

Update on the GSC Cambodia and Cuba service-learning volunteer programs.

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# Newsletter

## MARCH 2016

We know it's been a while since you've heard from us, but we've waited to share our most recent developments with you. Here are some highlights from the last few months:

- [Leadership Development Emotional Intelligence \(EQ\) Workshops in Cambodia](#)
- [University Program Activities in Cambodia](#)
- [Cuba Program Update](#)

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## Leadership Development Emotional Intelligence (EQ) Workshops



*GSC's college students with Cambodian high school students.*

Earlier this month, GSC's Spring Semester Study Abroad students from the University at Albany (UA), SUNY had the exciting opportunity to lead a two-day leadership workshop on Emotional Intelligence to high school students in Cambodia. As part of their academic

program, GSC's students taught Pannasastra University of Cambodia (PUC) High School students about how to understand and manage their emotions. Here's what a GSC student had to say about the workshop:

"Cambodian kids grow up to a culture of silence. Thoughtful and self-disciplined silence is often valued above speech, while self-expression is not commonly encouraged or emphasized in Cambodia. To help the participants have a better understanding of what Emotional Intelligence is, we created different activities to encourage the participants to express their emotions, and to understand why Emotional Intelligence is so important in both their social and professional life."  
- Xiaoli L.



*GSC students leading a group exercise.*

Following the workshop, each high school student was presented with a certificate acknowledging their effort to develop self-awareness, emotional self-regulation, and empathy.



*PUC High School President and student with GSC students Xiaoli, Kathryn, and Lizzy.*

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## University Program Activities in Cambodia



*GSC students, Professor Susan Hagadorn of PUC, and Professor Annette Richie of UA-SUNY, with the head monk of a monastery in Phnom Penh.*

## University at Albany, SUNY

In February of this year, GSC was fortunate enough to welcome Professor Annette Richie, our faculty counterpart at the University at Albany, SUNY, to Cambodia. Professor Richie serves as the Assistant Director of International Applied Learning, as well as an Anthropology Professor at UA. Over the course of GSC's sixteen-year partnership with the University at Albany, we've connected many [college students](#) and [AmeriCorps alumni](#) with our international service-learning programs, but haven't had the opportunity to send Professor Richie to Cambodia until just this year.



*Professor Annette Richie during a site visit to a local secondary school.*

During Annette's first trip to Cambodia, she worked with our local partner organizations to further develop GSC's [Semester Study Abroad Program](#). GSC's Cambodian educational partner, Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia, hosted a series of guest lectures for our students on subjects including: International development, contemporary social issues, Cambodian healthcare, the education sector, the role of Buddhism in national development, and human rights. GSC's Executive Director, Rick Lathrop, also offered lectures and participatory exercises via Skype webcam on the history of GSC, service-learning, and servant-leadership. After a week-long spring break, our students have now returned to their internships with local community development organizations.

## University at Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC)



*UTC staff members, a GSC program participant, and a host family member at a local monastery.*

In January of this year, faculty from UTC participated in an Advocacy Walk and a tour of our partner organizations, in search of a program for their Honors students. Of particular interest was GSC's [Community Development and Leadership Training Program](#), which provides peace-building, community development, and leadership training programs to Cambodian youth. Two UTC staff members will be returning to participate in this program with seven Honors students in May.

GSC offers 15-Week, 15-Credit Fall and Spring Semester Programs and 9-Week, 9-Credit Summer Programs in Cambodia through the University at Albany, SUNY. To learn more about these programs, visit our [Students page](#). Shorter credit-bearing Independent Study Programs can also be arranged.

**APPLY NOW**

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## Cuba Program Update

In January of this year, GSC sent a pilot group of ten participants to Cuba to meet with community partners and do a trial run of the Conversational English Teaching Program. This pilot program included cultural orientation, meetings with prospective program partners and project preparation in Havana.



*Volunteer Participant serenaded at a Salsa Club.*



*Meeting at the Cuban Council of Churches.*

Following our time in Havana, the group moved to Matanzas, Cuba. Instituto Cubano de Amistad con Los Pueblos (ICAP), the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples, was GSC's host in Matanzas, along with the University of Matanzas.



*GSC Executive Director and Associate Director, Rick & Maxine Lathrop with Cuba pilot program participants and ICAP representatives.*

ICAP and the University of Matanzas provided lectures and field trips covering Cuba and Matanzas history and cultural highlights.



*GSC Associate Director  
Maxine Lathrop with a  
Santeria iyalorichá priestess.*

The program participants met with University of Matanzas staff to further develop the conversational English curriculum.



*University of Matanzas Vice  
President welcoming the  
GSC program.*



*Program participants with  
University of Matanzas staff  
and students during a  
conversational English  
program session.*

GSC and the University of Matanzas thoroughly enjoyed working together and looked

forward to continuing and expanding this program. However, GSC was informed in early March that the Ministry of Higher Education has decided not to allow any US organizations to work directly and teach at Cuban institutes of higher education. We have been required to suspend our Conversational English Program for the time being.

GSC has developed connections with other organizations and is exploring the possibility of providing conversational English, sustainable agriculture and/or public health programs as early as this fall. We will be providing updates on the Cuba Program through this email newsletter. Stay tuned.

To read more about the Cuba Pilot Program trip, check out our latest [blog post](#).

## REQUEST INFORMATION

### Connect with us:

[www.globalservicecorps.org](http://www.globalservicecorps.org)

Phone: (503) 954-1659

Email: [gsc@globalservicecorps.org](mailto:gsc@globalservicecorps.org)



Facebook



Instagram



Twitter



Website

Global Service Corps  
1306 NW Hoyt Street  
Suite 310  
Portland, OR 97209

[Add us to your address book](#)

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