

International Immersion
ANUBHUTI SCHOOLS
JALGAON, INDIA
Handbook



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Introduction

The Anubhuti Schools international immersion experience takes place in Jalgaon, Maharashtra, India. These schools, founded by Shri Bahvarlal Jain, former chairman of the multinational company Jain Irrigation Systems, Ltd., provide free education to children whose families may not have the necessary resources that allow them to attend school.

Interns will act as classroom aides, assisting teachers with tasks, engaging and building relationships with students, and implementing small activities within the classroom. This is a challenging, yet immensely rewarding internship experience that will last for 6 to 8 weeks.



Contact
Information



Department of Child, Youth, & Family Studies

cyaf@unl.edu

(402) 472-2957

<https://cehs.unl.edu/cyaf/anubhuti-school-experience/>

Considering the Trip

Experience

This is a life-changing experience that allows interns to grow personally, professionally, and culturally. Each person will gain a unique perspective that they can apply in their future professions and carry with them throughout life. Not only will interns form lifelong friendships with one another after enduring an emotionally rewarding experience, but interns will also create international bonds with teachers and students they meet along the way.



Anubhuti City School Students
Celebrating the Birthday and
Departure of an Intern



Interns Learning Pottery at the
Anubhuti Residential School

Cost

The cost is typically around \$2,500 for the entirety of the trip. Costs include flights, transportation, and hotels. The CYAF Department will assist in booking travel, lodging, and transportation. Once accepted into the program, students will be asked to pay a deposit to secure their spot for the trip. Students will be asked to pay the CYAF Department via check or credit card for the final amount at a designated date.

Cultural Differences

Indian customs and practices differ from those in the United States. It is important to recognize this when considering the experience. Some cultural differences to consider include:

- Travel – India can be a difficult country to travel in. It is necessary to be flexible and patient.
- Beliefs – The Jain Hills and Anubhuti Schools practice a religion called Jainism. Interns need to understand this prior to arrival and agree to respect their traditions and beliefs.
- Diet – While working and living in the Anubhuti Schools, interns will adhere to a strict vegetarian diet. The consumption of alcohol and smoking is also not allowed.
- Living Conditions – Interns should be able to tolerate seeing and live in conditions that may be considered unsanitary by U.S. standards. Interns must also be able to walk at least one mile and climb several flights of stairs unaided.



Interns Eating a Meal at the Anubhuti City School



A Small, Local Village
Interns Visited on a Home Visit



Student Playing at the Anubhuti City School

Educational Differences

Although recently banned in the last few years, every group of interns has witnessed corporal punishment in some form. Although rarely, if ever, seen at the Residential School, interns will more than likely observe this type of punishment at the City School. However, research supports that corporal punishment does occur in both public and private schools (Cheruvalath & Tripathi, 2015). Data has shown that 78% of children in a study in India have experienced some type of physical punishment at school (Maiti, 2021). Most forms may result as a method of discipline, but other forms may stem out of entertainment.

Forms of physical discipline interns may witness include:

- Slapping across the face
- Beating/hitting with a ruler or stick
- Pinching/twisting the skin
- Pulling on ears

The children will respond to this type of punishment in a variety of ways. Some children will react with no emotion, some will cry, but some even laugh or talk back which leads to further punishment. Research says that corporal punishment can lead to a child becoming more undisciplined, not taking their schoolwork seriously, or losing respect for the teacher and classroom (Cheruvalath & Tripathi, 2015). This responsive behavior will also be observed by interns.

This is a difficult thing for interns to witness and process. Interns should prepare themselves for the emotional toll this could take on them. CYAF faculty is aware of these matters and will be available to provide guidance and support.

Experience Overview

Anubhuti City School

The Anubhuti City School consists of a primary (standards 1st - 7th) and a secondary (standards 8th - 10th) school. This is where interns will be spending the majority of their time completing their internship. Interns will be able to select which school they would like to observe at. While observing, interns will also have the opportunity to teach and interact with students and teachers. The students at this school come from impoverished homes with difficult backgrounds and upbringings that can be an emotionally trying experience for interns. However, the students are loving, kind, engaged, and driven to build a relationship with interns which makes for impactful and rewarding relationships.

Interns will select a main classroom to spend their time in. Being in a specific classroom allows interns, students, and teachers to create deeper and more unique relationships with one another. Nonetheless, interns will still be able to frequently float around and observe other classrooms and activities.

Discipline at the Anubhuti City School can be uncomfortable and difficult to witness or process, but it is the intern's role to observe and learn, not to judge or interfere.



Class 4 Student Working
on a Science Project



Typical Classroom at
the City School

Anubhuti Residential School

The Anubhuti Residential School is home to children attending school for standards 5-10 and standards 11-12. This is where interns will reside throughout their stay. Interns will be assigned a shared room within a designated hostel. The hostel will also house groups of students, but interns will have their own private room, apart from the students. Interns will also have a 'hostel parent' that will be a great resource for questions and concerns you may have. They will also act as a support system, so interns should be sure to spend time getting to know them.

Interns will have lots of time to interact with the students at the Residential School which means that many relationships will be formed here. Interns will eat most of their meals at the school, so they should be sure to spend time sitting with and getting to know the students. Interns will also have the opportunity to participate in after school activities such as track, basketball, football, and more. On the weekends and during evening free-time, students will want to spend time with and talk to interns to build friendships and learn about their lives. Boys and girls may not enter one another's hostels.



Interns with Class 5
Students



5th-8th Grade Girls
Hostel



Residential Students
on Science Day

Lodging

Upon arrival in Jalgaon, interns will stay briefly at Jain Hills, which is located across the road from the Anubhuti Residential School. This is a temporary arrangement that gives interns a few days to adjust to the time difference, diet, culture, and receive a debriefing on their stay.

At the Anubhuti Residential School, where interns will be living, interns will be assigned an apartment-style room in either the girls' or boys' hostel. The room includes two bedrooms, two full baths and one half bath, and a common sitting area. Each bedroom includes one queen-size bed, a dresser, a desk, and extra storage or shelving. Interns may be expected to share a bed during their stay. Each bathroom has a shower head; however, shower heads were deactivated to improve water conservation efforts. Instead, the bathrooms contain buckets to pour water in. Interns should expect to lukewarm bucket baths.

Ants are a common problem in the hostel. Interns should keep snacks and dirty laundry sealed as these were common problem-areas that ants were attracted to on past trips.



Common Living Area
in the Girl's Hostel



Bedroom in the Girl's
Hostel



Bathroom in the Girl's
Hostel

Transportation & Safety

All transportation will be arranged and provided for interns throughout the duration of the stay in India. When interns first begin working at the Anubhuti City School, interns will need to communicate with the supervisor at the Anubhuti Residential School to arrange for proper pick-up and drop-off times. The drivers will speak minimal English or no English at all; however they are very friendly and will want to get to know the interns. Drivers also have other responsibilities they are attending to, so it is important to be patient even if there are set times.

The safety of the interns is a main priority to both the CYAF Department and Jain Irrigation/Anubhuti. If interns want to arrange an outing, such as a trip to the local store (D-Mart) for snacks or a weekend activity, they must be accompanied by a chaperone. The interns' 'hostel parent' will most likely be the one to accompany them, so it is important to communicate and find a time that works in their schedule. While interns are out, they should be prepared for people to stare and take pictures. Interns will most likely be approached and asked to take pictures, but it is acceptable to politely decline if they are uncomfortable.



Interns Playing Yard Games with Students



Intern Receiving a Bindi at a Traditional Ceremony

Food

All meals will be provided during the internship. Food is strictly vegetarian at both the Anubhuti City and Residential Schools. Breakfast, served at the Residential School, typically consists of a meal made up of potatoes, dosas, or lentils. Chai tea and buttermilk will also be served. On week days, morning snack at the City School will be a banana. Students will also offer their snack from home to interns and will want them to try it. On weekends, morning snack at the Residential School will be a juice accompanied by a banana or laddoo (snack made of nuts and sugar). Lunch at the City School will be potatoes, beansprouts or chickpeas, roti, and rice. Afternoon snack will be served at the Residential School. This will usually consist of a fruit (banana, grapes, watermelon, or papaya) and a fried snack. For dinner at the Residential School, meals will typically be roti, rice, a vegetable, potatoes, lentils, or paneer.

Interns should be mindful of the portions they take at meals. The food can be spicy, so it is best to first try foods and then go back for seconds. It is an important aspect of the school that food is not wasted. Students and staff will be aware if there is food left on plates. If there is too much food remaining, interns, along with students, may be asked to finish what is left on their plates before they are allowed to clean it off.



Common Foods Eaten at
Jain Hills and the Anubhuti
Residential School



A Typical Meal at the
Anubhuti City School

Application Process

Timeline

The Department of Child, Youth, & Family Studies will begin advertising the internship, and recruiting applicants a year in advance. Interviews and informational meetings will follow. Follow-up meetings and an onboarding process will take place after final decisions to ensure interns are well prepared for their experience abroad.



Students at the Anubhuti
City School Celebrating a
Festival

Application & Interviews

Applicants will:

- Submit a general application.
 - Indicate interest in studying abroad, what they feel they will contribute to the experience, and what they hope to gain from the experience.
 - Meet with the Department Chair and faculty leader to discuss details and expectations of the internship experience.
 - Participate in a group interview with other interested candidates.
 - CYAF Faculty will finalize a group and conduct further preparation meetings.
-

Preparation & Packing

Visa Application

Due to Indian travel requirements, it is necessary for interns to obtain an Indian travel visa. Interns may apply for an e-Visa through <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/>, which typically takes 2-7 to be approved. The e-Visa costs around \$40 USD. CYAF staff will arrange a time to meet to aid interns in the application process and provide some of the required information. To come prepared, interns will need:

- **a passport** (which does not expire 6 months from time of return to the United States)
- **recent headshot** (passport photo) **against a white background**
- **place** (city, county, state) **and date of birth** (yourself, mother, and father)
- **payment** (credit card)



Interns Celebrating the
Birthday of the Jain Hills
Chairman

Travel Registry

Students will need to register their travel through the University (with the help of CYAF staff) prior to leaving. This will also allow students to receive international health insurance throughout their duration abroad.

<https://global.unl.edu/global-experiences/international-travel-registry-students/>

Classes

Although this 6 to 8-week internship takes place abroad, it is still possible to be part-time or full-time students through the University. Child, Youth, & Family Studies majors are required to take CYAF 497D which is a community internship. The Anubhuti Schools experience can count for the 6 credit option, due to the amount of time spent working and observing in the schools. To enroll in other classes, it is recommended that students meet with their advisors to find online classes that work with their degree plan. Or, students can communicate with professors to discuss a hybrid option by taking a course online while abroad, and finishing the course in person upon their return home.

Health

There are specific immunizations and prescriptions needed for travel in India, so an appointment will need to be made 6 weeks prior to leaving. The University has a Travel Clinic with an experienced travel nurse that can administer and prescribe what is necessary, and also provide health resources about the areas you will be traveling to. Immunizations and prescriptions specific for India include:

- Immunizations:
 - **Flu Vaccine** (up-to-date)
 - **Japanese Encephalitis vaccine**
 - **Typhoid vaccine**
- Prescriptions:
 - **Malaria pill**



Interns Dressed in Traditional
Wedding Jewelry on a Home Visit

Communication

Wifi connection will be limited and will vary in terms of availability. The Anubhuti Residential School will set interns up with wifi access; however, it will only be available in the staff room during school hours (including Saturday and Sunday). Due to this, interns may also want to consider an international data plan. (ex. Through Verizon, an international data plan costs \$100 USD/month.) Internship supervisors, Anubhuti teachers, and UNL professors will communicate through WhatsApp, so a phone plan allows for reliable communication.



Students, Teachers, &
Interns at the City School

Banking

The Indian currency is the rupee, and interns will be able to exchange USD for rupees upon arrival at the Indian airport. Interns typically exchange approximately \$200 USD and have plenty of rupees for snacks, clothing, souvenirs, tips, off-campus meals, and other miscellaneous items. Interns may consider bringing more USD to be hidden and used in case of emergency.

Lesson Planning & Classroom Prep

Most time in the classroom will be spent observing and learning about the cultural differences in education systems; however, both students and teachers will occasionally ask you to teach. Suggestions for teaching materials include interactive games (ex. Down by the Banks), action songs (ex. The Hokey Pokey), dances, poems (ex. Peter Piper), stories (ex. Three Billy Goats Gruff), or other small lessons.



Class 4 Students
Participating in a Game



Class 3 Student
Playing with Clay

Flights & Transportation

All flights, train rides, and other forms of transportation, to-and-from India and between cities, will be arranged and organized by CYAF staff.

Luggage

On international flights, each traveler is allowed one large, checked suitcase (50 lbs), one smaller, carry-on suitcase (30 lbs), and one personal item, such as a backpack. It is recommended that students bring all three as you will be bringing over toiletries, clothes, and other household items to last you two months. In addition, most students donate many of these items at the end of their stay and have enough room to bring home souvenirs and other items gathered along the way. Domestic flights in India have varying restrictions for luggage and weight.

Packing List

Clothing

Clothing in and around the schools, and the country, is more modest and conservative. Legs must be covered at all times, tops must have capped sleeves, and necklines must be above the collarbone unless paired with a scarf. It is also recommended that leggings be worn underneath skirts and dresses as students will be very active throughout the school day.

Suggested daily wear for females include long skirts paired with T-shirts, long dresses, and flowy pants with T-shirts. For males, suggested daily wear includes long pants with T-shirts. There will also be opportunities to exercise, so appropriate clothing for females includes leggings with T-shirts, and for males, long pants or shorts below the knees with T-shirts. It should be noted that the temperature is very warm (reaching the upper 90s F), so light and airy clothing is suggested.

Enough clothing for one to one and a half weeks is suitable. The Anubhuti Residential School provides a laundry service (with the exception of undergarments which you will be expected to wash). Laundry will be picked up from the hostel on Friday mornings and returned by Friday evening. Interns will also have the opportunity to buy traditional and modern Indian clothing to wear.

Example Clothing List:

- Females
 - 3-4 long skirts
 - 1-2 long dresses
 - 3-4 long, flowy pants
 - 3-4 pairs of leggings
 - 6 loose and long T-shirts
 - 4-5 T-shirts (casual for lounging and working out)
 - 1-2 light cardigans
 - 2 pairs of pajamas (shorts can be worn to bed)
 - 14 pairs of underwear
 - 7 sports bras/1 bra
 - 7-10 pairs of socks
 - 2 pairs of spandex
 - 1 pair of sandals (Chocos are recommended)
 - 1 pair of flip flops (for shower)
 - 1 pair of tennis shoes
- Males
 - 6-7 pairs of long pants
 - 3-4 pairs of long shorts
 - 6 loose and long T-shirts
 - 4-5 T-shirts (casual for lounging and working out)
 - 1-2 sweatshirts
 - 2 pairs of pajamas (shorts can be worn to bed)
 - 14 pairs of underwear
 - 7-10 pairs of socks
 - 1 pair of sandals (Chocos are recommended)
 - 1 pair of flip flops (for shower)
 - 1 pair of tennis shoes

Toiletries

Keep in mind that interns will be abroad for nearly 2 months, so they should bring a suitable amount to last them as there will be limited trips to the store.

- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Body Wash
- Loofah
- Towel
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Perfume
- Deodorant
- Hairbrush
- Ponytail Holders
- Dry Shampoo
- Face Wipes/Micellar Water
- Body Lotion
- Minimal Make-Up
- Sunscreen
- Bug Spray
- Hand Sanitizer
- Toilet Paper (5–6 rolls per person)
- First-Aid Kit (band-aids, Neosporin, etc.)
- Medication Bag
 - Prescriptions
 - Daily Vitamin/Supplements
 - Allergy Medications
 - Tylenol/Advil/Aspirin
 - Nyquil/Dayquil
 - Dramamine
 - Pepto Bismol
 - Tums

Paperwork

- Passport
- Visa
- Extra copies of passport and visa
- Medical paperwork (documentation of prescriptions, immunizations, and travel clearance)

Miscellaneous

- Watch
- Chargers (cell phone, laptop, watch, etc.)
- Power Bank
- Outlet Adapter
- Planner
- Notebook(s)
- Pencils/Pens
- Small everyday bag/satchel
- Headphones
- Sunglasses
- Snacks
- Ziplock Bags
- Tide Travel Packets
- Filter Water Bottle (large and metal)
- Air Freshener
- Ant Spray/Traps
- Blanket(s)
- Pillow/Pillow Case
- Books to read
- Photo Album – Students and teachers want to know about your family and friends, where you come from, and what you like to do, so this is a great way to show them!
- Gifts – This is completely optional; however, interns in the past have presented their teachers and students with small gifts (pencils, classroom books, notebooks, stickers, etc.) at the end of their stay. The CYAF department will also provide small gifts such as T-shirts, pencils, stickers, etc. upon departure.



Typical Outfits Worn by Interns

Schedule & Routine

Example Daily Schedule

5:30 - 6:30 am: Wake up (at the Residential School, morning fitness for students will begin near the beginning of March, that interns are welcome to participate in)

7:40 am: Breakfast

8:30 am: Leave for Anubhuti City School (transportation will be provided)

9:00 - 1:30 pm: Observe and participate in classroom activities

12:30 - 1:30 pm: Lunch (specific lunch times will vary depending on the class you are with)

1:30 - 2:30 pm: Meet with Anubhuti City School staff; receive updates

2:30 pm: Return to Anubhuti Residential School (transportation will be provided)

3:30 pm: Snack

4:00 - 7:00 pm: Free time (during this time, interns are welcome to use the staff room to complete homework, participate in sports with Residential School students, rest, etc.)

7:10 pm: Dinner

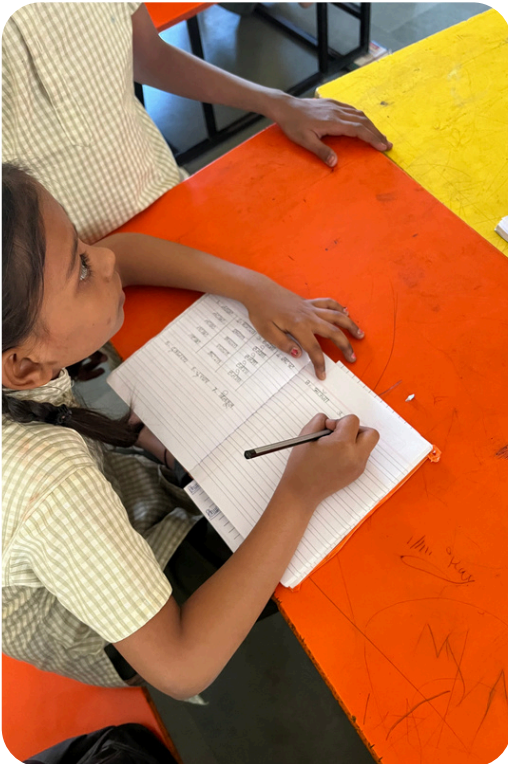
8:00 - 10:00 pm: Free time (during this time, interns are welcome to socialize with students they live with, debrief with one another, rest, etc.)

10:00 pm: Bed

*Keep in mind that you are only there for 6-8 weeks, meaning that staff and teachers will want you to see and do as much as you can during your time. This is a general schedule, but it will rarely be consistent.

Timing

Living in the U.S., interns may be accustomed to a rigid schedule and expected to be prompt for scheduled activities. This may not always be in the case while in India. Interns should be flexible and patient with scheduled and unscheduled events and activities.



City School Student Taking
Notes During Hindu Class



City School Students During
Dance Class

Homework & Blog Posts

As a part of internship requirements, interns will be expected to post a blog/Instagram post about weekly experiences. A weekly Zoom with CYAF faculty will also take place to allow interns a chance to debrief and receive help or advice for upcoming events and activities.

It is important to note that unexpected events and opportunities will be implemented into the interns' schedule frequently, so interns should be proactive about other school assignments.

Excursions

On most weekends, interns will have the opportunity to do some local or nearby sightseeing, or participate in other activities. Listed below are the most common places that interns have visited on past trips.

Gandhi Teerth Museum

The Gandhi Teerth Museum was created by the former chairman of Jain Irrigation and the Anubhuti Schools, Shri Bahvaralal Jain, as a way to honor the life and ideology of Gandhi. It also acts as an International Research Institute for researchers to visit and study from all over the world. Interns will have the opportunity to tour the museum during their first couple of days in Jalgaon, while staying at the Jain Hills campus. Admission is free for interns.



Lake at the Jain Hills



Memorial for the Former
Chairman

Jain Irrigation Systems

The Jain Irrigation Systems, founded on the belief of "Creating a Better World," were created by former chairman, Shri Bahvaralal Jain. The company is made up of manufactured irrigation products, environment-controlled agricultural products, fruit processing plants, and spice processing plants. Furthermore, the company also supports and creates many non-profit organizations, such as the Anubhuti City School. A tour will be lined up for interns.

Ajanta Caves

The Ajanta Caves, located in Ajanta, Maharashtra (about a 2-hour drive from the Anubhuti Residential School), is a group of painted and sculpted caves depicting Buddhist beliefs. This is a UNESCO World Heritage Site full of historical significance. This excursion will be arranged by Jain Irrigation. Admission for interns will be covered by Jain Irrigation and interns will be accompanied by a teacher from the Residential School. At the end of the tour, there will be an opportunity for shopping and dining.



Interns at Ajanta Caves



Carvings Inside a Cave

Home Visits

During their 6-8 week stay, many of the Anubhuti City School teachers will invite interns for home visits or other fun activities and experiences. Past experiences have included shopping for local Indian clothing and jewelry, learning how to make a home-cooked Indian meal, attending a wedding, or participating in the Holi festival. Interns should be proactive about communicating and planning these opportunities.



Interns Attending a Wedding
in Traditional Clothing



Interns Dining at a
Teacher's Home



Interns Participating
in Holi Festival

Return Home

Departmental Expectations

Interns will be asked to present to the CYAF Department and answer questions about the experience.

Adjusting to Life at Home

As this is an emotional and challenging internship, interns may find it difficult to process their experience and re-adjust to their normal routine. Past interns have shared the following recommendations to help ease the process:

- Stay in touch with the interns that you shared the experience with. They know the challenges of the internship and are able to process it along with you.
- Organize a Zoom or Skype call with your classroom at the Anubhuti City School.
- Meet with the Anubhuti Internship Experience chair to discuss the next steps or new opportunities.
- Be open to sharing your emotions with family members and be patient if they do not fully understand.

It is important for interns to recognize and acknowledge the emotional difficulty of this experience, but also to embrace the impact they were able to make on many lives!

References

Cheruvalath, R., & Tripathi, M. (2015). Secondary school teachers' perception of corporal punishment: A case study in India. *Clearing House*, 88(4), 127-132. doi: 10.1080/00098655.2015.1045821

Maiti, A. (2021). Effect of corporal punishment on young children's educational outcomes. *Education Economics*, 29(4), 411-423. doi: 10.1080/09645292.2021.1901073



Drawing Made by an Intern
& Class 4 Student



Interns Saying their Goodbyes
to Residential School Students

International Immersion
ANUBHUTI SCHOOLS
JALGAON, INDIA
2024 Interns Addendum



About the Addendum

The following addendum contains notes from the Anubhuti student interns who completed the program in the Fall of 2024. This addendum serves the purpose of providing students with the most updated information possible. This section will contain updated information about the original handbook as well as additional advice, experiences, insight into Indian culture and holidays and more!

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Updates and Additions

Travel

As mentioned above, India can be a difficult country to travel in meaning that flexibility is important amongst interns. Interns should be ready for a near 24-hour travel day to reach their final destination. A CYAF faculty member will accompany students to India and help them navigate travel. Although travel will change for each group, below is an example of travel plans from the 2024 student group.

- Omaha Airport -> Chicago Airport (2 hours)
- Chicago Airport -> Munich Airport (8 hours)
- Munich Airport -> Mumbai Airport (9 hours)
- Mumbai Airport -> Train Station (30 minutes)
- Mumbai Station -> Jalgaon Station (8 hours)

Classes

Although the number of credit hours taken by students can vary based on individual preference, students from the 2024 group recommend taking between 12 and 15 credit hours for the semester abroad. Most classes will be online but there is flexibility for a hybrid schedule if previously discussed with professors. 6 of these credits will come from the CYAF497D internship course, meaning students should pick between 2 and 3 other classes for their schedule. One recommendation from previous students is CYAF482, a global family health and wellbeing course that will align with many things you experience while in India. Taking between 12 and 15 credit hours will allow you to maintain your full time student status, but will also allow time for interns to immerse themselves with students, and not have homework as a time consuming task. Regardless, make sure to communicate with professors about travel and deadlines before hand as wifi access may not always be available.

Anubhuti City School

Interns will be transported to and from the Anubhuti City School each day. Within the first few days, students will have the opportunity to choose the classroom they want to observe in. Interns are recommended to choose standards 3 and above as the younger kids typically do not speak English. Interns can take a few days to observe in different classrooms before picking one, or can choose to observe in two separate classrooms spending the morning in one and afternoon in the other. The younger students will also enjoy if you stop by and visit their classroom throughout your time spent there, even if they are not the primary classroom you plan to observe in. Class sizes here are typically between 30 and 35 students.

Anubhuti Residential School

In the experience of 2024 students, interns arrived back to the Anubhuti residential school around 2:30 PM. Between arriving to the school and dinner, interns are free to do as they wish. This is a great time to build relationships with students by eating snack or dinner with them, or attending activities such as pottery, music, basketball, badminton, taekwondo and more. This time can also be used for interns to do homework or rest. After dinner, students typically head back to their hostels and may invite you to go with them. The only exception to students being away from their hostels after dinner is on movie night. Movie night takes place on both Friday and Saturday night with one 'juniors' movie and one 'seniors movie.' Most movies shown are in English and interns are encouraged to join the students.

Anubhuti Montessori School

The Anubhuti Montessori School is located on the residential school's campus. This is a school for children ages 3-6 and is open to children from Jalgaon to attend. Interns may coordinate with the residential school principal to set up days and times to shadow here. The school asks for only 2 interns to shadow at a time. The first few times will be strictly observational and interns will be unable to interact with students. Interns may have the ability to interact with students as shadowing here becomes more regular. This can be used as an opportunity to learn more about Montessori education, and experience the differences and similarities of toddler education between India and the United States.



The Anubhuti English Medium
School



The Anubhuti Residential
School



The Anubhuti Montessori
School

Packing List Additions

- **Laundry Detergent:** While there is a laundry service available, student interns found it easiest to hand wash their own laundry. Dissolvable sheets will work, but may still leave your clothes smelling dirty. Interns recommend powdered laundry detergent which can be brought from home or bought at D-Mart upon arrival.
- **Sheets:** While sheets will be provided for you to sleep on, interns found that bringing sheets for the bed provided an added feeling of cleanliness and comfort. Beds are queen sized. A fitted sheet, top sheet, and extra pillowcases are recommended. These can be donated at the end of the trip.
- **Pillow and Blankets:** Provided pillows are small and thin. If interns wish to sleep on these they may, but packing a pillow from home can help as beds are also thin. A lightweight blanket is also recommended to sleep with, however, nights will be hot. It is recommended to sleep with the fan on and windows open!
- **Snacks:** Snacks can be brought by interns or also purchased upon arrival. If desired, interns can bring American snacks with them for students to try!

Schedule & Routine

Example Daily Schedule

6:30 am: Morning fitness and yoga (these are on an alternating schedule)- interns can attend if they wish

7:40 am: Breakfast

8:30 am: Leave for Anubhuti City School (transportation will be provided)

9:00 - 1:30 pm: Observe and participate in classroom activities

12:30 - 1:30 pm: Lunch (specific lunch times will vary depending on the class you are with)

1:30: Return to Anubhuti Residential School (transportation will be provided)

2:00pm: Free time (interns may rest or participate in activities such as pottery, robotics, or music during this time)

3:30 pm: Snack

4:00 - 7:00 pm: Free time (during this time, interns are welcome to use the staff room to complete homework, participate in sports with Residential School students, rest, etc.)

7:10 pm: Dinner

8:00 - 10:00 pm: Free time (during this time interns are expected to return back to their hostel where they may socialize with students they live with, debrief with one another, rest, etc.)

10:00 pm: Bed

*This schedule has been slightly modified from the original provided

Festivals

Pola Festival

Observed in Maharashtra, Pola marks the start of farming season according to the Hindu calendar. The festival serves as a prayer to the gods to worship bulls and cows and the seeds that the earth provides. Cows are fed various grains to thank them and on this day farmers should buy new clothes. Puran poli will also be served to the cows as it is the typical Maharashtran food of celebrations.



A traditional meal eaten at the Pola Festival



Interns feeding a cow



A cow decorated in celebration of the Festival

At Jain Hills, the Pola Festival is celebrated with dancing, music, and a cow race. Interns are welcome to join in on the dancing and celebrations. Interns may also be asked to partake in feeding the cows which should be done with the right hand. After the celebration, a traditional lunch will be served on a banana leaf, as common with celebrations.

Teacher's Day

Teacher's day is observed as a way to thank teachers for the work that they do. At the residential school, a student vs. teacher cricket match will be played after snack. Interns are encouraged to watch. At the city school, sixth graders will serve as the teachers in classrooms for the day, leading all activities including yoga, music, dance, etc. Interns may observe the sixth graders using corporal punishment to discipline the other students. At the city school, games for the teachers such as musical chairs are played



Ganesha Festival



A Ganesha statue in home



Interns celebrating with a family on campus

Ganesha, also known as Ganapati is one of the most celebrated lords in Hinduism. For ten days, Ganesha is worshiped by people who put statues of him in their homes. On the final day, the statues are submerged in a body of water. Each day, sweets are put in front of the statue as an offering to the lord and at the end of the day are consumed with the belief that Ganesha has put his blessing into the sweets and all who eat them will also receive the blessing. Interns may be invited into homes to celebrate Lord Ganesha and share his blessings. The prayer takes place in the evenings and typically consists of singing a prayer to the lord and ringing a bell. Interns can clap along or observe respectfully. To accept the blessing (sweets), put your right hand on top of your left before putting it into your mouth.

Onam

Onam is a ten day Hindu festival, typically celebrated in the Southern state, Kerala. While Onam is not widely celebrated in Maharashtra, it may be recognized at the residential school through rangoli, floral designs, and a traditional Southern Indian meal served on banana leaves in the dining hall.



The dining hall decorated for Onam

Ghandiji's Birthday



A photo of students taken before the march



Ghandi park on Ghandiji's birthday

Ghandiji's birthday is celebrated on October 2nd each year to remember Ghandi. An organized march takes place through the streets of Jalgaon for students and community members to spread positive messages. Interns will depart from the residential school around 6:00 AM where they will be taken to the beginning of the march. The walk which is nearly two miles, will take participants to the Ghandi park located in Jalgaon. Here, remarks will be made in remembrance of Ghandi as well as a short reenactment by students from local schools. After the march, interns will be transported back to the residential school for the remainder of the day. All participants of the march will wear white to symbolize peace.

Navaratri



Students at the city school
dressed for a Navaratri
celebration



Intern performing a blessing
of the goddess Durga

Navaratri, meaning nine nights, is observed in honor of the goddess Durga to celebrate her victory over Mahishasura which restored religion. On the final day, statues are immersed in water and burnt with fireworks, which symbolizes the defeat of evil. The end of Navaratri symbolizes the change of seasons. Celebrations happen most often within communities, including dancing Garba and Dandiya. During this time, interns may be invited to teacher's villages where they will dance with them. Celebrations will also happen during the day at the city school and during the evening at the residential school, where all gather to celebrate and dance. Interns may be invited into homes for meals on the final night, or gifted money, sweets, or other goods. Each of the nine days has a corresponding color which interns are not required to wear but may be encouraged to. Day 1: Yellow, Day 2: Green, Day 3: Grey, Day 4: Orange, Day 5: White, Day 6: Red, Day 7: Royal Blue, Day 8: Pink, Day 9: Purple.



Interns and residential students before a
Navaratri celebration



Interns dancing Garba in a local village

Customs

Bindi

A bindi is the red (or other color) decorative dot worn on the forehead. The bindi is a part of ancient Hindu and Buddhist tradition and represents the ajna chakra, the third eye. Interns may have a bindi placed on their forehead for celebrations or other special occasions.

Rangoli

Rangoli is a form of traditional Indian art involving colorful patterns of rice, sand, or flowers. Rangoli may be seen on the floor outside of homes/buildings during festivals and special occasions to welcome guests and bring good luck.

Kurti/Kurta

Kurtis and Kurtas are a traditional Indian garment. Kurtis are shorter than kurtas, which typically fall to the floor. Interns may purchase or be gifted kurtis and can wear them to school or for special occasions.

Sari

Saris are a garment, typically worn by married women. They are a long piece of fabric that is draped and pinned to create the attire. The shirt worn underneath a sari is called a blouse or a choli. Similar to Kurtis, interns may be gifted sari's to wear or can purchase their own. Past interns have had custom sari's stitched for them.

Dupatta

A dupatta is a long "scarf" that is worn by women. The dupatta may be draped around the head, neck, or shoulders and serves as a symbol of modesty. Interns may purchase and wear dupattas from the local market

Customs

Removal of Shoes

Interns will be expected to remove their shoes before entering homes, classrooms, the dining hall, etc. The removal of shoes is a form of respect rooted in religious beliefs and cleanliness. Shoes are considered to be unclean and impure due to their exposure of the outside world. Interns should be conscious of their shoe choice, making sure they are able to be easily removed. Chacos and Texas are recommended.

Eating on the Floor

Interns will often eat sitting on the floor both at the residential school and city school, in addition to home visits. Sitting on the floor to eat is a tradition that shows respect for the food and the family. It is also believed that it may improve digestion and overall health.

Eating off of Banana Leaves

Special meals may be served on banana leaves. This is largely a part of Southern Indian cuisine and culture. It is said to offer health benefits in that the food will soak up the potassium from the banana leaf and transport it into the body once the food is eaten.

Eating With the Hands

Spoons may be offered with meals at the residential and city school, however, interns should expect to eat using their hands. Eating with the hands serves as a way to connect with the food. Chipati can be used as a “spoon” when it is torn into pieces and placed over the food, then closed to “scoop” the food.

Customs

The Right Hand

In Indian culture, the right hand is seen to be pure while the left hand is associated with cleanliness and hygiene. The right hand should be used for respectful actions such as offering prayers, accepting gifts, and eating.

Marigolds

Marigolds will often be seen as decoration during festivals and weddings. The marigold symbolizes purity, good fortune, and prosperity. Their strong fragrance is said to ward off negativity and evil spirits while their bright color is associated with the sun god.

Advice!



Experiencing India will be one of the most challenging yet amazing opportunities you will have in your life. There will be days that you feel tired, stressed, and overwhelmed but don't let those days get you down! Journaling is such a great way to express your emotions. Talking to the other interns will also be such a great way to decompress both during the experience and upon arrival back to the states. Your impact on these kids and the school is so meaningful and they will remember you for the rest of their lives. Soak up every minute you can because the time goes by so quick! -Mary

Hi, future students! Congrats on being chosen to go on this new journey! It will be one of the hardest things you do in your life but be prepared to grow in all aspects of your life! It's the most rewarding experience and teaches you how to appreciate the smallest of things you'd never even think of!

Biggest piece of advice is take as little classes as possible because even though six weeks seems like enough time it'll fly by so you want as much free time to be able to say yes to everything! Soak in every little moment and go into the trip with all much of an open mind as possible! -Avery



Advice!



First off, congratulations on being accepted—and even more importantly, for having the courage to say yes to this journey. You're about to embark on one of the most impactful and unforgettable adventures of your life, so soak up every moment. Yes, moving to India will come with big changes—new culture, different time zones, unfamiliar routines, and some distance from the people and comforts you love. But remember: it's just six weeks, and you're there for a powerful purpose. The growth, perspective, and relationships you'll gain will stay with you long after you return home. The children and community you'll be surrounded by are full of joy, resilience, and an eagerness to share their lives and culture with you. In return, show up with an open heart, a curious mind, and a willingness to step outside your comfort zone. You are stronger, more adaptable, and more courageous than you think. Get ready for a life-changing experience with some of the most incredible kids and kindhearted people you'll ever meet. They will teach you just as much—if not more—than you teach them. Wishing you courage, connection, and a heart full of unforgettable memories!

With excitement

Sara 720-552-7494 (reach out if you need anything!)

Advice!



Future students, be prepared to feel overwhelmed by the love that you will be showed by the students, teachers, and even hostel neighbors! Adjusting to India is difficult at times, yes, with the vegetarian diet, 11 hour time difference, weather, and being in uncomfortable and unfamiliar territory, but it will change your life. To be honest, when I got accepted I was beyond excited, but had little to no idea what I was getting myself into, but that was part of the fun! Each day is different and comes with different obstacles and blessings, but there is routine and soon familiar faces warm up to be forever relationships. The intentionality of the students that you will face is unbelievable and tears me up just thinking about. I miss those students like crazy and you will to even after the first day of meeting them. Their drive to learn about America and to grow in a relationship with you will show in their beaming eyes. They will teach you famous dances, songs, their favorite meals, and teach you a few sentences of their state language! Please feel free to reach out and ask questions! I am beyond excited for this journey of yours and a little tidy-bit of advice, if ever you feel in doubt of your purpose there or feeling homesick, say “yes” to every opportunity that is offered to you. Try new things and do it with your team of other students going as well. You will grow the most within your group if you let it happen and rely on each other during dire need of communication and friendship! - Lillian Mariniello (402-979-3695, if you need anything!)