

International

Students reach out to Honduras

Elizabeth Amonette
Reporter

While spring break can be a time for relaxation, many Elon students choose to dedicate their vacation time to helping the less fortunate through various Elon Volunteers! Alternative Break service trips.

In conjunction with The Kernodle Center for Service Learning and Community Engagement, Elon Volunteers! provides students with the option of volunteering in impoverished areas within the United States or internationally.

This upcoming spring break, a group of 12 Elon students will be traveling to El Progreso, Honduras to work with ProNino USA, a non-profit organization dedicated to creating bright futures for Latin American street children. ProNino provides a place for young boys to call home.

Once there, the students will help construct various buildings on the organization's grounds and work closely with the children of ProNino.

Additionally, students will gain a more in-depth understanding of the social issues of Honduras.

"Students can expect

a rewarding blend of immersion in a new culture and firsthand experience offering service," said sophomore Jenn Brouder, one of the coordinators of the service trip. "They will see the effects of poverty and truly begin to understand its effect upon all other facets of life," Brouder said.

Brouder, who has volunteered with ProNino twice in the past year, said she believes the Honduras service trip has changed her life in many positive ways.

"ProNino has opened my eyes to a world of possibility and has encouraged me to imagine a world where no children are hungry or afraid to go home for fear of abuse, where no children live and sleep on the streets," she said.

Raquel Cortes Mazuelas, one of the faculty advisors for the trip, first traveled with Elon Volunteers! to El Progreso in January 2007, and has been involved with ProNino since.

"I believe students learn to value what they have and learn to be more humble by helping and getting to know people almost their age who haven't had the privilege of being born with a support system as most of us have," Cortes Mazuelas said. "Working with ProNino

or other organizations that deal with neglected, abused and impoverished children is a win-win situation for both parties. ProNino kids receive the love that they've been longing for all their lives, and Elon students learn about this project and receive love as well."

This year, more than 40 applications were submitted by students interested in going on the trip.

Those who have been selected to participate in this year's trip are currently fundraising to lower trip costs and help support the children of ProNino.

They recently planned profit shares at local restaurants such as Red Bowl and Mellow Mushroom and hosted a bake sale in Moseley Center to benefit the cause.

Junior Chessa Simpson, who previously participated on another service trip to Honduras, said she encourages all of Elon to support ProNino and Elon Volunteers! by donating.

"My experience in Honduras was life changing," she said. "It's the opportunity to step out of your own world and your own view of life and see it from a completely different perspective, one that is humbling and eye opening."

Elon learns about India



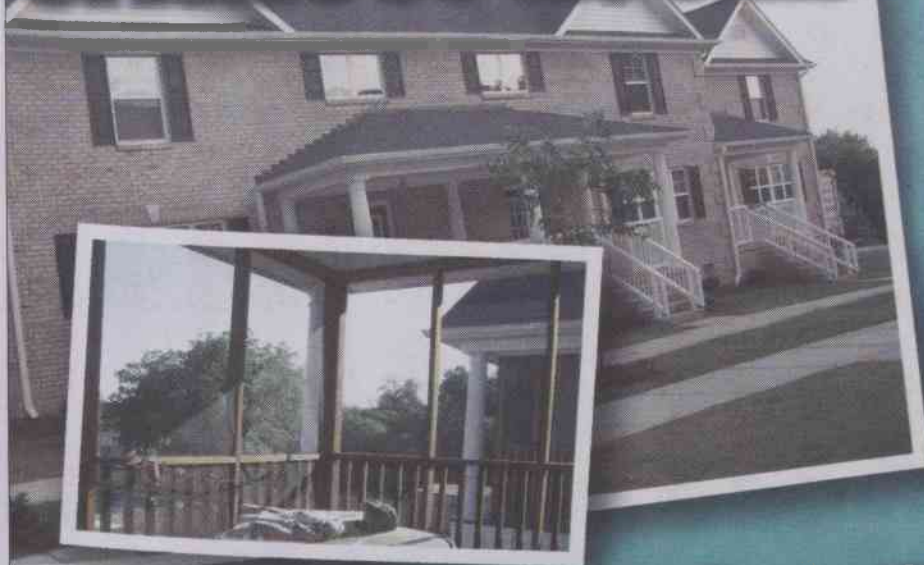
BRIAN ALLENBY | Staff Photographer

International Education Week kicked off Monday at Elon University with Indian food, a bazaar, dance shows and activities. Numerous speakers, themed dining hall food and College Chai, in lieu of College Coffee are just a few of the more than 20 scheduled events, found here: <http://bit.ly/EPindia>

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