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**BOWDOIN College Alternative Break Trips 2016-17**

**Alternative Spring Break**

**Information Session:** Mon 10/17, 8pm @ Russwurm Great Room

**How to I participate?**  Application deadline was Wednesday, 11/2.  Decisions will be announced in mid-November.

**Trip Dates:** Saturday, 3/11 through Saturday, 3/18 (all trips except Guatemala) or Sunday, March 12 through Monday, March 20 (Guatemala trip).

**The Intersection of Race, Gender Identity, and Sexuality in San Francisco, CA**This trip will explore the intersection of race, gender identity, and sexuality in San Francisco. Students will have the opportunity to learn about marginalized LGBTQ+ populations and the effects of gentrification on these communities. By working with a variety of organizations, students will learn how to advocate for these groups in the future and will engage in conversations about whiteness, gender bias, masculinity, and classism. Leaders: *Hayley Nicholas '17 & Hassaan Mirza '17*

**Education In a Developing Economy, in Guatemala City, GUA**Participants will learn about the historical and cultural background of poverty existing in the Guatemala City garbage dump, and will learn about additional social issues affecting the community. In addition, participants will work with community members across all ages, with whom they will plan fun and engaging educational projects, lead English classes, and spend time at Safe Passage’s Early Childhood Education Center.  *Leaders: Ama Gyamerah ’17 & Chrissy Rujiraorchai ’17*

**Passamaquoddy Community & Education in Pleasant Point, ME**Participants will learn from Maine’s Passamaquoddy Native community in Pleasant Point, ME, by assisting teachers at the Beatrice Rafferty School and serving at the Sipayik Youth and Recreation Center. Participants will discuss issues with community leaders in order to forge lasting connections with members of Maine's Native community.  *Leaders: Swapnika Mallipeddi ’19 & Annie Wilcosky ’17*

**Public Health in Atlanta, GA**Participants will learn about many aspects of public health efforts in Atlanta, home of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), with a particular emphasis on health issues related to nutrition and food security.  We will spend time with officials at the CDC as well as a variety of local grassroots agencies that work with underserved communities to improve health outcomes, quality of life, access to nutrition, and healthcare services.  *Leaders: Meghan Bellerose ’17 & Rachel Kupferman ’17*

**Climate & Environmental (In)Justice in New Orleans, LA**Participants will investigate the inequity between different groups who bear the burdens of adapting to climate change, coastal land loss, and pollution. We will meet with local groups to learn about the causes of environmental injustice, and how to prevent it. We will also volunteer with groups that work to prevent coastal erosion and restore New Orleans' Lower Ninth Ward.  *Leaders: Liam Gunn ’17 & Laurine Verwiel ’17*

**Understanding Homelessness & Housing Insecurity in Philadelphia, PA**Participants will learn about homelessness and housing insecurity with a special focus on homeless youth and LGBTQ individuals. In addition to examining the structural causes and effects of homelessness, participants will have the opportunity to gain insight into the problem through interacting with people experiencing homelessness, and working with a variety of organizations that take unique approaches to combating homelessness.  *Leaders: Brandon Morande ’19 & Emma Roberts ’17*

**About Alternative Breaks**

Alternative Break trips, which take place during both Winter and Spring breaks, provide a unique opportunity for students to participate in an intensive public service experience while increasing their understanding of significant social and environmental problems.  Engaged in direct service relating to these problems, students live and work in communities with which they otherwise may have little contact. Being completely immersed in this environment over an extended period of time allows students to internalize their experience, which can serve as a springboard for a lifelong commitment to social change.

Prior to the trips, participants attend weekly pre-service meetings to prepare them for their service experience. These meetings include background and cultural information about the site, educational visits from Bowdoin professors, reading assignments, film viewing, fundraising, and team-building activities. During the trip, students participate in meaningful service activities, daily reflective sessions, and evening group activities. After returning to campus, students work together to educate the larger Bowdoin community about their issue area and experience.

**Where and when are the trips?** Alternative Break (AB) trips take place at the local, national, and international levels during both the winter and spring. There are two types of AB trips: Alternative Winter Break (January 15-20) and Alternative Spring Break (March 11-18 & 12-20).

Most trips do have a fee, but **need-based financial aid is available to cover up to 80% of trip costs.**

**Alternative Winter Break**

**Info Session:** Wed 9/14, 7pm @ McKeen Center Common Room

**Trip Dates:** Sunday, January 15 through Friday, January 20, 2017

**How do I participate?** ONLINE APPLICATION closed on Thursday, 10/6.  Decisions will be announced to applicants in late October.

**About this year's trips:**

**Reproductive Justice in Portland, ME**

This trip will focus on reproductive justice, which exists when all people have social, political, and economic power to make decisions about their gender, health, bodies, sexuality, and family planning. We will learn from organizations that support reproductive rights, including trans\* rights groups, sexual health organizations, local police force, and politicians. The trip will also discuss sex trafficking in Maine, and learn from groups dedicated to helping survivors of trafficking and assault.  *Leaders: Penelope Lusk ’17 & Harriet Fisher ’17*

**Immigrant & Refugee Education in Portland, ME**

This trip will allow students to learn about the immigrant and refugee community in Portland, ME. Volunteers will engage first generation American students at a Portland middle school and work with a college aspirations program tailored towards English Language Learning students. Volunteers will also work with various education-focused organizations that support these populations, including Portland Adult Education (an institution offering literacy, mathematics, history, etc. classes for immigrants, refugees, ESOL individuals, and other adults seeking to continue their education).  *Leaders: Ellen Pham ’18 & Thanh Tran ’19*

**How Bowdoin AB Works: Student Leadership** Alternative Break trips are organized and led by students who want to provide an intensive learning through service experience. ASB leaders are responsible for all aspects of the alternative spring break trip, including recruiting participants, trip logistics, coordinating with the host site, and leading the actual trip.

**Leader Selection** AB proposals and leader applications are reviewed each spring for the following year by a committee of students, faculty, and McKeen Center staff. Those leaders whose trips are selected receive support and training from the McKeen Center to plan and implement their AB trips.

**Leaders' Seminar**  
During the fall semester, ASB leaders participate in the Leaders' Seminar, a 10-week course facilitated by the staff of the McKeen Center. This seminar prepares leaders in how to organize and lead their trips and to help student participants examine the political, social, cultural, and economic aspects of their service and the communities in which they will be living. Through this seminar, leaders develop their own seminar which they lead for their trip participants in the spring.

**Past Trips**

*Before this trip I thought of issues of poverty as if they could be drawn on graphs and shoved into political speeches, but now I think of them as a tangle of simple problems that all kinds of people face every day.  
- Jessie Turner ’13, Guatemala*

The Alternative Spring Break program has a successful and exciting history.  The first trip sponsored through the McKeen Center (formerly the Community Service Resource Center) traveled to Peru in 2002.  Since then, the program has grown exponentially.  In 2012 we saw almost 100 students travel to 8 destinations, both domestic and international.  Through all this time, these trips have been designed and led exclusively by students.  See below links for descriptions of all the past trips and students' reflections of their experiences.

**Read about past trips:**

**2015**[**2014**](https://www.bowdoin.edu/mckeen-center/service-leadership/alternative-breaks/archives/2014/index.shtml) [**2013**](https://www.bowdoin.edu/mckeen-center/service-leadership/alternative-breaks/archives/2013/index.shtml) [**2012**](https://www.bowdoin.edu/mckeen-center/service-leadership/alternative-breaks/archives/2012/index.shtml)[**2011**](https://www.bowdoin.edu/mckeen-center/service-leadership/alternative-breaks/archives/2011/index.shtml)[**2010**](https://www.bowdoin.edu/mckeen-center/service-leadership/alternative-breaks/archives/2010/index.shtml)[**2009**](https://www.bowdoin.edu/mckeen-center/service-leadership/alternative-breaks/archives/2009/index.shtml)[**2008**](https://www.bowdoin.edu/mckeen-center/service-leadership/alternative-breaks/archives/2008/index.shtml)[**2007**](https://www.bowdoin.edu/mckeen-center/service-leadership/alternative-breaks/archives/2007/index.shtml)[**2006**](https://www.bowdoin.edu/mckeen-center/service-leadership/alternative-breaks/archives/2006/index.shtml)[**2005**](https://www.bowdoin.edu/mckeen-center/service-leadership/alternative-breaks/archives/2005/index.shtml)[**2004**](https://www.bowdoin.edu/mckeen-center/service-leadership/alternative-breaks/archives/2004/index.shtml)

**For more information about the ASB program contact**[**Andrew Lardie**](mailto:alardie@bowdoin.edu)**, Associate Director at the McKeen Center.**