PACE International
A PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE
Peru’s Challenge – Peru
PERU’S CHALLENGE

Peru’s Challenge works with volunteers to create opportunities for children and communities living in the Andes of Peru, focused in and around Cusco. Since October 2003, when the program started, Peru’s Challenge has worked with four different communities, supporting more than 1000 families and started to educate over 600 children. The population of communities they support are essentially indigenous, of Quechua origin, generally lacking formal education and very malnourished.

Before starting any project, Peru’s Challenge has lengthy discussions with all members of the community to ascertain what it is they require and how they can work as a team to meet these needs. Throughout the project, the community is involved in all decisions and plans so the project and community can become self-sustaining for years to come.

Macquarie University and Australian Volunteers International have developed a 3 year plan with Peru’s Challenge to work in the community of Quilla Huata. The plan is based around three key themes:

- **Education** – construction of classrooms and school facilities and conducting classes in health, English, sports and arts for student well-being & development;
- **Sustainable Livelihoods** – construction of community workshops, classes in English & business education for adults, and support for management of community income projects; and
- **Health** – health campaigns, health education, survey tools and data collection and analysis.

The partnership with Peru’s Challenge is based on bi-annual project intakes, in June and January, of multi-disciplinary teams (10-15 people) from Macquarie University and has been centred around community identified needs and priorities to contribute to the community of Quilla Huata in a positive and sustainable way.
Peru’s Challenge is based in Cusco and Macquarie students work in the community of Quilla Huata. Your program will be a mixture of education, construction, sustainable livelihoods and, if required, contributing to the organisational capacity of Peru’s Challenge through internship opportunities.

**BENEFITS OF THE PROGRAM**

- Be part of a reciprocal learning experience that will broaden your perspective
- Enhance your employability as you build on your problem-solving, communication and leadership skills
- Learn the language and immerse yourself in the culture
- Work alongside locals and learn from those who strengthen community based initiatives
- Appreciate community development
- Be part of a diverse team and meet friends from different nationalities and degrees
- Go through a full learning cycle from pre-departure sessions to re-entry activities
- Receive a Macquarie University Certificate upon completion of the program

“To be able to be part of a strong, united and motivated Macquarie University team has enabled us all to contribute so effectively to the community of Quilla Huata. It was remarkable to see what little people power can achieve in one month. The joy and satisfaction that is shared with the community and the team at the completion makes the pain of wheelbarrowing mud bricks for days so worthwhile.”

Amelia Stojevski, Peru Program Participant July 2010
Accommodation
Accommodation in Cusco will be in shared rooms in a Volunteer House. Female/male participants will be placed in different rooms.

Food
Peru is famous throughout South America for its food. As a major fishing nation, fish is abundant, and prepared with imagination. The primary ingredients found in nearly every Peruvian dish are rice, potatoes, chicken, pork, beef and fish. Most of these meals include one of the different kind of ‘aji’ or Peruvian hot pepper.

Language
Spanish and Quechua are the predominant languages in Peru, with a small proportion of the population conversant in English. Spanish language training will be provided as part of the program. Participants are also strongly encouraged to practice basic language skills prior to departure.

Climate
Cusco’s climate is generally dry and temperate. There are two defined seasons; dry season lasting from April to October, and wet season from November to March. Days are usually sunny and nights are cold. Wet season usually sees occasional short, sharp showers during the day and night.

APPLICATIONS & FURTHER INFORMATION
Applications are open to all Macquarie University students who meet the selection criteria and who apply by the closing date. The application process, dates and forms will be available at the following link: www.international.mq.edu.au/paceinternational

Participants will be selected based on their responses in the Application Form and an interview.

Further information & enquiries:
Email: paceinternational@mq.edu.au
Phone: 02 9850 9927

PACE International is jointly managed by Macquarie University and Australian Volunteers International. PACE International offers students a unique opportunity to actively contribute to more just, inclusive and sustainable societies through activities with communities and organisations overseas.