



ICYE

# Volunteering Profile

ICYE USA - United Planet



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## Introduction

### Welcome!

Dear Volunteers,

The United States is renowned as the land of the free therefore; the country holds a challenging and often spotlighted position in international affairs. As an international, Boston-based, 501(c)3 non-profit organization; United Planet partners with ICYE so volunteers can address shared challenges affecting our interconnected world. United Planet provides diverse and creative opportunities for volunteers to achieve a more global understanding and mindset.

Boston was the center of the American Revolution; and is one of the most beautiful cities to date. With more universities and colleges than any other U.S. city and a young international population, Boston is an ideal point of entry for exchangees into the United States. During orientation, exchangees will have an opportunity to explore and become immersed in this vibrant city. Volunteers quickly fall in love with the charms of historic New England and delight in the region's aura of civic duty and social responsibility. Spend your free time during orientation strolling through centuries-old streets, or soaking up the wealth of knowledge that abounds here in Massachusetts.

Volunteer projects are based in and around our home, Boston, Massachusetts. Because projects are located in different areas of North America, volunteers can see more than they imagined. As a volunteer in the United States you will live with locals, which creates an intimate experience of sharing and learning in an authentic setting. Community service projects include working in farms, teen education programs, disability communities, and more.

We hope that you are even more excited to visit the United States as an ICYE Exchangee with United Planet! This is the beginning of a very fulfilling process both for you and for the people you are helping. You will have the chance to make a valuable difference while simultaneously changing your own life as well! Our mission at United Planet is to promote global awareness and foster cross-cultural understanding and friendship. We are very excited that you will become a part of this mission and are grateful for your involvement with ICYE. We look forward to seeing you soon here in the United States.

Kind regards and best of luck,  
The United Planet Team



## Types of projects

You could explain the ICYE categories of projects you are mainly offering and if there are different requirements:

- Developmental Disabilities
- Environment & Sustainable
- Developmental Disabilities

Please also add the following note:

Want to know why ICYE does not offer volunteering opportunities in orphanages? Read more here: [No Volunteering in Orphanages](#)

## Locations

New Hampshire, Greenfield in Massachusetts and Virginia

## Application Deadlines

April 30th, 2025.

## The Lukas Community, New Hampshire

Lukas is a year-round community of individuals ranging in age from the very young to the not so young. It provides a caring, therapeutic environment for adults with developmental challenges, in which each person is recognized as a unique human being with dignity, freedom and purpose. The Lukas Community derives its name from the gospel writer, St. Luke, who was both a physician and an artist. The community was founded in 1981 by a group of individuals who saw the desperate need for a place where adults with developmental challenges could live full and productive lives. <http://www.lukascommunity.org/>

### LOCATION

PO Box 137, 63 Memorial Highway Temple, New Hampshire

### DURATION:

12 months/ 6 months

### ICYE PROJECT CATEGORY

Developmental Disabilities

### AIMS OF THE PROJECT

To provide developmentally challenged adults with a secure community environment within which one's dignity and life purpose may be realized

### PROJECT'S ACTIVITIES

Assisting in the personal care and vocational care of developmentally challenged adults.

### COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Forty people of all ages from young children to the elderly, some disabled and some not, share their lives, work and recreation in four extended family households located on 65 acres of farmland fields, forests and wetlands. Rural setting with lots of distance from cities.

### VOLUNTEER'S REQUIREMENTS

- An open mind, an eagerness to learn
- A sense of commitment to the residents
- A strong sense of responsibility

## VOLUNTEER'S TASKS

There is some work within the households (personal care of the residents, meal preparation, housekeeping as needed, etc.) and also outside the home in such activities as therapeutic gardening, Eurythmy (therapeutic dance), weaving, music, fitness activities, painting and crafts to name a few.

## NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS IN PROJECT

10

## ACCOMODATION:

Private room within a household

## WORKING DAYS/ HOURS



Michelle from Costa Rica on a trip with her resident friends from Lukas.





## Plowshare Farm Life Sharing Community

Plowshare Farm is a life-sharing community where people with diverse capabilities, including adults with special needs, live and work side by side to build an inclusive and sustainable community.

### LOCATION

32 Whitney Drive Greenfield, NH 03047

### DURATION:

12 months/ 6 months

### ICYE PROJECT CATEGORY

Developmental Disabilities

### AIMS OF THE PROJECT

Environment & Sustainable

To work together to respond to the social, human, spiritual and ecological needs of our times, creating a community environment where every person and every aspect of the natural world can be learned from and valued.

We have found our most successful, and happiest, volunteers to be people who carry strong self-initiative. Who, after an orientation period, can see what needs to be done, and do it out of one's own initiative. We like to be light-hearted and cheerful, even as we are accomplishing tasks, and we enjoy this quality in others. The day is not all work.

### PROJECT'S ACTIVITIES

We offer a yearlong volunteer opportunity for people who seek experience in the following areas:

- General care and guidance of adults with developmental disabilities, autism spectrum diagnoses, down syndrome, seizure disorders (epilepsy), and other special needs.
- Aspects of organic farming and gardening.
- Therapeutic vocational activities with a focus on traditional trades that include cooking, woodworking, household care, building projects, crafts, baking, and farm work.
- Arts-based therapies, which at various times can include eurythmy,

painting, music, etc.

- Intermittent work with children.
- Participation in local community activities such as concerts, excursions, shopping, sports, festivals, and other varied social events.
- Sharing a social life with people with various challenges.

A unique aspect of our work is that most of our “workshops” are actually projects that need to be done in which people with all different abilities and challenges are included and supported to contribute to the best of their capabilities. Through this approach, people with special needs are not the “product” or the “object” of someone else’s work, but instead are active participants in the work which needs to be accomplished to support the community. For the volunteer, this method of working allows room for learning new skills, for becoming involved in projects, for supporting people with special needs to reach their full potential, and for independent initiative.

## COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Our community includes four extended family households, a community building (with community gathering space, performance space, kitchen, bakery, studio space, classrooms, and office), a barn, gardens, some outbuildings, a pond and 200 acres of fields, forest, and marshes.

Our environment is quite different from an “institution”. As nearly all of us live here at Plowshare (instead of coming here for 8-hour “shift work”), we are more like traditional extended-family homes and a shared farm, all of which include people with special needs. Residents (adults with developmental disabilities), co-workers, and volunteers work side by side in completing projects, with the individual needs of each person being considered in the planning of the day.

Our setting is truly rural. The closest real “town” (with 7,000 people) is 15 minutes away by car; the closest “city” (30,000 people) is 40 minutes away by car. Yet at the same time, Boston (a major metropolitan hub) is only about one and a half hours away. The seashore, a very busy and lively place during the summer, is a bit more than an hour away.

## VOLUNTEER’S REQUIREMENTS

Volunteering at Plowshare Farm is not an easy task. What we are looking for in volunteer candidates is people who are “wide awake” – people who see tasks through to completion, have pride in their work, and have curiosity and compassion for the experience of other human beings.

As a volunteer, we encourage your self-initiative in the following responsibilities:

- Help in some of the various workshops: farming, building, gardening, baking, cooking, fiber arts, etc.
- Help with meal preparation and other household tasks.

- Participation in household and community life such as daily meals, social interaction and leisure activities in the house or outdoors.
- Help with fulfilling hygienic needs of the residents.

### VOLUNTEER'S TASKS

Live in and provide assistance with daily needs in one of our lifesharing homes where people with a wide range of abilities, including people with disabilities, live together in an inclusive community-based setting. This includes sharing general household activities, supporting others in the household in activities of daily living, and sharing in social time together.

Participate in 2-3 areas of volunteer service during the day, depending on the community's current need and personal interest, such as wool and fiber arts, woodworking, baking, and biodynamic gardening. Learn about traditional baking and more).

- Be part of a community that is striving toward ecological sustainability (energy production and heating, growing our own vegetables, getting milk and eggs from our own animals, tapping maple trees for syrup, etc).
- Ages 17+

### NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS IN PROJECT

3

### ACCOMODATION:

Yearlong volunteers have a private bedroom and share meals in the household where they share daily life with residents, householder(s) and coworkers.

### WORKING DAYS/ HOURS.



## Innisfree Village

Innisfree Village was founded in 1971 by a group of parents in Maryland and Virginia who were searching for a progressive alternative to institutional care for their growing children with intellectual disabilities. They envisioned a place where their children would share their lives with caregivers and would be considered family members. Their children were only youngsters at the time, but these farsighted parents were preparing for the time when their offspring would be adults and would need the stimulation and satisfaction of living and working with others.

Throughout its five decades, Innisfree has retained the mission identified by the families who began the community: to provide a lifesharing home and work environment in an atmosphere of beauty, warmth, and respect where all community members are valued, and all are encouraged to explore and contribute to a meaningful and challenging life. <http://www.innisfreevillage.org/>

### LOCATION

5505 Walnut Level Road, Crozet, VA 22932

### DURATION:

12 months/ 6 months

### ICYE PROJECT CATEGORY

Developmental Disabilities

### AIMS OF THE PROJECT

To be a model therapeutic environment with people with intellectual disabilities, emphasizing empowerment, interdependence, and mutual respect of all community members.

### PROJECT'S ACTIVITIES

Assisting in the personal care and vocational care of developmentally challenged adults.

### COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Innisfree is located in a small rural community, near the small city of Charlottesville. We participate in community/regional events throughout the year, as well as selling Innisfree made goods to local businesses year round.

### VOLUNTEER'S REQUIREMENTS

- Must have a current TB (Tuberculosis) screening.
- 21 years of age (others can be assessed)

- One year commitments preferred

#### VOLUNTEER'S TASKS

- The volunteer serves as a residential caregiver to a small groups of residents
- Facilitates in therapeutic workstations
- Oversees the upkeep and maintenance of the house in which they live, including budget
- Completes written reports
- and participates in other community activities and events

#### NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS IN PROJECT

3

#### ACCOMODATION:

Volunteer caregiver lives in one of the village houses. They are provided room and board. Ask for a job information sheet for more details about other benefits and incentives.

#### WORKING DAYS/ HOURS

30 - 40 hours







## Additional Information

Exchangees are required to pay for their own air transportation within the US since placements are located throughout such a vast geographical area.

Book flights from your home to the US and domestic flights with our partners STA Travel and/or High Point Travel. Both offer discounted rates and payment plan options for convenience.

United Planet, also, recommends the following websites for information on domestic flights:

- Expedia Travel [www.expedia.com](http://www.expedia.com)
- Kayak [www.kayak.com](http://www.kayak.com)
- Student Universe [www.studentuniverse.com](http://www.studentuniverse.com)
- Travelocity [www.travelocity.com](http://www.travelocity.com)
- Southwest Airlines [www.southwest.com](http://www.southwest.com)
- Jetblue [www.jetblue.com](http://www.jetblue.com)

United Planet can provide assistance with booking domestic transportation if requested in advance.

## Additional Transportation for Long-Term Placements

Project Name	Address	Bus Ride ( <i>provided by United Planet unless otherwise stated</i> )	Plane Ride*
The Lukas Community	PO Box 137 63 Memorial Highway Temple, NH 03084	1 hour Greyhound: Bus Stop, 26 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116 to Greyhound: Bus Stop, 8 N Southwood Dr, Nashua, NH 03063	
Innisfree Village	5505 Walnut Level Road, Crozet, VA 22932		3-4 hours w/stops \$160 to 200
Plowshare Farm	32 Whitney Drive Greenfield, NH 03047	2.5 hours Greyhound: Bus Stop, 26 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116 to 67 Main St, Keene, NH 03431	

\*Please keep in mind, exchangees are required to pay for their own air transportation within the US since placements are located throughout such a vast geographical area.