

PITTSBURGH HEALTH CORPS - Member Service Description

1. Site Information

Site Name and Location:

Global Links
4809 Penn Ave.
2nd Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15224
www.globallinks.org

Global Links is in the Bloomfield/Garfield neighborhood of Pittsburgh and is accessible by PAT bus lines from downtown or Oakland.

Organization Description and Mission:

Global Links (GL) is a medical relief and development organization with a two-fold mission: promoting environmental stewardship in healthcare; and improving health and advancing healthcare equity in developing countries. Rooted in Pittsburgh, but with a mission and impact that reaches out to the poorest countries and populations in Latin American and the Caribbean, GL has for over 20 years been redirecting still useful medical materials away from U.S. landfills to public health improvement efforts in Western PA and abroad.

In its 22nd year, Global Links remains true to its roots of working towards health equity for poor and vulnerable populations, while protecting the environment from the burden of wasteful disposal of still-useful medical surplus. We are proud of our innovative and responsible approach to this task; however, we do much more than “send the right stuff” to our program countries. We actively support and advance the public health agendas in those countries, building relationships that allow us to both learn from and educate the physicians, nurses, administrators and health ministry officials in recipient communities so that we all can better understand how to best allocate and use donated materials. The GL mission goes well beyond simply providing material aid; we are actively engaged in initiating and collaborating in larger, systemic plans to improve public health. This wider perspective has focused us on the importance of collaborative relationships and how impact is multiplied when strong partnerships are involved

Critical Community Need(s) to be addressed through member service:

Global Links relies on the support of volunteers throughout the greater Pittsburgh area to efficiently and economically fulfill our mission to help improve health in developing countries while also promoting better environmental stewardship in the U.S. Last year 235 individuals and 80 groups volunteered more than 9,000 hours in order to sort and pack critically needed medical supplies. These life saving materials filled 39 forty-foot sea containers destined to benefit those living in the poorest countries in our hemisphere.

Never before has the demand for our services of providing medical support to hospitals overseas been greater. To do this, it is essential that we further increase the organization’s volunteer base and expand our outreach and education work within area hospitals and the Pittsburgh community.

In addition, Global Links is working to increase partnerships with organizations serving local needs in order to provide them with materials to fulfill their mission. In 2010, we were able to support the work of organizations such as Operation Safety Net, Three Rivers Center for Independent Living, cancer support groups and more. We donate surplus home medical items to 3 lending libraries in our state, who can issue them to uninsured patients. We donate liquid nutrition to a cancer support group that can provide them to patients without insurance coverage. By working with these new partners, we were able to redirect over 6 TONS of materials for reuse in our local community.

The *Health Corps member* helps in the following ways:

1. Increase the number of volunteers Global Links can accommodate to help sort and pack medical supplies and thus increase the amount of supplies available to meet the needs of resource-poor communities.
2. Help forge community partnerships with local Pittsburgh community organizations so that we can support their missions by donating materials on their “needs lists”.
3. Help support outreach activities to raise awareness of Global Links’ programs and services and the hands-on

volunteer opportunities available for the community to participate in.

4. Help maintain the quality of Global Links donations by helping to research incoming medical supplies Global Links receives from area hospitals to determine if and where they should be donated.
5. Assist in educating volunteers about public health issues in our partner countries and the utility of the supplies that we send.

In addition to the critical help members provide to Global Links and the patients we serve overseas, we strongly believe that the expansion of Global Links' outreach efforts is also benefits the greater Pittsburgh community. Through our outreach efforts, Global Links helps to educate the local community about the structural surplus of materials that exists in the U.S. health system and the need to find an alternative to throwing this material in our increasingly full landfills. In so doing, Global Links is helping to deepen the environmental awareness of the community while educating the community about the great need of hospitals overseas. Global Links is also helping to expand Pittsburghers' awareness of the interconnectedness of our global community. Disease transcends national boundaries in our increasingly mobile world, and the lack of adequate healthcare in some sectors of the world, can create health problems in others. If people in one part of the world receive inadequate healthcare, it affects us all.

II. Service Description

A. Improving Global Links' on-site volunteer program

1. Volunteer Supervision

A large portion of the work that Global Links is able to accomplish is facilitated through the work of volunteers. Volunteers generously donate their time at Global Links each week Tuesday – Saturday. The volunteer base is comprised of individuals who volunteer on a regular basis (weekly, bi-weekly or monthly) as well as groups who come in monthly or seasonally. Groups fall into the categories of 1.) corporate groups 2.) faith-based groups 3.) civic groups 4.) schools 5.) colleges and universities.

In order for our volunteers to feel that the work they do is important, it is crucial for volunteer time to be spent effectively and efficiently. It is the responsibility of the volunteer department, of which the *Health Corps member* is a part, to ensure that volunteer time is spent well and that volunteers feel fulfilled in serving our mission.

Volunteer supervision includes:

- Orienting and leading volunteer individual volunteers and groups who sort and pack medical supplies. (Note that the presentation given at the beginning of the project educates the public about healthcare issues facing the underserved.)
- Cultivating relationships with volunteers.
- Directing packing projects to ensure that all medical supplies are packed to arrive in a "ready-to-use" manner- with all required parts/accessories- to best meet the needs of the medical staff and patients served in our partner countries.
- Educating volunteers on the crucial health need for the supplies that are being packed as well as specific health related issues on the ground in the countries where we work (i.e. cholera in Haiti)
- Lead groups 3-5 times per week for 2 hour projects. Lead individual volunteers regularly.
- Ongoing. Incoming HealthCorps members should be able to start leading volunteer shifts on his/her own after 3-4 weeks of training.
- ~ 20-25 hours per week will be dedicated to volunteer supervision

2. Volunteer outreach

- Help recruit and retain volunteer groups and help systematize communication with these groups.
- Work with Community Outreach Manager to schedule and attend relevant community festivals, local events and

university volunteer recruitment fairs; research opportunities for outreach fairs and events that Global Links does not yet know about. Some of these events may not necessarily be designed to recruit volunteers, but to inform the community about Global Links' work and the public health challenges worldwide.

- Develop displays for volunteer recruitment fairs and events.
- Write and create educational presentations that demonstrate the impact on health outcomes of Global Links' work and that connect current as well as potential volunteers to the impact of that work. These presentations should educate people about public health issues and how surplus in the U.S. can help to address these issues.
- Ongoing. Start immediately.
- *~ 2 hours per week.*

3. Volunteer feedback and recognition

- Assist in gathering volunteer feedback (suggestions, comments, concerns) to help ensure that Global Links is constantly improving the volunteer experience.
- Plan ways and/or events to thank and recognize our volunteers.
- Develop ideas to constantly encourage, motivate and utilize volunteers.
- Conceptualize and help plan 1-3 volunteer recognition events throughout the year.
- Ongoing. Start immediately.
- *~ 2-3 hour per week.*

4. Volunteer education

- Work on researching pressing health issues in Global Links nine partner countries.
- Plan, develop and present health education materials to help further our volunteers' understanding of the health issues that our partner countries currently face.
- Ongoing. Start immediately
- *~ 3-4 hours per week*

B. Helping to maintain the high quality of our overseas donations through medical product research

- Utilize the Global Links databases, the internet, and calls to manufacturers to research incoming supplies new to GL. In consultation with the volunteer coordinators and other staff, determine usefulness of "new" products for partner hospitals.
- Document information for GL databases.
- Assist in improving existing knowledge base (i.e. capturing and cataloging photos of medical supplies to streamline future staff, member and volunteer training).
- Ongoing. Start immediately.
- *~ 3 hours per week*

C. Assisting office outreach projects/initiatives

- In addition to the core areas listed above, additional opportunities exist for involvement with other outreach programs. Such opportunities include:

- Assisting with fulfilling medical service trip requests. This includes pulling medical supplies based on each service trip's request form, packing and documenting the supplies as well capturing the supplies' ultimate destination and purpose.
 - Establishing new local community partner relationships while also helping to maintain existing relationships. This includes identifying human service agencies and health centers working with uninsured and/or low-income families and then further identifying ways that Global Links can help these local agencies.
 - Assist with our "Global Links to Health" tours/presentations.
- Ongoing. Start after 1 month of training.
 - ~ 4-5 hours per week.

Overall Service Goals: (What is the member expected to achieve?)

- Lead volunteer groups in preparing quality donations of medical supplies. Build relationships with volunteer group leaders and other group volunteers. Build relationships with regular volunteers. Help to identify their strengths and ways in which Global Links can best capitalize on those strengths.
- Increase public awareness about Global Links and community involvement with our organization. (At least once a month attend volunteer recruitment fairs, give talks and presentations, participate in "Global Links to Health" tours, etc.)
- Develop an effective message for the public about healthcare realities facing the underserved in our world and why our work is important. (Create appropriate displays and presentations dependent on audience (high school students vs. hospital nurses). These can be visual displays, PowerPoint presentations, etc. as appropriate and as opportunities permit.)
- Develop events and ideas for volunteer recognition & motivation. (Help to plan and facilitate 1-3 events in the year for volunteers; contribute ideas.)
- Increase Global Links' capacity to serve hospitals overseas better by learning about medical products and documenting information about supplies. (Research weekly information on supplies; document information for GL databases on a weekly basis.)
- Increase Global Links' capacity to help local community partners in meeting their missions. (Identify new community partners that could benefit from the work that Global Links does)

Service Activities/Responsibilities: (Describe a member's service week)

Sunday – off

Monday – off

Tuesday:

- Volunteer supervision
- Desk time (product research, filling medical service trip requests, working with community partners, health research, volunteer recognition etc)
- Various team meetings

Wednesday:

- Volunteer supervision
- Desk time (product research, filling medical service trip requests, working with community partners, health research, volunteer recognition etc)

Thursday:

- Volunteer supervision
- Help with casepack and/or unloading medical truck
- Desk time (product research, filling medical service trip requests, working with community partners, health research, volunteer recognition etc)

Friday:

- Volunteer supervision
- Desk time (product research, filling medical service trip requests, working with community partners, health research, volunteer recognition etc)

Saturday:

- Volunteer supervision

* The weekly schedule is flexible and dependent upon scheduled volunteers, upcoming events etc.

Member Outcomes:

Increase volunteer participation – Supervise 3-5 volunteer groups a week and supervise at least 15-20 individual volunteers each week. Help Global Links volunteer team meet its goal of **8500** boxes packed and **9000** volunteer hours.

Effective presentations – Create 3-5 visual displays and/or power point presentations for the Global Links sorting center and warehouse locations, volunteer fairs and the public aimed at specific audiences. Develop multiple health-related messages and present to the staff/public/volunteers at least once a month. This can include helping with our “Global Links to Health” tours/presentations.

Events – Conceptualize and help plan 1-3 events for volunteer recognition during the service year.

Identify community partners – Identify and establish relationships with 3-5 new community partners. This includes identifying the agency’s work, clientele, and how Global Links can support their work through Global Links “Community Partner Needs List.”

Product supply documentation – Add to our body of knowledge on medical supplies and their uses in healthcare institutions. (Research at least 3 products a week for the duration of the service year.)

III. Performance Measures: The PHC AmeriCorps program is based on National Health Corps Performance Measures. The site specific performance measures are below:

Non Member Volunteers (NMV)

Does your service description include the member recruiting, orienting or supervising volunteers?

(Please check one) YES NO

Supervise 3-5 volunteer groups a week and supervise at least 15-20 individual volunteers each week. Help Global Links volunteer team meet its goal of **8500** boxes packed and **9000** volunteer hours.

Professional Development and Promotion of Public Health and Health-Related Careers:

The Health Corps members will be an integral part of establishing new local community partner relationships while also helping to maintain existing relationships. Part of establishing and maintaining relationships will include visiting community partner sites (health clinics, medical training facilities, human service agencies etc) where they will have the opportunity to learn more about the healthcare needs of the underserved/health disparities and health related topics.

The Health Corps member will also be scheduled to go on rounds (in hospitals, homecare centers, family support centers, etc.) with our Medical Outreach Manager to learn more about these environments and to see how GL forms and maintains these crucial relationships.

IV. Logistical Information

Expected Schedule for Providing Service at Site:

Tuesday – Saturday (1 evening each week, 2 Saturdays each month)

Orientation Plan:

Week 1:

- Organization orientation (overview of Global Links; meet with individual staff members to learn what their various roles are within the organization; attend “Global Links to Health Tour;” read through Global Links materials – past shipments, country reports etc).
- Department orientation (review service description; discuss service expectations; review common supplies Global Links receives; practice sorting supplies with Global Links Medical Supply Specialists).
- Begin working in with volunteers to get a sense of appropriate volunteer supervision, medical supplies and appropriate packing.
- Shadow Volunteer Program Manager

Week 2:

- Continue working in with volunteers and shadowing Volunteer Program Manager.
- Overview of various initiatives/projects that members will be involved with (medical service trips, community partners, suture, community outreach).
- Review medical product research procedures.

Week 3:

- Begin supervised volunteer supervision.
- Begin medical supply research.

Week 4:

- Begin independent volunteer supervision.
- Begin working on projects (community partners, medical service trips, health topic research etc)

Week 5:

- Hospital rounds

Holidays:

Labor Day (Monday, September 5)

Thanksgiving (Thursday, November 24-Sunday, November 27)

Winter holiday break (Friday, December 23 – Monday, January 2) – TENTATIVE – determination is made typically at the end of November and is at the discretion of upper management

Easter (Saturday, April 8 – Sunday, April 9)

Memorial Day (Monday, May 28)

4th of July (day(s) TBD since this falls on a Wednesday)

Service Location(s) if different from site address:

Sorting Facility:

4809 Penn Ave.

2nd Floor

Pittsburgh, PA 15224

Warehouse:

6899 Hamilton Ave.

Pittsburgh, PA 15208

Additional Info (parking, transportation, ID) How does the member need to travel to perform service duties?

Please check one Bus Car None

Member Qualifications:

- Strong communication skills
- Ability to perform independently AND as part of a team
- Ability to multi-task and meet deadlines for projects without reminders
- Ability to thrive in fast-paced environment
- Demonstrated leadership capabilities
- Attention to detail
- Administrative skills

- Excellent phone manner
- Good public speaking skills
- Knowledge of MS Word, MS Excel, and MS Access, Outlook
- Self-starter
- Flexibility is key
- Medical background helpful, but not necessary