



Sharing from Lingnan VolTrateers

A New Chapter of Overseas Volunteering Experience!

List of Participants and Workcamps

Student Name	Location	Workcamp Project
Chan Long Yi, Abby	France	Moirax - Medieval Heritage
Chan Sui Man, Agnes	France	Moirax - Medieval Heritage
Chau Pak Yin, Edwin	France / Lithuania	Le Fort De L'aiguille / Krekenava Regional Park Lithuania
Cheung Ting, Tina	Iceland	Growing Gardens in Reykjavík & Botanical Gardens in Reykjavík
Ho Wai Man, Mika	Ecuador	Selva Y Vida
Kwok Ka Wo	Lithuania / France	Gražutė Regional Park / Protect the Castle of Pailly
Lai Chun Kit, Ryan	Thailand	Intercultural and Language
Lam Chau Kwan, Coco	Germany	The Forest Aeuro
Lau Pak Hei, Patrick	Greece	Summer in the City



Moirax - My Third Home

The project I joined was organized by Concordia, a non-profit organization in south-western France, aimed at promoting harmony between nations and appreciation of cultural difference. Our major job was to restore the walls surrounding the borough. To be honest, the job was physically demanding. We moved countless of stones everyday, transported sand and lime with wheelbarrows and used cement mixer to make mortar. We usually had a tea break in between and the villagers would bring us some home made cakes and cookies. Although the work was tiring and tough, we still had a lot fun.

Apart from working at the walls for 5 hours in the morning, we also had to prepare every meal by ourselves and clean the house every week. We had plenty of free time after the work but we were never bored. The local community invited us to join various activities, such as playing golf, cycling in the nearest city Agen, drawing workshop, photography workshop, clown improvisation workshop, etc. I am truly grateful for meeting such a nice bunch of campmates, camp leaders and the local community. In spite of the diversity, we got along very well and I would see them as my lifelong friends. My workcamp experience would be definitely different without the people I met there.

However, every coin has two sides and joining a workcamp has no exception. I truly enjoyed the workcamp and would recommend it to all of my friends, but every future applicant should be prepared to a challenging environment and physically-demanding work ahead before submitting your application.



VolTrateer: **CHAN Sui Man, Agnes**
Workcamp Project: **Bio Farm Birchhof in Switzerland**



Live an Organic Life

Bio farm Birchhof is a well-developed farm for organic vegetables and promoting their organic farming projects and missions. In the workcamp, I was involved in different farming works and have learnt how to sort out good vegetables and identify their species, features and functions. Through the project, I have gained a lot of knowledge on organic farming. I was greatly impressed by their philosophy that humans should care more about plants. As we rely on the nature for living, we have the responsibility to protect a more balanced and sustainable ecosystem.

Besides, I met many friends in the workcamp and some of them were refugees from Afghanistan and Tiber. We got a lot of good time together for taking a walk, riding bicycle, playing card games etc. They helped me to understand more about their countries and cultures. Making friends with them were one of the best memories I had in the workcamp.

For culture exchange, I have experienced a Zurich Festival, a Luzern Festival and their national day during my stay. In the Zurich Festival, people put on 'carnival dressing', drank alcohol and went to enjoy heavy electro music in the city. Luzern Festival was a classical music festival with a lot of orchestra and choir performances. The National Day is of the 1st of August every year, people would play fireworks everywhere. I had a lot of fun in joining these events.

Being well-prepared of yourself will make a trip more worth going and fruitful! Get connected with the locals and you would feel more inclusive in the place naturally. It is also a kind of respect to the place if we are more prepared.



VolTrateer: **CHAU Pak Yin, Edwin**
Workcamp Project: **Le Fort De L'aiguille in France & Krekenava Regional Park in Lithuania**



Workcamps in France and Lithuania

Joining VolTra workcamps was a very unforgettable experience and I had tried a lot of things which I have never done before. In France, I had slept in the sleeping bag, cooked for nearly twenty people, ridden bicycle to workplace, tasted wine and made cement for the first time. In Lithuania, I had my first trial to cut out a path in the forest, kayaking, use a lawn mover, go fishing, eat in the home for community neighbor.

After trying different new experiences in this journey I have surpassed my own limits. I become more independent and firmly realize the importance to conserve our culture and natural environment. Not only myself benefited from the workcamps, but also the local community and environment are benefited from them. I still remember, in the end of the workcamp in France, the mayor of Fouras joined our farewell party and thanked for the effort paid by the international volunteers. When we compared the wall before and after our renewal work, the effect was remarkable. I also noticed the tidiness of the river and landscape of Lithuania changed after our work. What we did can really help shorten the distance tourists between nature and protect the environment in a small extent. Therefore, I believe that it is mutual beneficial towards volunteers and the environment.

On the other hand, I had met different kinds of people in both workcamps. There were active people who looked like party animals, passive people who did not want to involve in the group, military commanders, professional MMA fighter and so on. Chatting with them had enriched my way of thinking. They shared with me about their own stories and different thoughts. It is always interesting and exciting to listen to someone with a different culture. I found that everyone is special and unique and there are always something we can learn from them. I am glad that I had joined VolTra this summer and got all these fruitful experiences.

VolTrateer: **CHEUNG Ting ,Tina**
Workcamp Project: **Growing Gardens in Reykjavik &
Botanical Gardens in Reykjavik in Iceland**

Working and Travelling in Iceland

The workcamps I joined was in Reykjavik, the capital of Iceland. Both camps were related to environmental protection. I was responsible for doing gardening works with the local colleagues and other volunteers there, for instance, picking up the weeds, transplanting the trees, working in the greenhouse, etc.



My communication and interpersonal skills have been enhanced a lot after joining the workcamps. I become more confident to speak and get along with the people from difference cultures. I was shy and usually stayed alone at the beginning, however, I started to be more active and chatted more with other participants on the second day. From my experience, I think language difference would not be a barrier to communicate with the others. You can do it if you want. As we had a lot of team works in the camps, it was important to communicate with others. We would help each other whenever others were in needed. As no one could understand Cantonese there, I found it was really effective to improve my English there because I had to use the language everyday.

Besides, I had got many new experiences in Iceland, which I would never expected to try. For example, I overcame my fear of animals and had ridden on a Icelandic horse! I had also taken a glacier walk with a dog. I am glad that I finally had the courage to break through myself and able to get close with animals in the workcamps.

Furthermore, I got a precious friendship with all the international volunteers there. We worked, played and lived together. At the same time, we taught each other our own languages and cultures. This really broadened my horizons and knowledge. Lots of fun was found and I really enjoyed the time in Iceland.



My Workcamp Experiences in Lithuania and France

I had joined two workcamps in Europe this summer. The workcamp in Lithuania was in a regional park and my duty was to clean the weeds in the forest, set up the guideboard and hiking indication, clear the waste in the river, etc. All the jobs were shared by a group of international volunteers.

Another workcamp I joined was in France, it was in a rural area and I had to build a rock wall in a castle. I met another group of international volunteers there and we had so much fun to work together. I had also learnt how to build a stable wall in a traditional way.

I had overcome a lot of difficulties during the workcamps and turned out I have achieved a lot too. My spoken English had been greatly improved as I could only use English for communication in the workcamps. I had learnt some French as well. In France we slept in the wild tents and the temperature difference was large. I did not bring enough warm clothes and it was chill at night. I became more adaptable and flexible in different environment and I believe it would help me to get more opportunities in the future.

When you are young, better to lead yourself with courage so that you could experience more and learn more. Joining Voltra workcamp would be a valuable experience in your life.



VolTrateer: LAM Chau Kwan, Coco
Workcamp Project: The Forest Aeuro in Germany



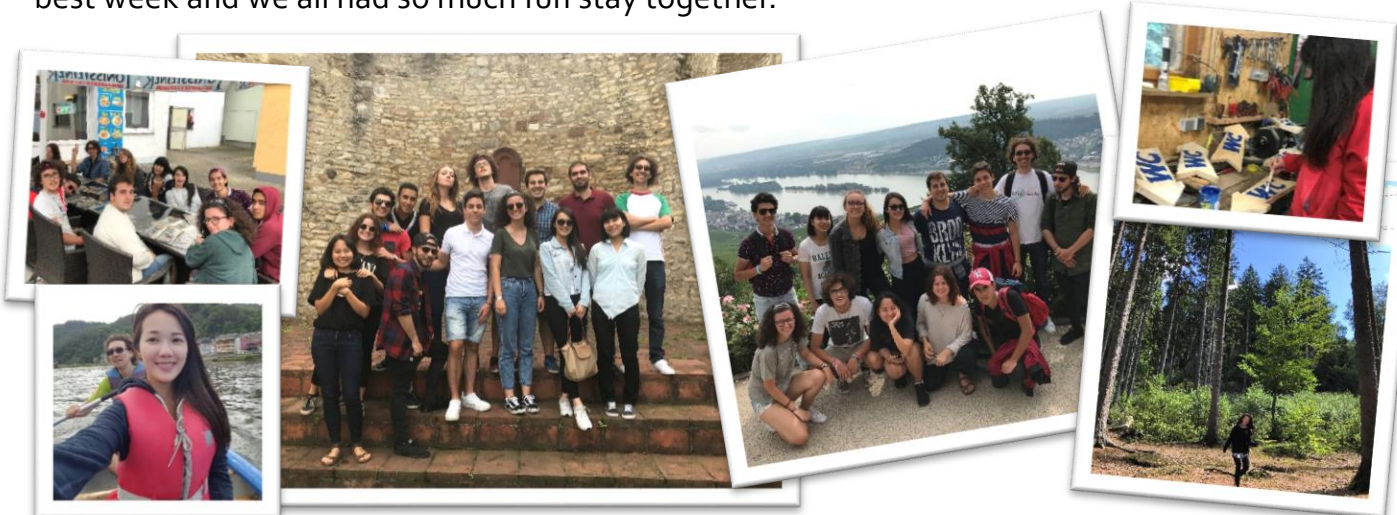
Holiday Fun in the Forest

This camp is tailor made for nature lovers. We worked and lived in the middle of the forest. The house was built by the wood and I lived on the second floor with a balcony, where I could immediately enjoy the stunning forest view. I enjoyed having a walk around the forest after work, sometimes I could see a group of deers crossing the road. I felt so great to get such a close connection with the nature.

We were helping with different kinds of conservation works, such as taking care of plants and trees in the forests, building and repairing protective fences, etc. Most of the work required a lot of physical energy which was quite hard for me. Although the work was a bit tough, I had a sense of satisfaction as I have done something good for the forest.

The greatest challenge I was facing at first was about the cultural differences. We were in a group of 16 people from 10 different countries living in the same house. We worked, ate and played together. Since we were from all over the world, with extremely different living styles we did have some conflicts at the beginning. After several group meetings and we communicated about each others' concerns, the problems were solved and we got along very well at the end.

In the last week of the camp, we had a whole week free to visit other places for sightseeing. We also went canoeing, hiking and visited Luxemburg for a day trip. That was definitely the best week and we all had so much fun stay together.



Holiday at School

I worked in a summer school for the children who live in a municipality in Greece. I worked with a group of international volunteers and the pedagogues there to plan the daily activities for the children. These activities included warm up exercises, theatrical plays, athletic activities and drawing workshops etc. There was a feedback session after work everyday to discuss the challenges we had and planning for the next day. I enjoyed the feedback time a lot because I believe it helped us to improve and ensured what we did could really help the children.

I would like to say thank you to the pedagogues who had a very important role in the camp. They acted like interpreters between the kids and us so that we could communicate well with the kids even we did not speak the same language. Furthermore, they were very talented in teaching kids. They knew all the games, children songs and they understood the needs of kids very well. I have learned from them that it is important to treat people equally. A good teacher should provide every student with equal opportunity and responsibility to participate in the class. Besides, it is also important to teach students a method to learn instead of simply giving them the knowledge. With an effective and efficient way to learn, they can get different knowledge easily by themselves.

I was grateful that I had good teammates and friends there who had inspired me a lot in the workcamp. Thank you Voltra and Lingnan University for providing me with this valuable opportunity. This summer in Greece was really meaningful and I would say international workcamp is the best choice for you to get a new experience around the world.



An Unforgettable Experience in Estonia

I participated in a language camp with other international volunteers in Estonia this summer. The camp aimed to raise the English proficiency of the campers, who are Russian kids in Estonia.

We were responsible to lead different group activities for the kids, play with them and conduct a country presentation to introduce our own country and culture. I enjoy working with people from different cultures and like working with kids, I hoped that I could contribute to the camp and give the kids a happy summer. At the beginning, I suffered from jet lag especially when the daytime in Estonia could last for at least 16 hours. I took awhile adapting to the weather and culture difference, and felt much better after a week. There were a lot of fun to work in camp with other volunteers, even though the kids could be naughty sometimes, I still enjoy working with them. I could not forget the scene they were crying to say goodbye to me at the end.

My dream is to travel around the world and the Voltra experience has strengthened my faith. My mum was so worried before my departure because it was the first time for her daughter going to an European country alone. However, I think she has more confident on me now and I plan to experience more by myself in other countries.

I highly recommend Voltra workcamp to anyone who wants to work with foreigners or learn to be independent. Age or which major you are studying in is not important, as long as you have the courage to try new things, you will discover how beautiful the world is.





Travel on Your Own

Challenge Yourself

Build International Friendship

Non-Business Summer Work

Expose to different cultures



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