HAWAII: ISLAND SERVICE ADVENTURE

10-DAY PROGRAM

HIGHLIGHTS

- Lend a hand on projects that address Hawaii's ever-changing environmental need
- Learn about Hawaii's Indigenous populations and gain a deep understanding of their rich culture and history
- Explore the Pacific via a snorkeling excursion and look out for glorious manta rays
- Explore the pristine beaches, crystal-clear waters and volcanic terrain of this diverse island
- Join forces with local experts on diverse conservation initiatives

**No passport required for U.S. citizens.*

ACTIVITY LEVEL

- Medium

2026 PROGRAM DATES

- July 1 - July 10

GET IN TOUCH!

experiencegla.com
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@GLAteens





Experience the allure of the Big Island while leaving your mark – join us for an unforgettable journey of exploration and impact.

OVERVIEW

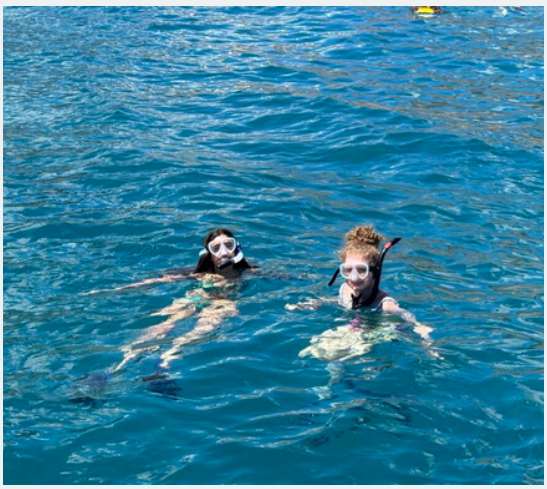
Adapt to the Island of Hawaii's evolving needs and make a lasting impact while embracing thrilling adventures, like snorkeling in the Pacific Ocean and scouting manta rays at night!

Explore diverse landscapes, from dry forests and mountain views to ocean breezes and unforgettable sunsets. Contribute to the island's environmental and cultural conservation efforts while learning about the delicate balance between preservation and progress.









ITINERARY

Actual schedule of activities will vary by program session. The information detailed here is typical for what you can expect to experience; however, service work and activities vary depending upon the needs of our local community partners, various celebrations and customs, as well as the weather and specific needs of the student group.

DAY 1: WELCOME TO HAWAII!

Aloha and welcome to Hawaii! Touch down into Kona International Airport (KOA), where staff will be waiting to greet you when you arrive. We'll travel across the island to the Home Base to unpack, rest up and meet your fellow adventurers. Enjoy your first meal as a group and get to know your staff. Let's take in a gorgeous Hawaiian sunset on our first night together and get prepared for the days to come!

DAY 2: ORIENTATION & GUEST SPEAKER

In the afternoon, we return back to Home Base to learn about your new home, go over program objectives and hear about the community service projects you'll be supporting throughout your program. We'll meet with a local community member to get an introduction to the Big Island and the communities in particular with which we'll be interacting. We'll consider the needs of the community and go over expectations for us as volunteers. Throughout the day, we'll also get to know each other better with group activities and meals.

DAYS 3-4: CULTURAL & ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION & SERVICE

Today, we're going to have an incredibly unique opportunity to learn about the culture of the Island of Hawai'i and the importance and significance of the relationship between humans and the environment. We'll partner with local projects that are dedicated to the preservation of Native Hawaiian flora, fauna and customs. During our full day with the partner organization, we're going to learn about the environment and the culture of the Native Hawaiians, or Kānaka Maoli. Service will be based at a cultural reserve, where the root of the organization comes with the betterment of education efforts to impose community resilience. We will support environmental stewardship initiatives at the reserve, such as traditional taro farming or invasive species mitigation.

On top of the service work, we will learn about the Hawaiian ahupua'a, the traditional land-dividing system in Hawai'i, as well as customs such as hula dancing and lei-making. Truly immerse yourself in Hawaiian culture and service today and soak it all in.

DAY 5: SNORKEL, SEA & HISTORY

It's adventure time! And where better to adventure in Hawaii than out in the Pacific Ocean? We'll start the day on a catamaran to take in the island of Hawaii from the water. Take a dip in the stunningly blue ocean to see what marine wildlife you can find as you snorkel and swim. Perhaps you'll find some sea turtles in their natural habitat and be able to prepare some questions for the service partner. Take some time to relax and enjoy sailing off the coast of the Big Island.









DAY 5: SNORKEL, SEA & HISTORY - CONTINUED

In the afternoon, take a walking tour of Kona Town, where you'll visit local shops, historic sites and get a taste of life in this coastal community before returning to home base.

DAY 6: SERVICE, INNOVATION & STARGAZING

Spend the morning continuing your service work, taking in stunning views as you support conservation efforts on the Island. In the afternoon, visit the Energy Lab at Hawai'i Preparatory Academy, a world-renowned facility where students and scientists collaborate on real-time environmental innovation. Engage with a guest speaker who will share how Hawai'i is leading the way in climate resilience and renewable energy.

As night falls, take time to look upward — the clear island skies set the stage for stargazing, giving space to reflect on your place in a larger world.

DAY 7: SERVICE & CULTURE

Spend the morning engaged in ongoing service work with the Forestry and Wildlife department continuing your efforts to support local sustainability and environmental initiatives. In the afternoon, enjoy a mix of leadership activities, pool time and free time at home base.

Later, dive into Hawaiian traditions through a lei-making workshop and hula class, gaining insight into the cultural roots and meaning behind these practices. Evening mentor groups round out the day with reflection and connection.

DAY 8: CULTURAL SITE VISIT

Head south for a visit to Pu'uhonua o Hōnaunau National Historical Park, a sacred place of refuge in ancient Hawaiian society. Walk the coastline, explore historic structures and deepen your understanding of traditional Hawaiian values like forgiveness, justice and spiritual protection.

DAY 9: VOLCANOES, LAVA TUBES & EPIC FAREWELLS

Kick off the day with a National Park Ranger guest speaker and learn about the powerful forces that shaped the area and the challenges facing this unique ecosystem. Spend the morning giving back through hands-on service inside Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park. In the afternoon, explore ancient lava tubes and steaming vents formed by the island's volcanic past. As the sun sets over the cliffs of the park, soak in the magic of your final evening. Cap it all off with a celebratory dinner, as a fun to say "aloha" to your new friends in true island style.

DAY 10: DEPARTURE

It's time to say aloha again (which also means "goodbye!"). Enjoy your last Hawaiian breakfast and head to the airport to begin your journey back. At the airport, GLA staff will help you check in for your flight and see you off on your trip home.

PROGRAM SPECIFICS

- **Tuition:** $5,699
- **Service Hours:** 20
- **Ages:** 14 - 18
- **Student-to-Staff Ratio:** 6-to-1
- **Accommodations:** Exclusive Dormitory
- **Arrival and Departure Airport**
  - Kona International (KOA)

GLA HOME BASE

Our Home Base for this program will is a shared dormitory. Students have the unique experience of learning from hosts about local ecosystems and living close to nature.

GLA HOME BASE OVERVIEW

- Pool
  - GLA Home Base 1: Island of Hawai'i - No
- Air conditioning
  - GLA Home Base 1: Island of Hawai'i - No
- Remote
  - GLA Home Base 1: Island of Hawai'i - Yes

FOOD

On the day-to-day, meals are healthy and balanced and will consist primarily of typical American fare (sandwiches, salads, pastas, chicken, etc.) We will also have the opportunity to sample more traditional Hawaiian cuisine and local produce.

NOTICE ON PROGRAM UPDATES

While this program is being planned for this season, some activities or details may change between now and the program start date. Please note that references from past participants and previously published information may not accurately reflect every aspect of this program. Refer to the sample itinerary above or to the GLA website for the most up-to-date version of program activities, and please note that further updates may be made between now and the program start date.

CLIMATE

The Big Island is warm and humid during the summer months, with average high temperatures between 75°F (23.8°C) and 80°F (26.6°C). Nights drop to an average of 60°F (15.5°C). However, the weather can change drastically quickly in different parts of the island, so be prepared for quick and random rain showers as well as potential cooler temperatures in the evenings.

LEADERSHIP

Global Leadership Adventures started as an educational institute, so we continue to think and act like educators—not tour operators—as we deliver life-changing programs. We intentionally weave a leadership curriculum into the daily experience on our programs. Through group discussion, meaningful service, workshops, speakers and excursions, staff guide students to reflect on program events through the lens of leadership, and celebrate outstanding examples of leaders they encounter in the local community. Lending this context to the experience creates opportunities for students to dig deep into their vision, purpose and knowledge of themselves and the world.

ABOUT GLOBAL LEADERSHIP ADVENTURES

Global Leadership Adventures was founded in 2003 by Fred Swaniker, a native of Ghana, TED Fellow and educational entrepreneur whose work has been praised by Barack Obama. Born as a global extension of the revolutionary African Leadership Academy, Global Leadership Adventures now operates programs centered around leadership, sustainable community service projects, and meaningful travel across Africa, Asia, Europe or the Americas. Through life-changing adventures, we strive to inspire the next generation to realize their potential to transform the world and their role in it.

GLA HAS BEEN FEATURED IN:

The New York Times
USA TODAY
NBC NEWS
The Boston Globe
seventeen

OUR EXPECTATIONS

BE PRESENT | Our mission at GLA is "to inspire the next generation to realize their potential to transform the world and their role in it." To that end, we expect GLA students to maintain high standards of personal behavior and to be open-minded. The culture may be different, sometimes shockingly so. GLA will challenge students as they are expected to work hard and be present physically and mentally for all activities. We also ask students to take a step back from regular use of technology - particularly their smartphones - so as to maximize their engagement with the program and their fellow participants. Students may get hot, dirty and bug-bitten along the way, but their contribution can transform the community. The goal is for each student to return home having had a life-changing experience.

NO TOLERANCE | GLA has a no-tolerance policy towards drugs, alcohol, tobacco and disruptive behavior. Those who violate or are suspected of violating this policy will be immediately dismissed from the program at the sole discretion of GLA staff.

COMMUNITY-LED EXPERIENCES | GLA makes every effort to offer thoughtfully crafted programs for teens and young adults. Detailed planning and exhaustive communications with partners are indispensable parts of our program development process. However, occasionally service and activities are adjusted from session to session, due to weather, changing needs of our local community partners and/or various cultural celebrations and customs. We expect participants to be open-minded and flexible, willing to embrace the experience when plans change. GLA makes every effort to communicate adjustments to students and families with advance notice. We expect you to be open-minded and flexible.

MENTORSHIP | GLA is not a therapy program. Our staff are highly skilled, professional, caring and fun, but they are not licensed therapists. GLA programs can be physically and emotionally demanding, and applicants should be in good physical and mental health.

ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

At Global Leadership Adventures, we welcome age-eligible teens who are excited about the opportunity to travel to apply for our programs. To ensure a safe and meaningful experience for everyone in the group, we follow essential eligibility criteria. While out intent is not to be exclusionary, it's important to note that GLA programs are not therapeutic programs and are not able to support struggling teens seeking behavior or mental health outcomes.

Applications are carefully considered and screened to align with these criteria. It is not uncommon for GLA to require supporting documentation or information in the application screening process to confirm eligibility or suitability for program participation. Failure to disclose full medical history may also result in the application not being accepted, additional fees, and/or removal from the program. Please discuss with our team for any further clarification or concerns and visit **https://www.experiencegla.com/policies/essential-eligibility-criteria/** to view the full essential eligibility criteria list.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP

CONTACT US | Want to learn more about Global Leadership Adventures and our available programs? Our Admissions Team has expertise and insights into our slate of program offerings, and we're happy to answer any questions you might have. We have collectively visited or staffed many of our GLA programs around the world, and we have advice to share on everything from getting your travel documents together to what a typical day on a program is like. Call us at 1-858-771-0645 any time during office hours for assistance.

ENROLL NOW | We encourage you to enroll on your 1st choice program as early as you can! In fact, our most popular programs fill up early every year, and many students end up putting off the quick and easy application process only to end up on the waiting list. The best way to ensure that you save your spot is to place your deposit and apply early. You can easily enroll online at **www.experiencegla.com/enroll.**