By signing this statement, I am agreeing to invest that time, energy and commitment if selected to be a Break Away participant. I will attend Break Away events, including group meetings and fundraisers.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

ALCOHOL/DRUG FREE POLICY:

Break Away is an alcohol and drug free program. This is done in order to achieve the program's goals and objectives. This is also required for the safety and well being of all participants and the group. As such, students are not to possess and/or consume alcoholic beverages and/or illegal drugs while participating in Break Away. Should this policy be violated, the participant will be asked to leave the trip and will be responsible for making his/her own arrangements and paying for the trip home.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

NON-REFUNDABLE PAYMENT POLICY:

All students participating in Break Away will make an initial \$50 - \$150 deposit payment (depending on trip) due by October 31. This payment is a commitment to the program and will not be refunded after November 15th. By signing this statement, I am signifying that I understand the Break Away non-refundable payment policy.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I have read all above statements and considered them seriously. I fully understand all above statements, and agree to comply with them.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

International Trip Supplemental Application

Due to the nature of this year's international trip we must determine which applicants are best suited to deal with intense issues such as the poverty of this developing nation and the stress of a language barrier. Please consider these questions carefully. Note that some international trip applicants will be contacted for an interview, to be conducted September 29-October 3. Thanks!

Special Considerations and Written Responses

Physical Constraints

The trip is scheduled to take place in January of 2009. This time of year is hot, sunny and humid in the Dominican Republic.

Do you understand that the weather conditions will be hot? () yes () no

Do you have a tolerance for heat? () yes () no

Emotional Toll

In addition to our work in elementary schools, we are going to be working with children living at an orphanage (and staying on the grounds of the orphanage). This can be very unpredictable, challenging, and fulfilling. This may be a difficult situation for many of our participants.

Are you prepared to be present with emotionally difficult situations? () yes () no

Monetary Responsibility

The trip fee is \$2,000. This fee includes all costs except incidentals and souvenirs. Fundraising will be a *priority* group activity but ultimately each participant must raise the total amount of the trip cost.

Are you prepared to secure the necessary funding for the trip and willing to support group fundraising efforts as well? () yes () no

Pre-trip Commitment

In order to prepare for the trip, several pre-trip meetings, discussions and seminars will be scheduled prior to departure. It is important that *all* members of the group are able to attend these functions. Whenever possible, these will be scheduled to accommodate group members' other commitments.

Can you participate in pre-trip group service and educational activities?

yes no

Our group will be meeting in a class format before we leave. Each participant will be responsible for completing required readings and reflective writing assignments throughout the pre-trip period, as well as a final reflection paper after the trip. In addition, each participant will be responsible for researching an aspect of Dominican culture that interests them, and presenting this to the group (as well as the wider campus community at the Extended Classroom Experience fair in April, 2009).

Are you committed to the pre-trip educational requirements? yes no

Post-Trip Commitment

Like many Break Away trips, this experience and commitment will not end with the trip. Participants are asked to commit to post-trip community service to help 'spread the word' about what each person has learned.

Are you prepared to commit to post-trip service? yes no

Written Responses

Why are you interested in children's and international development issues?

If chosen, what do you hope to take away from this year/trip?

The Dominican Republic has a traditional, conservative culture; our host organization is located at a religious-based orphanage. As such, volunteers must agree to follow certain guidelines regarding conduct and dress. For example: men must wear long pants when teaching; women must wear capris, pants or long skirts; no drug use, drinking or smoking is allowed; and volunteers are discouraged from using foul language, engaging in public displays of affection, or displaying visible tattoos.

If chosen, how would you feel about following these guidelines?

How do you feel about being from a non-religious college and sometimes working in organizations that are religiously based?

Spanish is not required to volunteer with Orphanage Outreach Teach Corps, however, some knowledge of Spanish is helpful. Do you speak any Spanish? () yes () no

How much?

If you have any questions about the international trip and its pre- or post-trip requirements, please contact Laura Megivern at laura.megivern@jsc.edu or 802.635.1694.