

The Voluntourism Debate, hosted by NUI Galway Literary & Debating Society

"This House Believes That short term unskilled volunteering in developing countries does more harm than good"

In association with ALIVE, The NUI Galway Literary & Debating Society will be hosting a debate on the subject of Voluntourism at 7pm on Thursday February 20th in the Kirwan Lecture Theatre on the main Arts Concourse of NUI Galway.

This weeks debate concerns the merits and potential harms of individuals volunteering unskilled labour in developing countries. While this type of volunteering raises awareness of issues, it can also exploit projects as a volunteering holiday with the poverty of others used as a tourist attraction. Volunteers leave with a feeling that they've made a difference to the world but did the money they spent on getting there possibly have the potential to do more good? With expert speakers Lit'n'Deb wishes to argue all sides of this growing movement to volunteering abroad.

Speakers in proposition are Daniela Papi and Harold Goodwin.

Daniela spent six years living in Cambodia where she founded PEPY, a youth leadership and education organization, and PEPY Tours, a development education travel company. PEPY Tours, which started as a "voluntourism" organization, is now a leading advocate in the shift from service to learning travel and Daniela blogs frequently about this and other topics through her blog, "Lessons I Learned".

Dr Harold Goodwin has worked on 4 continents with local communities, their governments and the inbound and outbound tourism industry. Harold researches on tourism, local economic development and poverty reduction, conservation and responsible tourism and teaches Masters and PhD students. as well as the industry, local communities, governments, and conservationists. Harold also undertakes consultancy and evaluations for companies, NGOs, governments, and international organisations.

Speakers in Opposition are Janet Horner and David Clemmons.

David Clemmons, Founder of VolunTourism.org, is currently residing in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia. He is working with Grupo Nacional de Trabajo para Participacion (GNTP.org) and its Team members to: 1) explore the potential of voluntourism in Bolivia, 2) map official development & private development assistance projects, as well as tourism, throughout the country, and 3) develop training programs for tourism schools in Bolivia.

Janet Horner is the Information and Support Project Officer for Comhlámh and Irish Association of Development Workers and Volunteers. Janet has also worked with Suas and S.A.L.V.E. International. S.A.L.V.E. is a small, recently established NGO based in Jinja Uganda whose mission is to help children living on the streets of Jinja to obtain an education and a secure living environment.

As always, all are welcome to attend and as usual the evening will begin with Private Members Time, where any member may raise a motion to be discussed by the house. Following the main debate, speakers will have the chance to have their voices heard. After the debate finishes we'll be heading to Murty Rabbittes for fun times and food.

So join us in the Kirwan Theatre on the Arts Science Concourse this Thursday at 7pm for the motion that "This House Believes That short term unskilled volunteering in developing countries does more harm