

# 2018 Youth Mission Team - Panama

## Quick Facts

**Location:** Tocumen, Panama

**Dates:** July 9-16th +/- a day

**Ministry:** construction/work projects and ministry to children

**Mission Agency:** Merge Ministry the same organization we used for our Dominican Republic, Alaska and International Falls Trips.

**Cost:** ~\$1500\* per person subject to change based on airfare. \*We estimate a cost of ~\$650 or less based on fundraising success and participation.

**PANAMA – Tocumen** We are partnering with a church near the airport that has a **school for young children** and is **working to build more classrooms**. This church also has a **mission site in a housing project** nearby where they have a **children and family outreach center** and are helping their community. There also are projects in the community near the church and in the neighborhood of the mission.

**What will we do there?** We will focus on building/work projects as well as ministry to children. Specific projects and ministry will be developed based on the strengths of the team that commits and the most crucial needs that arise.

**What are my responsibilities?** See Commitments and Responsibilities below.

**What is the Tocumen like?** Panama is one of the safest countries in Central America. The country is booming economically, partly because of the Panama Canal, but also because of visionary governments. However, foreigners and the rich are pushing low-income people out of Panama City into surrounding communities like Tocumen, where the infrastructure is much less developed.

**What is the congregation like?** The congregation is strong and growing. They have a strong youth ministry. The church has an elementary school on their property that they operate. They also have a ministry in a housing project nearby. The church is very outreach oriented, strong and led by good pastors.

**What is the community?** It is a semi-urban area with people walking everywhere. The people primarily work in Panama City and live outside in Tocumen. It is not super crowded and seems very safe. People play sports. The housing project community is made up of one-story homes, but still compact and more populated.

**Has Merge had teams there before?** We had two teams to this site in 2016. One was a college soccer team that did community ministry and played games against professional women's teams. That trip was super successful. They had a large church team in the summer that did well with children's ministry, outreach events, and some construction projects. No teams there in 2017.

**What projects / ministries are most needed?** Generally workshops to attract people to the church, youth ministry, sports ministry, family ministry, outreach events, classes in the school (possible), music ministry, sports ministry, ministry at the mission site (mainly with children and families).

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**What leaders are committed so far?** Jeff Page, Gary Pearce, Jeni Davis, Charlie Oblites, Justin Bayne

**What are the accommodations?** Our team will stay in classrooms at the church.

**Travel Documentation Needed:** Passport

**Vaccinations Recommended:** Hepatitis A, Typhoid, Measles, Yellow Fever and the full battery of childhood vaccinations.

## Team Commitments and Expectations

1. I commit to **actively participate** in service projects, team meetings, and team bonding events. I expect that as I engage with other people, I will get to know them in a deeper and more meaningful way.
2. I commit that I will value others by being on time, attending the mandatory events/meetings (and making advance alternative arrangements, if necessary), and by not engaging in any disruptive or disrespectful behavior. I expect that as I show respect, I will receive respect.
3. I commit to participate in the Vendor Fair and at least 50% of the planned fundraisers. I expect that as I work to raise funds that I will appreciate the value of money and what it means to have a strong work ethic.
4. I commit that, at a minimum, I will attend **Sunday worship** services at least **once a month** and **Sunday youth group at least twice a month**. I expect that as I engage with a community of Christians, I will grow in relationship with others and with Christ.
5. I commit to be involved with the life of this congregation in a more meaningful way by seeking out opportunities to serve. I expect that as I serve, I will mature in my understanding of what it means to be part of the Body of Christ.
6. I commit to pray for all of us as a team and as a family. I expect that as I make prayer a part of my life, I will discover things about myself and about God that I've never known before.
7. I commit to **attend or help lead the Love Of God event March 2-4<sup>th</sup>**. I expect that as I share and receive God's love within my community I will be better equipped to demonstrate it in Panama.
8. I commit that while in Panama, I will have an open attitude and will eagerly embrace learning about the life and the community we will serve. I expect that by laying aside my own assumptions, I will have room to experience new and wonderful things.

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9. I commit that while in Panama, I will be a willing servant not only for my team members but also for those in the community. I expect that as I work alongside others, I will discover what it means to be a servant leader.
10. I commit that I will be in relationship with all of my various team members, not just a chosen few. I expect that as I widen my social network beyond my core group of friends that I will gain a deeper appreciation of the diversity of the gifts and talents that God has granted us all.
11. I commit that I will respect other team members' boundaries. I expect that as I treat others the way that they wish to be treated, that I will become more sensitive to other people's needs.
12. I commit that while in Panama, I will follow the instructions of Jeff, the other adult leaders, and staff members of Merge Ministries. I expect that by being responsible, others will learn that they can depend on me.

I also understand that ...

... If, at any time, I feel that I am struggling with these commitments that I will speak with Jeff about my feelings.

... Any actions that could be construed as illegal, immoral, or unethical while in Panama will result in my immediate return to Novato at my own cost.

... All financial obligations will be met by the dates required.

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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## International Mission Trip Starting Timeline This is a working document!

**October 15<sup>th</sup> First Meeting \$75 Refundable deposit due.**

**October 29<sup>th</sup> eScrip Mission Fundraiser begins**

**November 26<sup>th</sup> eScrip Fundraiser due**

**December 3<sup>rd</sup> \$75 Non-Refundable Deposits are due (\$150 total deposits to date)**

**January 7<sup>th</sup> - Mission Team Meeting \$200 due 10:15am** (maybe someone could design our t-shirt and take that project on) (\$350 total deposits to date) Copies of passport or copy of passport application required.

**February 11<sup>th</sup> Valentine's Day (inspired) Bake Sale** (*Bring your baked goods to the church before 10am and volunteer to sell, sell, sell*) \*pending Session fundraiser approval

**March 2-4<sup>th</sup> Love Of God Retreat**

**March 11<sup>th</sup> - Mission Team Meeting- 10:15am \$200 due** (\$550 total deposits to date)

**April 8<sup>th</sup> - Social Fellowship Mixers will begin** (*sign up to be the student rep on the patio with David Mink*)

**April 21<sup>st</sup> - Vendor Sale (Set up on 20<sup>th</sup>)**

**May/June- Mother's Day and Graduation eScrip Gift Card Sales!**

**TENTATIVE! May 13<sup>th</sup>—Mission Team Training- 10:30-2:30pm—**This weekend will be our weekend with Dale from Merge to do training: check in see how finances are going, getting paper work organized, making sure everyone has passports in hand, working on letters of permission to leave the country and getting those notarized, making sure that if we need to have shots we are working on that.

**June 10<sup>th</sup>—remaining balances due (to be determined based on fundraiser).**

**July 4<sup>th</sup> Buckaroo Breakfast Servers**

**July 8<sup>th</sup> (or June 24)- Team Commissioning at the 10am service.**

**Night Before the Trip – Dinner and Bag Check In (Mandatory for all team members, families welcome too)**

**Mission Trip ~ July 9<sup>th</sup> – Returning July 16<sup>th</sup>**