

# Puerto Rico

PHPC MISSION & EDUCATION TRIP

JUNE 17-23, 2019

**When?** We will travel from Dallas on Mon., June 17<sup>th</sup> and depart to return home on Sun., June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Where?** We will stay and work at Campamento El Guacio in San Sebastian, PR.

**What will we be doing?** Community reconstruction projects – more details are below.

**Age requirement?** All participants must be 15+, and any participant not college-aged or older must be accompanied by an adult.

**Cost?** We anticipate the total cost for this trip to be between \$1000-\$1500 depending on airfare.

**Deadlines:** All participants must pay a deposit of \$250 by April 1<sup>st</sup> to secure a spot on the trip. The full cost of the trip is due by May 1<sup>st</sup>. We will have 1 pre-trip meeting in May prior to traveling.

## **Tell me more about Campamento El Guacio...**

Prior to Hurricane Maria, Camp El Guacio was being utilized as a Presbyterian conference/retreat center. Right after the hurricane, the Camp began to distribute water and ice to the community, which was without electricity. As there was no running water nor electricity in the community, three washing machines were available. People took turns at the Camp to do their wash. Housing and meals were provided for volunteer groups (relief workers) who were working in the nearby towns, San Sebastián, Las Marias and Maricao. A psychologist provided counseling as a volunteer service at the Camp for the community. The Camp became a distribution center of food, basic needs, solar lamps, water filters, clothes (donated by different groups, organizations and churches) and medical attention.

At this time, Campamento El Guacio continues serving the community in many ways and serving Presbyterians, other churches and groups as a retreat and conference center. They are ready to welcome and provide housing, meals and fellowship to groups who come Puerto Rico to continue helping in the recovery efforts.

**What will our accommodations be like?** We will stay in Buenavista, the sleeping facility at Camp El Guacio. The rooms can accommodate either four (4) or six (6) people to a room. There are rooms for female and male volunteers. Each room has either four or six bunk beds equipped with new beds and mattresses. Each room has its own bathroom; toilet, wash basin and shower, with hot and cold water. Each room has air-conditioning. Linens will be provided.

**Where will we eat?** We will eat onsite at Camp El Guacio, and all meals will be covered in the cost of the trip. The Camp will do its best to accommodate all dietary restrictions, so please make those known ASAP.

**What kind of work will we be doing?** We will be assisting with long-term recovery efforts that are much needed in the community. This may include:

- Painting indoors and outdoors.
- Replacing and repairing roofs.
- Sealing concrete roofs.
- Cleanup and debris removal up jobs
- Mowing grass, cutting shrubs and small trees
- Other tasks depending on the needs and capabilities of the volunteers.

**What will we do in our free time?** Camp El Guacio has many recreational amenities available to our group, including a basketball court, Volleyball court, Billiard Table, Ping-Pong Table, and Lush walking and hiking areas. Every evening, we will gather for a time of reflection and prayer. On Friday and Saturday, we will plan activities off-site based on the interests of the group.

**What does the week look like?** Our basic itinerary will be as follows:

**Monday, June 17<sup>th</sup>:** Fly from Dallas to San Juan, PR; Drive to San Sebastian and settle in

**Tuesday, June 18<sup>th</sup>:** Full work day (8-3)

**Wednesday, June 19<sup>th</sup>:** Full work day (8-3)

**Thursday, June 20<sup>th</sup>:** Full work day (8-3)

**Friday, June 21<sup>st</sup>:** Half work day; Time to relax, explore, get offsite

**Saturday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>:** Sight-seeing around PR

**Sunday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>:** Attend a local worship service; Fly from San Juan to Dallas

**What are the educational goals of this trip?** We hope that participants will travel to Puerto Rico with a spirit of openness and a willingness to learn. While the work we are doing is important, we are also being sent to bear witness to our siblings in Puerto Rico, to hear the stories of Hurricane Maria and its aftermath, and to pay attention to how this disaster was both “natural” and “unnatural.” We hope participants will gain a greater understanding of the connective nature of the church, and will develop relationships with new partners in Puerto Rico.

Prior to traveling, we will read a few articles together that help to contextualize the history of Puerto Rico as well as the effects of Hurricane Maria.