

Nursing Opportunities at Great Shape! Clinics

Great Shape! is a 501 (c) 3 charitable nonprofit based in Oakland, California. Since 1988, Great Shape! has worked tirelessly to provide life changing access to health care and education to the poorest of Jamaica's children and families. We are a non-political, non-sectarian humanitarian group that believes that it is our privilege and duty to serve those less fortunate than us. Indeed, we believe that we have far more to gain from these beautiful people, their culture and from the overall experience than we can ever give.

Great Shape! Inc. is service in action. In Jamaica, we facilitate a humanitarian dental project, a literacy empowerment program, and an eye-care vision project. The Sandals Foundation and Jamaican Ministries of Health and Education are our lead partners.

Last year Great Shape! had a nursing presence at some of the iCare and 1000 Smiles clinics, this year the goal is to have at least one nurse at every clinic.

Overview of projects



1000 Smiles is the planet's largest humanitarian dental project. Our volunteer dental professionals and non-professional volunteers provide access to dental care and education to Jamaican children and their communities. Started in 2002, this amazing project is a dynamic collaboration between Great Shape! Inc., Sandals Resorts International, and the Jamaican Ministry of Health. Nearly 200 dental volunteers from all over the USA, Canada and beyond come together each year for several weeks of bliss: to offer their care, education, expertise, time and love to those children in need in rural Jamaica. These areas have only one dentist for every 80,000 people!



iCare is an international humanitarian eye care project of Great Shape! Inc. in collaboration with our essential partners: VOSH Northwest, Sandals Foundation, Lions Club and the people of Jamaica. It is a life changing program that harnesses the compassion and expertise of humanitarian eye care professionals by sending them to Jamaica to give the gift of sight to thousands who can't even afford a pair of reading glasses. In the areas we work there are no publicly available optometrists, and only two ophthalmologists for over ½ million people. The numbers are staggering. That is why our services are so greatly needed. Most of our patients come from very low income rural communities and almost none of them have ever been to an eye doctor in their life.



SuperKids is a literacy empowerment project reaching thousands of children in Jamaica. In the schools that partner with Great Shape! Inc. the literacy rate sits at 40%. SuperKids supports the

curriculum and provides resources to boost reading and computer skills, art, music and sports. Since 2008, SuperKids has improved literacy in seven schools in the Ocho Rios area and this year they will move on to the Negril area. Our volunteers inspire kids and partner with Jamaican teachers. SuperKids attracts volunteers from across the U.S.; educators, computer techs, athletic coaches, dancers and musicians, plus folks who just love kids and believe in education. The good news is this project is working and many of the schools that partner with SuperKids have shown an improvement in test scores.

What will a nurse's role be?

We anticipate that at each clinic or school the nurse will be providing screening and education for hypertension and diabetes through blood pressure and blood glucose testing. The nurse will also make appropriate referrals for urgent and emergent care, will respond to any medical emergencies at the clinics and provide basic first aid as needed for both clinic patients and volunteers.



What do I need to bring?

The nursing services are what we are able to bring to them. It is expected that each nurse will procure donations to accomplish what we set out to do. You should begin now by contacting local supply representatives in your area for glucometers, strips, single use lancets, alcohol wipes and gloves; an automated blood pressure unit with medium, large and extra large cuffs; over the counter medications for cough and cold, GI issues, bug bites and burns; bandage and other first aid supplies; antibiotics for dental, sinus, urinary tract infections if you have access; and whatever else you would like to be able to work with and provide. While we expect every nursing volunteer to actively seek donated supplies and equipment, we don't want this

expectation to discourage anyone from coming. If you simply are not able to procure these items we will work with you to find a way to make it happen.

What qualifications are needed?

You need to be very autonomous and comfortable working independently. You must be able to adjust your typical approach to nursing and your way of thinking to fit within the reality of the Jamaican's existence. Adaptability is key, this is Jamaica mon.

You also will need to submit documents in order to obtain a temporary license to practice nursing in Jamaica, Great Shape! will facilitate this process but start early!!!

When Can I Go?

1000 Smiles

Session 1: Ocho Rios

Week 1 only: Arrive Sept. 23 or Sept. 24 and depart Oct. 1

Week 2 only: Arrive Oct. 1 and depart Oct. 9 or 10

Week 1 & 2: Arrive Sept. 23 or 24 and depart Oct. 9 or 10

Session 2: Montego Bay

Week 3 only: Arrive Oct. 14 or 15 and depart Oct. 22

Week 4 only: Arrive Oct. 22 and depart Oct. 30 or 31

Week 3 & 4: Arrive Oct. 14 or 15 and depart Oct. 30 or 31

Session 3: Whitehouse

Week 5 only: Arrive Nov. 4 or 5 and depart Nov. 12

Week 6 only: Arrive Nov. 12 and depart Nov. 20 or Nov. 21

Week 5 & 6: Arrive Nov. 4 or 5 and depart Nov 20 or 21

iCare

Session 1: Montego Bay

Arrive October 7 or 8 and depart October 15, 16 or 17

Session 2: Ocho Rios

Arrive October 14 or 15 and depart October 22, 23 or 24

SuperKids

Negril Session

Week 1 only: Arrive Nov. 4 and depart Nov. 12

Week 2 only: Arrive Nov. 12 and depart Nov. 21

Week 1 & 2: Arrive Nov. 4 and depart Nov. 21

Work Conditions & Schedule

Our clinic sites are set up in local Jamaican buildings such as a church hall, community center or school. We do our best to make things comfortable with fans and shade, but at 15 degrees north of the equator, often the days are hot. Our volunteers work Monday through Friday. The day starts at 7:20 with a breakfast meeting and at 8:00am we head out into the field to change the world. Clinic finishes around 3:30 to 4pm and we try to have volunteers back to the hotel in time to run and jump in the aqua blue Caribbean Sea or just relax a bit before dinner. First Sundays are working days reserved for orientation and set up. The work is fun and extremely rewarding, but is also busy all day long.

Accommodations

Sandals Resorts International and their charitable arm, Sandals Foundation, provide free all-inclusive luxury accommodations to our volunteers. As a guest at the resort, volunteers are welcome to enjoy for free the many amenities that are provided to paying guests. These include several all-you-can-eat restaurants, full bars, swimming pools, water sports including scuba diving, entertainment, and much more. Often these rooms sell for \$500 a night.



3 To A Room

Sandals Foundation donates over 1 million USD a year in rooms to Great Shape! In order to maximize this incredible donation and in order to help the most people possible, we place three volunteers to a room. We encourage volunteers to form groups of three when applying so that you can room with people you know. If not, we place volunteers with the most compatible roommates possible and folks make new friends from all over the USA and beyond. Couples are asked to either bring a third person with them to be their roommate or, if space allows, be willing to pay a third project fee that a third roommate would have paid in order to secure a private room.

Free Time

With the exception of first Sundays, evenings and weekends are your free time to bask in the sun, sit by the bar, take advantage of the many resort amenities or get out and explore the island.

How Much Does It Cost?

Volunteers pay for:

- Their own airfare (average to Jamaica around \$550 USD)
- A project fee of \$700. Project fees go directly to support Great Shape! Inc. in paying for all the expenses related to putting on safe, well organized, highly effective and deeply meaningful projects. As a charitable organization, all expenses related to participating in Great Shape! projects are tax deductible as allowable by law.

Sponsorship!

Volunteers are encouraged to fundraise to offset their expenses. The fundraising program “Sponsor a Smile” allow friends and family of volunteers to sponsor them to participate on the project. Each \$50 sponsorship earns the donor a 1-in-1000 chance to win an all-inclusive vacation for 4 nights plus airfare for 2 persons in Jamaica. 90% of what the volunteer raises is refunded back to them to offset their airfare and project fees. 10% is used to purchase the vacation prize.



Travel Arrangements and Documents

Once approved, each volunteer makes their own travel arrangements to fly into and out of Montego Bay, Jamaica (MBJ) on the dates allowed. Free transfers to and from the airport and host resorts are provided.

Valid passports are required to enter Jamaica and to return into the USA. No Visa is required for US or Canadian citizens. Green card holders and others staying in the USA by Visa are generally free to travel to Jamaica and back, but such cases should be discussed with Great Shape! staff.

Health & Safety

Great Shape! places a very strong emphasis on health and safety on our projects. In general, Jamaica is a very safe country to visit if you follow the common sense rules of the project. Water and food is plentiful and safe to consume.

Most times there are no special vaccinations required to travel to Jamaica, but we always encourage volunteers to speak to their health care providers to discuss their personal health as it relates to participation in the project.

The number one health concern in Jamaica is the sun including getting burned, heat stroke or exhaustion. It is very important to carefully manage your exposure to the sun and take measures to stay hydrated and cool.

How Can I Apply To Volunteer?

Once you have decided that you would like to join in this amazing experience you can complete an application online at www.gsjamaica.org for 1000 Smiles, email icare@gsjamaica.org for an iCare application, or email superkids@gsjamaica.org for a SuperKids application.

We will review your application and approve it as soon as possible if space is available. Once approved we will guide you through a short registration process to get you ready to go to Jamaica and change the world!

Need More Information?

Visit the web site www.gsjamaica.org for more information about Great Shape! Inc. and their three projects. For questions regarding volunteering as a nurse e-mail Colleen Clancy at cclancy1@twcny.rr.com. For questions regarding registration and paperwork please contact Tiffany Rinaldi at tiffany@gsjamaica.org or call 510-893-1751.