

GUATEMALA MISSIONS

2024 SOCCER CAMPS



VOLUNTEER MISSION PACKET

Dear soccer camp volunteers and leaders,

On behalf of our staff and board of directors, welcome! We're excited about your interest in Champions in Action and our summer soccer camps for Guatemalan youth. This will be a life-changing experience for them—and for you as well.

This packet is designed to help you understand more about Champions in Action and our summer mission trips. It's divided into two sections. The first will give you an idea of who we are, what we do, and what a mission trip with us is like. The second will tell you how to begin preparing once you've decided to come. Please read through this information, and don't forget to sign up for your camp session online at **www.championsinaction.org/camp**

If you have any questions between now and your trip, don't hesitate to get in touch with your team leader (if applicable) or me. This will be another great summer in Guatemala, and we're excited to have you along!

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www.championsinaction.org

PROLOGUE

It was a November afternoon in 2010, and we were arriving at, of all places, a beach in northeast Guatemala.

We had brought some others with us too. 100 Guatemalan boys, to be specific. Teenagers. From the inner city. We had the idea that we were going to spend six days here next to the beach — you know, like, summer camp style. The plan was to play soccer with these boys, share the gospel with them, and equip a group of Guatemalan young men to be their mentors for a whole year afterward.

We must have seemed insane to anyone who was paying attention. This was our first time doing any sort of camp. We were just a small group of Guatemalan and American volunteers with some soccer balls, some seed funding, 501(c)(3) status, and a wild dream: What if we used soccer to connect disadvantaged kids to Christian mentors from within their own communities? What if a generation of mentors invested themselves in helping a generation of youth — many of whom lack the positive influence of fathers and mothers — to make good decisions, pursue their own dreams, and follow Jesus Christ?

That was the vision God showed us — wild and uncertain, big and exciting. So we stepped out of the boat, trusting that he would be faithful and praying that our dreams might soon become real.

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Since that first little camp back in 2010, over 3,300 children and teens have come through our program, and dozens of young men and women have been their mentors — living out Christian leadership in a tangible, practical way.

The result? Over 155,000 — and counting — of mentorship hours invested in the youth of Guatemala.

Mentors have stepped up and been trained. Kids have put their faith in Jesus Christ and been baptized. Soccer has provided a platform for long-lasting discipling relationships. Fewer youth are losing their lives to senseless violence. More are learning the values that soccer teaches and developing friendships with Christian role models.

As the COVID-19 pandemic took 2020 and 2021 by storm, Champions in Action was uniquely poised to take swift action to support the vulnerable families within our programs. Our mentors had established relationships within the communities, and with the families, allowing them to serve as the hands and feet of our Lord. Through this experience, our program evolved to enable even more long-term impact through our mentor and youth relationships. Our program now encompasses a 6 year mentorship pipeline - focused around our core mentorship through soccer programming - and further supported by other holistic support programs, like food support, a full time social worker and compassion funds, amongst other programs. We continue to see, beyond a shadow of doubt, that the Lord has blessed Champions in Action. The wild dreams that we prayed circles around years ago are now coming true. Our King has been faithful.

And this we earnestly believe: He's not finished — and neither are we.

The numbers tell us a lot about the opportunities ahead. The population of Guatemala is nearly 18 million people, and of those, half are under the age of 18. Over 3,200,000 people live in or around Guatemala City alone. Of those, hundreds of thousands are disadvantaged inner-city youth whose lives could be transformed by the presence of role models.

Considering the sobering statistics of violence, homicide, abuse, malnutrition and mass emigration in Guatemala, you might say that these population figures are overwhelming, and in a sense, you'd be right. But we're looking at things a little differently. What we see in the numbers are millions of opportunities.

We are certain that an investment in youth can change a nation from the inside out.

The wild dreams that we prayed circles around years ago
are now coming true. Our King has been faithful.

Our vision is to see a generation empowered — by the gospel of Jesus Christ, mentoring and soccer — to transform themselves, their families, their communities and their nation. By God's grace and providence, it's already happening. Violence, addiction and poverty are giving way to discipleship, hope and opportunity. Lives are being transformed.

Are you ready to be part of this? New opportunities are in front of us — starting now.



BOYS CAMP 2023 VIDEO*

WHAT TO EXPECT

part one — about the trip

THE BASICS

When are this year's camps?

There are two camps in 2024. The first camp is **June 21st-30th**, and the second is July **12th-21st**. Volunteers must arrive in Guatemala on that **Friday** (i.e., June 21 or July 12). Departure should be scheduled for the last Sunday of the trip (i.e June 30 or July 21). Please see the "Before & After Camp" page later in this packet.

Where is this year's camp?

Camps take place at El Faro, a Christian retreat center six hours northeast of Guatemala City, halfway between the seaside towns of Livingston and Puerto Barrios.

How much does it cost?

\$950, plus the cost of airfare. That covers a full day of onboarding a training the day before leaving for camp; transportation to and from the Guatemala City airport; hotel, transportation and meals in the city immediately before and after camp; transportation by charter bus to and from camp; food and lodging at camp; **and a camp scholarship for TWO youth or mentors in Guatemala.**

Okay, but I don't speak Spanish...

No problem! Some of our staff are bilingual, and your group will have a translator at all times so that you can communicate with mentors and kids.

...Or play soccer.

That's fine too! There's a place for everyone to serve; don't worry.

ABOUT CHAMPIONS IN ACTION



Champions in Action is a Christian nonprofit organization and ministry in Guatemala. We connect disadvantaged youth to life-changing mentors through the gospel of Jesus Christ and soccer.

Every summer, Champions in Action hosts soccer camps where adult Christian mentors connect with disadvantaged youth from the “red zones” of Guatemala—marginalized inner-city areas where father figures and positive adult influences are scarce, and where poverty, gangs, violent crime, broken families, drugs and alcohol abuse are realities that many children see.

Throughout the world, soccer transcends lines of class, gender, ethnicity, geography, language, and age, and it brings people together like few other things can. Within our program, the mentors and kids are on a **six year mentorship** journey together. Camp is the mid-point of the mentorship pipeline. At camp, mentors spend a week coaching their kids in soccer, and at the same time, they share the gospel and strengthen relationships.

During each camp, short-term volunteers have teamed up with mentors to make long-term impacts in kids’ lives. And this summer, it’ll all happen again.

That’s where you come in.

THE 6 YEAR MENTORSHIP PIPELINE

In 2022, Champions in Action transitioned its mentorship program to a six year mentorship pipeline.

In the first two years of our program, the kids are 12 and 13 and getting acclimated to soccer and having a full-time mentor. They play in our soccer league, learn the sport, get used to working as a team and begin to build trust with their mentor. This is the prevention stage: getting kids involved with our program and connected with a positive mentor, before the gangs - and bad influences - can take root.

By 14, the kids are being pulled in various directions – by gangs, poor influences, lack of access to education and the weight of the reality of their home lives and communities. In this phase, our mentors ‘do battle’ with the kids and are in the trenches of life with them. During these two years, kids have the opportunity to attend our summer camp, providing that ‘line in the sand’ type experience for them. Half of the teams attend camp when they are 14, and the other half when they are 15.

Our oldest division is focused around our 16 and 17 year olds. This phase of our program prepares the kids to flourish once they leave the Champions in Action mentorship program. We prepare the kids to be active and engaged citizens, ready to positively contribute to their families and communities. They have the opportunity to join our professional skills building program, gaining internship experience, and prepare emotionally and spiritually to enter the adult world, with all its complexities.





ON MISSION AT CAMP

Champions in Action soccer camps are a different kind of summer mission trip. We don't expect our volunteers to come in and fix the problems existing in the country. You are less camp counselor and more youth and mentor cheerleader. Camps are a relational ministry, targeted at helping to encourage and empower our mentors and youth in their relationship together. As a volunteer, you'll work alongside mentors, supporting them as they coach kids in sports, life and faith.

Volunteers are placed in a group with a mentor and his or her ten campers for the whole week. You'll cheer kids on during their soccer matches, eat meals with them, have fun with them at free time, and worship with them at evening chapel. Volunteers also serve behind the scenes on teams in charge of things like activities set-up, coaching, media, worship, etc.

The camp week is all about loving the mentors and kids through words and actions. It makes an impact that can change their lives—and maybe yours too.

CHANGE OF SPACE, CHANGE OF PACE

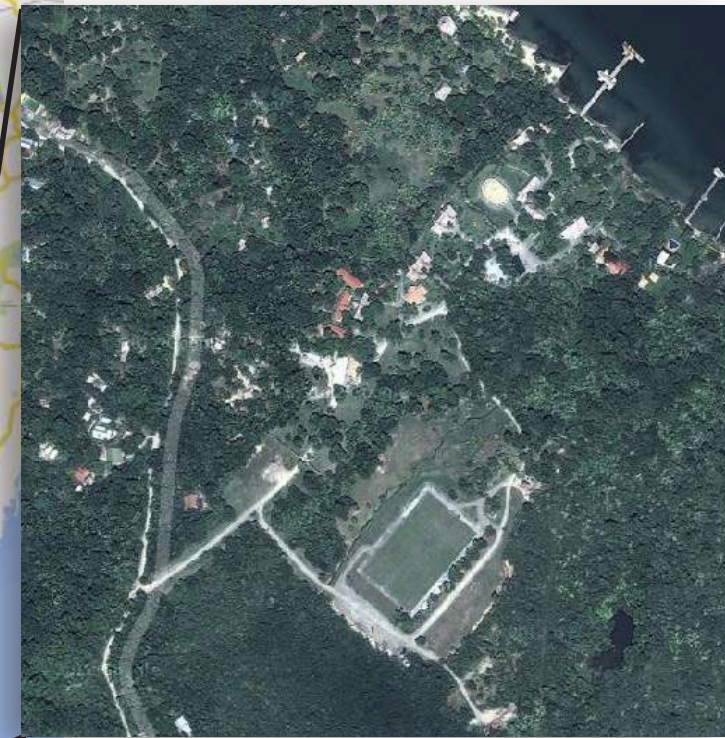
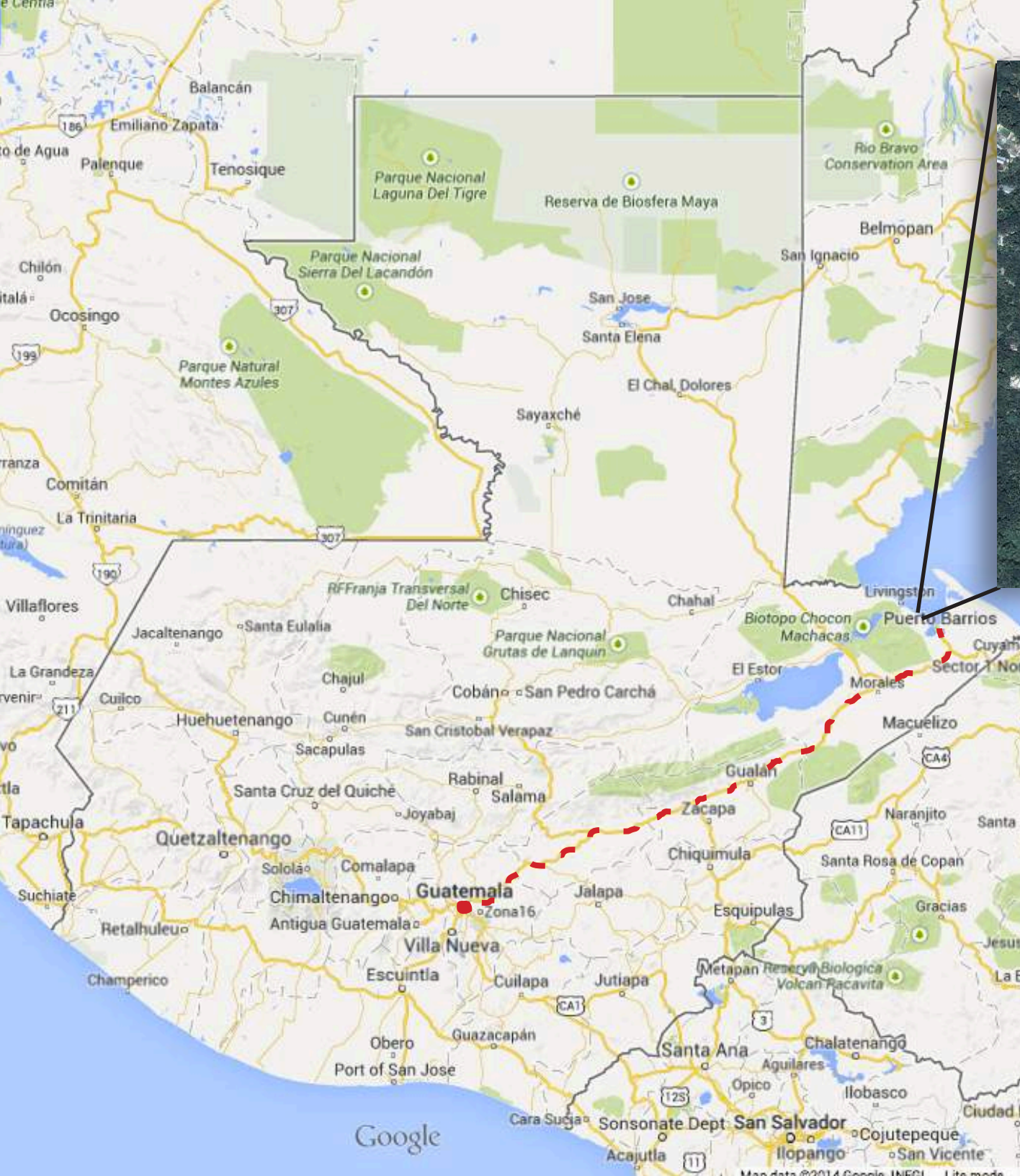
For camp, we all head out to a Christian retreat center six hours northeast of Guatemala City, right on the coast.

It's a quiet, beautiful place, perfect for reflection and for talking with God. In a way, camps are like a mission trip with a retreat-style experience built in. Volunteers will take time to look at scripture in the mornings and share stories in the evenings about what God is doing in the hearts of campers.

For volunteers and youth alike, the trip is purposely designed to create a change in your perspective and normal routine. We must get comfortable with being uncomfortable so that God can work in our hearts and minds.

For the youth, camp is designed to break the kids down, so that we can build them back up in who God says they are. Because of this, each day is intentionally filled to the brim. Get ready! It's a crazy week, but one filled with so much hope and transformation.





GETTING THERE

Volunteers arrive in Guatemala City, in the south-central part of the country. From there, we'll take buses (and a few boats) to camp, which is on the northeastern coast, in between Livingston and Puerto Barrios.

TRIP SCHEDULE

SAMPLE TRIP ITINERARY

Friday

Volunteers arrive in Guatemala
Dinner and hotel

Saturday

Orientation with Champions in Action staff
Historical Reflection
Trauma Training
Team breakout sessions

Sunday

Meet kids, load buses, travel to camp
Arrive at camp in early afternoon, settle in,
begin camp

Monday-Thursday

Camp

Friday

Closing activities, pack up
Leave camp by morning
Arrive in Guatemala City in the evening
Dinner and return to hotel

Saturday

Possible trip to Antigua or other activities
Dinner together in the city

Sunday

Most volunteers leave by morning

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE AT CAMP

6:00 - Physical training and warm up
7:15 - Volunteer team devotional time
8:00 - Breakfast
8:45 - Share a testimony, group announcements
9:30 - Soccer drills and training
12:00 - Free time; beach time for kids and mentors
1:00 - Lunch, share a testimony
2:30 - Soccer games
6:00 - Free time; beach time for U.S. team
7:00 - Dinner
8:00 - Chapel
10:00 - Volunteer team debrief
11:00 - Get some sleep

* - Weekly and daily schedules sometimes change without notice. These example schedules are based on past camps.



TIMELINE TO PREPARE

Fall 2023 - February 2024

Read mission packet.

Sign up for camp online.

Pay \$150 deposit.

Begin U.S. passport application.

March - April

Research and book flights as soon as possible.

Email flight itineraries to us.

Read Champions in Action volunteer guide.

Deposit due to Champions in Action (\$400 per individual).

Complete necessary forms.

Receive U.S. passport.

May

Pay final \$400 of camp fee (\$950 total per individual). All flights should be booked + forms submitted.

1-2 weeks before

Final preparations and information distribution. Review volunteer handbook and rules again.

Team and group assignments.

***Note About Passports**

Start the process early! You can apply for a U.S. passport online at **www.travel.state.gov**. If you already have a passport, make certain that, by the time of your trip, it will still have at least six months before it expires. Otherwise, your airline won't let you board your flight.

NEXT STEPS

1. Engage in a heartfelt conversation with your loved ones. Sharing your excitement and plans for potential international travel can not only bring joy but also provide an opportunity for valuable input and support.
2. As you talk with friends and family about your summer mission trip, encourage them to join you. We're always looking for people who love the Lord and love kids to come serve at our camps.
3. Sign up Online at **www.championsinaction.org/camp**. **All volunteers must sign up for their camp session Online.** After we receive your sign-up form, we'll get in touch with you (or your team leader).
4. Ensure that you have a valid passport whose expiration date falls at least six months **after** your arrival in Guatemala. Double check your passport's expiration date. Passports **MUST** be valid for at least six months after your arrival in Guatemala. Learn how to apply for (or renew) a passport at <http://travel.state.gov/>.
5. Pay your \$150 camp fee deposit. See "[Financials & Fundraising](#)" page later in this packet.
6. Search for round-trip flights to Guatemala City (GUA). Volunteers **MUST** arrive in Guatemala on Friday or via red-eye early Saturday morning. Consult with us (or your team leader) BEFORE booking your airfare and forward your itinerary to us once you do so.



HOW TO PREPARE

part two — getting yourself ready

MORE ABOUT CAMP

We're excited that you'll be with us for camp! Regardless of where you're from, how old you are, or what your faith story is, the Champions in Action soccer camp is an experience you'll never forget.

The kids at camp will be excited too. Most have never interacted with "norteamericanos" in real life. So don't be surprised if they're fascinated with you before you even say a word. From their point of view, people from another country have come to spend a week playing soccer with them! That's special because, although some come from homes where adults love them and take care of them, others come from homes where their family life is in shambles and their circumstances are rough. For some kids, camp will be the first time that loving adults purposefully invest in them. See the opportunity for ministry here?

As a missionary at camp, your role is to work alongside and support mentors; they are the primary ministers who will continue to disciple the kids long after you've returned home. Still, your interactions with the kids are valuable and important! Your job at camp is to love and serve the campers and mentors—in person, in prayer, and behind the scenes. Even if you speak no Spanish at all, remember that some things—a smile, a high-five, a hug, or even just being silly together—transcend language barriers. If you do want to say something, lots of bilingual people will be at camp, so don't be afraid to ask for help.



PRAYER & SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Remember that prayer is the single most important thing we'll do as we prepare for this summer's camps. **We encourage you to pray daily for the mentors and their kids, starting today.** Through prayer, we submit to God's will and place our ministry in his hands.

We also know that when we pray together, Jesus is in our midst (Matt. 18:20), so we encourage you to meet with other camp missionaries and spend time praying with them and getting to know them. (Our staff will help you connect with others in your area who are coming to camp this summer.) We've seen it over and over every year: when volunteers get to know one another and pray together before leaving home, it makes a difference once they get to the camp.

- Pray that God would begin working now in the hearts of campers, opening their hearts to the truths that they'll hear at camp. Pray that they would invite Jesus into their lives if they haven't already.
- Pray for the mentors, that God would give them hearts of boldness, wisdom, and endurance as they begin their year-long ministry.
- Pray for those who will be speaking from God's word during evening chapel.
- Pray for everyone's safety—before, during, and after camp.
- Pray for yourself, that God would give you boldness and energy, and prepare you to be an ambassador of Christ's kingdom and gospel.



SHARING TESTIMONIES

During camp, we invite volunteers to share their testimonies (through a translator) in front of the whole group, if they would like to.

All Christians have a story of how they came to know and put their faith in Jesus Christ. By telling others how God brought you from darkness into light, we're telling them about who Jesus is and how he transforms us from the inside out.

People in the developing world sometimes assume that Americans, because we have more material possessions, are more "blessed" and free from sadness, struggle and pain. Testimony sharing is a great way of showing that God is constantly at work restoring broken people—in all parts of the world.

Here are some pointers to help you develop your testimony so that it's concise and understandable.

1. Recall the events and experiences that led you to the point in your life where you were willing to give your life to Jesus.
2. Recall the people who were significant. Who were your influences when you made this decision?
3. When did you make this decision? What thoughts and feelings did you have at the time?
4. What was the evidence that a spiritual transformation/rebirth took place in your life? Did you regain hope, or find joy in spite of life's circumstances? Did you become more loving toward friends and family? Tell us how your life began to change. Tell us what the cost has been to follow Jesus and how he is better than anything you left behind.



FINANCIALS & FUNDRAISING

PAYING FOR CAMP

By the time you arrive in Guatemala, you must pay the full \$950 camp fee to Champions in Action. The first \$150 is due as an initial deposit, and to reserve your space, at the time you sign up for the trip. The deposit is non-refundable and will exclusively go towards youth programs should you be unable to attend camp. Your spot at camp is not reserved until the initial deposit is received. The next \$400 is due by the middle of April. The final \$350 is due by the end of May.

To make payments, you (or those who are providing support for you) may mail checks to us at: **Champions in Action, P.O. Box 898, Round Rock, Texas 78680**. Checks should include “[your name] - Camp Fee” in the memo line. (If you are coming as part of a church group, please follow the payment instructions given by your trip leader. You might need to submit payments through your church.) Payment to our Texas office is strongly preferred as the best way to submit camp payments. But we are able to accept camp payments online if needed. Please note, there will be an additional fee to cover the processing costs for the card.

Finally, because Champions in Action is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, contributions toward your camp fee will be tax-deductible.

FUNDRAISING

Don't let cost keep you from attending! If finances are a concern, we encourage you to tap into your network and raise funds to cover the cost of your service in Guatemala. One of the most tried-and-true ways to start raising funds is to send a support letter. It's easier than you think:

1. Pray and brainstorm to think of all the people who are family, friends, co-workers, etc. Be sure to include friends of your parents. Consider everyone who cares about you and cares about people.
2. Draft a letter about the mission trip and what you'll be doing in Guatemala. Then print out copies. Include your signature and a very short, personalized note to the recipient. If you have time, you might even consider writing your letters by hand; they're sure to stand out from all the mass-printed mail. Remember: the more you personalize your letter, the more likely it is that a person will support you.
3. In the envelopes you send, include a return envelope with your address (or Champions in Action's address) on it.
4. Pray that God moves the hearts of those to whom you send letters, that they might give generously toward the mission you've been called on. Depending on how successful your fundraising is, you might even be able to share your overflow funds with some of the other missionaries.
5. Once you return from Guatemala, be sure to thank your donors—perhaps just a brief note that shares what God did in you and through you, plus a picture of you with the kids and mentors in your group.

PRECAUTIONS

While Guatemala does have a higher rate of crime and violence, the dangers tend to be concentrated in localized areas. Most areas are quite safe during the day, especially for large groups like ours. While you're with Champions in Action in Guatemala, we take precautions to keep volunteers safe and healthy. At camp, we maintain a medical team to handle minor emergencies (e.g. upset stomach, heat exhaustion, sports injuries, etc), and we'll work with reliable local doctors for any larger problems. The following are our recommendations for ensuring that you stay safe, healthy, and happy throughout your trip.

REGISTER WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT

The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program is a free service provided by the U.S. Department of State for Americans visiting other countries. Visit <http://step.state.gov/step/> and enter information about your trip so that the U.S. Embassy can assist you in the event that there's some emergency.

ENSURE YOU'RE INSURED

Call your primary health insurance provider, tell them you're going to Guatemala, and ask about short-term international coverage. If your primary insurance can't provide coverage, consider purchasing travelers insurance. One option you can check out is www.volunteercard.com.

VACCINATIONS

We advise you to talk with your doctor about getting vaccinations. Vaccinations aren't a hard requirement for this trip, but you may choose to get shots for hepatitis A and typhoid to further minimize the risk of contracting one or the other. You should already have your routine vaccinations, like measles, polio, chicken pox, and the like. If not, then talk to your doctor about getting them. Again, you should follow your doctor's advice, but for most people, vaccinations for malaria, rabies, and hepatitis B generally aren't necessary. COVID-19 vaccinations are encouraged as an

extra layer of protection, but are not required.

FOOD AND WATER

We'll do our part to provide healthy, enjoyable meals during the trip. You can help yourself stay well by: 1) washing your hands before every meal, 2) not drinking or brushing your teeth with tap water (bottled water will be abundant both in the city and at camp), and 3) eating with the rest of the group. If you're going to be adventurous and eat elsewhere while we're in the city, use discretion; it's at your own risk.

WEATHER

The sunshine and the humidity at camp are intense, and they'll mess you up if you don't stay a step ahead. Bring a hat, sunglasses, and/or sunscreen and use them as necessary. Most importantly, drink LOTS of water. Keeping yourself hydrated is the best way to prevent fatigue and heat exhaustion, so bring a refillable water bottle and use it constantly (you can also bring Gatorade powder or concentrate if you'd like).

COVID-19

COVID-19 is still actively present in the country. Champions in Action is taking necessary steps to ensure we develop proper health protocols to keep you, the kids, mentors and our staff safe. Rapid tests will be available, for a fee, while at the camp facility if needed.

Guatemala has dropped all COVID entry requirements. US citizens only need to enter with a valid passport. Similarly, the US has also dropped all testing and COVID entry requirements upon re-entry to the United States.

BEFORE & AFTER CAMP

Volunteers are responsible for selecting and purchasing their airfare from the U.S. to Guatemala and back. Spirit, Aeromexico, American, United, Delta, and other airlines all have daily flights to Guatemala City. (If you're coming as part of a group, follow your team leader's instructions.)

Saturday we begin an onboarding and training session in the morning and we return to the city Friday night. **Volunteers must schedule their arrival flight for the Friday.** If you must arrive on Saturday, please schedule an early morning arrival via a red-eye. For departures, volunteers generally leave the Sunday after camp ends. Please consult with us before purchasing flights.

We usually schedule some group activities for our time in Guatemala City during the days immediately after camp. We won't schedule our 2024 activities until closer to camp, but here are some of the things we've done in the past...

- Tours of Guatemala City, including the national cemetery and various neighborhoods where our kids live.
- Day trips to Antigua, a colonial town 45 minutes west of the city that attracts tourists from around the world.
- Visiting a local community and playing games with the kids.

Additionally, you're welcome to schedule your own travels in Guatemala after camp! However, our staff will not be able to help you coordinate transportation and accommodations after Sunday morning. Please note that Champions in Action will only cover the expense of your hotel stay for the Friday and Saturday nights immediately before camp begins, and likewise, immediately after camp ends. Champions in Action will also cover the expense of your meals with the group during this time. Please bring along extra money if you'd like to purchase snacks or handmade crafts and other souvenirs at the markets in Antigua or Guatemala City.

TRAVEL SAVVY

Arrive at your airport in the U.S., passport in hand, at **least** two hours before your departure. Please do not miss your flight.

Guatemala has an electronic Regional Traveler Affidavit, which may be completed from any electronic device with internet access. We recommend that you fill it out at least 5 hours before your flight to avoid any difficulty at the airport. Click on the link **Regional Traveler Affidavit**.

When filling out the form, follow these tips:

- When asked for arrival or departure customs, answer: *La Aurora*, which is the national airport.
- In any fields that ask for your country or nationality, select "*Estados Unidos*" which indicates United States of America.

When you arrive at the Guatemala airport, get off the plane, follow everyone else. Bathrooms can be found in the hallway after deplaning and before going downstairs to immigration. Continue downstairs to immigration, get your passport stamped and claim your baggage. Don't exchange any money (*you will get an unfavorable rate*). Walk outside to the pick-up area and look for Champions in Action staff. Once you're outside, someone will probably offer to help you with your bags. Politely decline. Let no one besides you touch your bags.

While traveling abroad, your passport is your most important possession. Don't carry it out in the open, don't leave it unsecured, don't lose it. To a thief, it's worth thousands of dollars on the black market. To you, it's required to get back out of Guatemala.

TRAVELING WITH A MINOR

Human trafficking continues to be a severe issue in Guatemala. In an effort to cut the amount of trafficking occurring in Guatemala, the country has begun strictly reviewing the movement of all minors as they leave the country.

In this effort, our teams who may be traveling with minors - either minors who travel alone, within a group, or with only one of their parents/legal guardians - could be impacted and require additional paperwork.

In the case of traveling with a minor (neither biological parent on the trip) or one parent traveling with their child, an additional notarized document is needed. The parent(s) not traveling with the child must prepare a sworn document, that is notarized, giving permission for the minor to travel under the supervision of an adult guardian on the trip or giving full rights to the one parent accompanying the minor on the trip. If you do not have the documentation, immigration authorities will not allow the minor and parent to leave Guatemala. Please contact our staff for specific details if traveling with minors.

The requirements sound much more daunting than what they really are. Our staff is very experienced in navigating these requirements and can help with sample documents.



PACKING

Here's a list of items (below) that you might consider packing. Some things are important (we'll list them in **bold**), but most are either recommended or optional. At camp, the weather will be sunny, very humid, and hot (highs in the 80s or 90s Fahrenheit), with rain in the evenings. In and around the city, expect lower humidity and lower temperatures (lows in the 50s or 60s, and highs in the 70s or 80s), with rain in the afternoons and evenings. Please respect the local customs by packing attire that is modest and appropriate for a youth camp. You'll receive a more detailed dress code later.

As a rule of thumb, don't bring anything to Guatemala that is especially valuable (exceptions might include cameras and music equipment). Your

possessions are your responsibility; Champions in Action isn't responsible for lost or stolen property. We do encourage you to bring some extra cash, just in case. Also, there is a small snack bar at camp that sells treats and soft drinks during afternoon free time. During the trip, you might have an opportunity to buy souvenirs.

Please don't overpack. Please keep suitcases to one large 'checked bag' and a carry on size bag (in addition to your personal items), unless bringing donations or you have received special permission. Space is limited. If you're staying in Guatemala for a while to travel after camp, your hotel/hostel can help you find a place to wash laundry.

Passport

Copy of insurance information

Cash, plus debit or credit card (Call your bank and tell them you'll be traveling.)

Athletic shoes

Athletic shorts for each day of camp

T-shirts for each day of camp

Socks and undergarments

Soccer cleats and shin guards

Sweatshirt and/or pants for evenings in the city and while on the bus

Swimsuit

Sunglasses and hat

Casual clothes for the city

Light rain jacket

Small umbrella

Small pillow and twin sheets

Note: Depending on the sex of the camp, pillows and sheets may be provided for some. We will pass along more information before camp.

Bathroom toiletries (shampoo, deodorant, toothbrush, etc)

Bath towel and/or beach towel

Shower shoes (flip flops)

Non-aerosol insect repellent

Sunscreen

mini laundry detergent pack and/or febreze to freshen up team jersey

Bible, pens, journal, notebook Backpack

Small flashlight or headlamp

Camera (with extra batteries)

Watch or alarm clock

light rain jacket

Dry Gatorade

Small snacks for in between meals

Refillable water bottle

Antibiotic (e.g. Cipro; follow your doctor's recommendation)

Imodium A-D (diarrhea medicine)

Anti-nausea medication

Hand sanitizer gel

Face covering (multiples)

Vitamin C supplement (e.g. Emergen-C)

Any personal prescription medication (labeled)

PRE-CAMP ONBOARDING

If you're a returning volunteer team, camp may look a little different this year. If this is your first year with us (Welcome!). We've made some improvements to our camp program based on volunteer feedback and learning over the years.

Our biggest new change is a full day of onboarding training prior to heading out to camp. We work with teens from extremely disadvantaged situations. The context in which they grow up is complicated, nuanced and extremely different from situations within the US. For that reason, we've created a three part onboarding and training curriculum for the Saturday before departing for camp. This is part of the camp experience and all volunteer should be in attendance.

Volunteers will be divided into groups based on their team assignments for the week. They will experience a historical reflection to have an overview of how red zones came about, the systemic structures in place today and the complexities around life in red zones. Furthermore, we'll be doing a trauma training breakout session. Every volunteer will participate in a 'Trauma Informed Volunteer' curriculum in preparation for the camp week, in order to be best equipped to listen, process and react to stories you may hear. And the final session of our onboarding day will be individual team breakouts to discuss your specific team assignments, their unique issues and individualized ways to bond with the kids and get to know them.

OTHER NEW CHANGES

Based on volunteer feedback, we've made some other adjustments to camp, including a pre-packed lunch for the return trip on Friday (no more frantic sandwich making Friday morning! IYKYK).

There will also be a full-time camp nurse on staff for the entire week. If you have medical training, we'd still love to use your skills. But we will also have a trained professional full time to provide quality care to volunteers and youth/mentors, also enabling our volunteers to be fully present with their teams.

Due to our teams increasing in talent and competitiveness, we'll also be bringing in referees to supervise the afternoon games. This will enable a high-quality, fair refereeing for all teams and enables our staff to address other areas during the afternoon games.



CULTURE, ATTITUDE, ETIQUETTE

While you're in Guatemala, you're an ambassador of your community, your country, and Jesus Christ. At all times, speak and act in a way that represents the Kingdom well.

By now this shouldn't come as a shock, but most of Guatemala is unlike your community. The food is different, the streets are different, the culture is different, the churches are different.

Try to understand the reasons behind customs and habits that seem strange to you. Appreciate the differences, and try to notice the similarities. Don't make comparisons between countries, especially regarding money and material possession. A family's home and clothes might be austere (by our standard), but it doesn't mean they're living in misery. Don't show pity for those who have less than we do; really, it just insults their dignity.

Arrive in Guatemala with an open-minded attitude, and be prepared to be surprised. Trips like these have a way of moving the hearts not just of the campers, but the U.S. volunteers too. Sometimes, we Americans go overseas underestimating the people we'll serve; we expect that we're going to love them and minister to them and change their world! ... By the end of the trip, though, we find that we too have been loved, ministered to, and changed. This is our hope for you this summer.

SENSITIVITIES

Keep in mind how you might be perceived by locals. Guatemalan culture is friendly, but it's also formal. Camp is pretty relaxed, but while we're in the city before and after the trip, be sensitive to the nuances of the culture. Greet people by saying ¡buenos días! (good morning!) or ¡buenas tardes!

(good afternoon!) before you ask them a question. "Por favor" means please and "gracias" means thank you—use both as often as possible. When we're in public, don't talk and laugh loudly in groups. Ask strangers for permission before you take their picture. Smile and make eye contact. Be exceedingly polite.

The reality of the COVID pandemic in Guatemala, and any local communities we may be visiting, will likely be much different than what you have probably been experiencing in the United States. Access to health care and mass vaccinations continue to be severely limited in the country. Please be respectful - and follow - local laws. Precautions may be odd compared to the US, but please continue to be respectful and follow the wishes of your local hosts, regardless of what others may be doing around you.

GO WITH THE FLOW

While we're in Guatemala, it's not a question of if plans will unexpectedly change. It's a question of when. We always try to keep things moving as smoothly as possible, but sometimes they don't, and we appreciate your patience as we make changes on the fly. So, when you and your group find yourselves standing in the pouring rain while waiting for a late bus, or you're adjusting to a daily camp schedule that got changed at the last minute, please bear with us. At all times—before, during, and after camp—keep up a positive attitude, a servant heart, and an others-first mindset. It goes a long, long way.

STILL TO COME...

This Missions Packet isn't the end of our communication with volunteers and team leaders! You'll continue to receive communication for us in the months leading up to camp. And, we are always here to answer any questions or logistical concerns you may have. Here's a preview of what's to come:

REGISTRATION FORM

If you haven't already please complete the registration form. This (plus your \$150 deposit) is what will reserve your spot at camp. The registration form allows us to get to know you, and your experience, a little better and helps inform us with things like team divisions, job assignments and t-shirt ordering.

HEALTH AND INFORMATION FORM

All volunteers will be required to submit a health information form through the Champions in Action camp website. Through this form, we will collect information such as emergency contact info, dietary restrictions, health needs, etc.

LIABILITY RELEASE FORM

All volunteers must sign a liability waiver form (included in this packet) before arriving in Guatemala. If the volunteer is a minor, his or her parent or guardian must also give permission to participate in Champions in Action's activities.

ORGANIZATION RULES

There are a number of rules and expectations that all international volunteers are expected to abide by. They exist to keep everyone safe and to ensure that Champions in Action's ministry is not harmed in any way. These rules will include a dress code, cultural guidelines, safety guidelines, behavior

rules, and more. They can be found in volunteer handbook, which will be sent at a later date in the spring.

VOLUNTEER GUIDE

A few weeks before camp, volunteers will receive more information about daily schedules, a refresher on organization rules, social media sharing tips, cultural tips, and more.

GROUP AND TEAM ASSIGNMENTS

Champions in Action staff will work with team leaders to divide volunteers into groups with youth and mentors at camp. We will also work with team leaders to assign each volunteer to one of the work teams (e.g. soccer, water, worship, media, etc) that will serve youth and mentors behind the scenes at camp. We will be sending you your youth team assignments, as well as work teams, ahead of time so you can prepare accordingly.

CAMP PAYMENTS

Please don't forget to stay on track with your camp payments (\$150 upon reserving camp dates, \$400 in April, final \$400 by the end of May). This helps us ensure we're able to reserve everything needed for camp in a timely fashion in order to provide the best experience for you and the kids. Please note: our camps are exclusively funded via volunteers' camp fees. No annual operational funding is allocated to covering camp expenses. Champions in Action makes no profit off of camps.

SEE YOU SOON!

Thank you again for your desire to serve the Lord and serve kids in Guatemala this summer! As you prepare for camp, please get in touch with us or your team leader (if applicable) if you have questions or concerns. We look forward to seeing you soon!



www.championsinaction.org

RELEASE FORM

It must be read and signed before any volunteer can participate in Champions in Action in Guatemala. Please complete this form and return it to us at emmy@championsinaction.org.

In being permitted to participate in any way in the Guatemala Mission Trip under the auspices of Champions in Action, I acknowledge, appreciate, and agree that:

1. While details and precautions are communicated to the participant, the risk of serious injury including the potential for permanent disability and death does exist.
2. I knowingly and freely assume all such risks, both known and unknown, even if arising from the negligence of those persons released from liability below, and assume full responsibility for my participation.
3. I understand that the activities may be physically and mentally intense. I understand and will comply with all rules and regulations. If I observe any unusual or unnecessary hazard during my trip, I will make such known as soon as practical.
4. I, for myself and on behalf of my heirs, assigns, personal representative and next of kin, hereby release and hold harmless Champions in Action, its Founder, Board Members, Staff and volunteers ("Releasees"), with respect to any and all injury, disability, death, or loss or damage to person or property, whether caused by the negligence of the releasees or otherwise, except that which is the result of gross negligence and/or wanton misconduct.
5. I, for myself and on behalf of my heirs, assigns, personal representative and next of kin, hereby release and hold harmless Champions in Action, its Founder, Board Members, Staff and volunteers ("Releasees"), with respect to any COVID-19 exposure, official diagnosis and/or any subsequent medical costs as a result of a positive test result.
6. I have read this Release of Liability, fully understand its terms, understand that I have given up substantial rights by signing it, and sign freely and voluntarily without any inducement.

Signature _____ Date _____

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address, City, State, ZIP: _____

Phone Number and Email: _____

FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF PARTICIPANTS UNDER 18 YEARS OLD:

This is to certify that I, as a parent/guardian with legal responsibility for this participant, do consent and agree not only to his/her release of Champions in Action, and all other Releasees, but also to release and indemnify the Releasees from any and all liabilities incident to his/her involvement in this program, for myself, my heirs, assigns, and next of kin.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Emergency Phone Number: _____

