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The idea of volunteering internationally first dawned on me when I learned about the Peace Corps in my 6th grade history class while studying President Kennedy. I decided that day that I wanted to change the world, seek adventure, and see new places. But I also wanted to help people in the process. I fully support the mission of WorldTeach. I believe that education is the key to ending poverty. Understanding the underlying roots and causes of poverty allows us to contemplate means of solving these issues at the core. Literacy and math are also essential to success; they are fundamental in all aspects of life and can be used limitlessly.

WorldTeach is an excellent program that allows you to keep your independence while having a strong support group on site. The orientation made my adjustment to a completely new environment so much easier and the network of WorldTeach volunteers became not just my support, but some of my closest friends. WorldTeach provided me with airfare, housing, a living stipend, and a teaching site, but also allowed me to live my own life outside of my teaching role. WorldTeach gave me an opportunity to make a difference and see concrete changes before my eyes halfway across the world in a place I had never even heard of before I applied!

My students had raved for weeks that they wanted to take me up the mountain behind school. Finally, we set a date and 5 of my students along with 5 other kids from the village and I started the trek. It took about 3 hours to reach the top, with stops to play in the caves and on the WWII Japanese canons along the way. When we reached the top, I could see almost the entire coral reef that surrounds the lagoon- the view was breathtaking. We lay underneath a tree drinking coconuts and playing games for hours before heading back down. The entire hike was gorgeous, the Japanese war craft was incredible, and I loved getting to spend time with my students outside of a school setting.