



Ako bu ije

UMU ARO (USA), INC.

AROCHUKWU MEDICAL CLINIC BOARD ("BAMC")

Thursday, October 02, 2008

Greetings to all former and potential Volunteers of All Aro (USA), Inc.! The Board of Trustees of its Arochukwu Medical Clinic ("BAMC"), including its Nigerian members is pleased to announce the plans for a medical mission to Arochukwu, Nigeria in March 27th – April 5th, 2009. We chose March as opposed to summer because:

- Flights have become very expensive due to fuel costs. Airlines consider March "off season", so fares will be approximately \$500 - 600 less per person, making the trip more affordable.
- Hospital and Medical personnel have found it difficult to book time off in prime summer vacation months, and then found that they could not have personal summer time off as well. A March trip will make it easier to book time off for the mission, and still have an opportunity for summer vacation.
- March is the dry season in Nigeria; hence there will be less rain, less humidity and fewer mosquitoes. This should make an adjustment to the climate easier for the volunteers.

Friday March 27th will be the USA departure date, with a return home in the USA as soon as Sunday April 5th. This makes a nine day minimum commitment time, although there is opportunity to incorporate participation in Ajalli mission earlier and extend the stay in Nigeria.

Rising costs are evident everywhere. The logistics of feeding and transportation for 25 – 30 people is a heavy burden for the economically challenged community in Arochukwu. It has become necessary to ask volunteers to subsidize the cost for food, local transportation and expensive diesel fuel to run the generators, which are the main power source. A reasonable fee of \$200 will be charged to each volunteer in addition to airfare costs. While this money will surely help defray the bills, most of the expense burden remains with the Arochukwu community. A total expense outline follows.

Everyone will be asked to fill out a short personal information form, available for download or attached to this letter. Email access is the best way to send information to everyone. Please make sure to include it, and check regularly for updates.

We invite you, once again, to join us in this mission of generosity and hope. God bless.

Sincerely,

Mazi Jidefor O. Oji
Secretary

Mazi Eni P. Kanu
Chairman

Mazi Eni Paul Kanu
Chairman
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Mazi Jidefor O. Oji
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Arochukwu Trustees

Mazi Sam Ohuabunwa, OFR
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dba

All Aro (USA)

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Medical Mission in Arochukwu, Abia State



Arochukwu (also known as “Aro”) is an ancient town site, believed to have been inhabited since 300 BC and is acknowledged as the homeland of the Igbo tribe. Arochukwu town was established in 1400. As the population increased, family groups settled peacefully in other locations, but kept their Aro roots, traditions, and family ties. *Ajalli* is such a town, and it remains tied to its Arochukwu heritage. Aro today is comprised of over 200 separate communities which all claim Arochukwu as home.

The Medical Mission in Arochukwu is organized and maintained by All-Aro USA, a non-profit organization of Americans with an Aro heritage. It is dedicated to attending to humanitarian needs of people in isolated parts of Nigeria. Arochukwu is a remote town which had no local health care, and is one hour away on unreliable roads from the nearest hospital. All-Aro USA raised all the funds, designed and built the clinic building, which opened in 2004. That year, several member of the *Ajalli* team joined other American and Nigerian professionals to provide medical care and medications.

Since then, Physicians from surrounding towns have come to this very functional building once a month to sustain basic health care. Medications are regularly replenished by the Foundation. An American team under the direction of All-Aro USA visited again in 2005. A full medical mission with diverse specialties is planned for **March 30 to April 3**, (*the week following the Ajalli mission*), to support the local medical professionals. Goodness and Mercy Team members are invited to participate a few days at the Arochukwu site.

The clinic building has consulting and treatment rooms, and could easily accommodate minor surgeries done with local or epidural anaesthesia. There is an in house pharmacy and basic lab. For the first time, eyeglasses will be offered at this clinic. The primary need is for medical care providers, dentists, optometrists and nurses to give basic care to the thousands of people who will come for clinic week.

Both the Nwankwo and Nwosu families have ties to Arochukwu. Their cousin, Mr. Jay Oji (Dallas, TX) was the President of All-Aro USA when the clinic was built, and as past-president he remains very active in the foundation, and is the liaison for this mission.

For the *Ajalli* volunteers, transportation to Arochukwu, (*approximately 2 hours by road*), accommodation and food will be provided at no extra cost to you. Your extra commitment would be 2 or 3 days, and you would be escorted to the domestic airport to fly to Lagos and your international flight home.

Arochukwu is a town rich in history, and there will be opportunity to explore some of these exceptional sites.

Contact: Jay Oji; jay@oji.net



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Expectations

It is anticipated all volunteers will be personally responsible for the following:

- Reading all correspondence, and checking email regularly.
- Submitting all required fees and paperwork on time.
- Ensuring that you have a passport, and that it is current (must be valid thru September 2009).
- Itineraries, all airline tickets or e-tickets (payment and safekeeping).
- Acquiring and taking the anti-malaria medication, and considering the immunization advice
- Your own personal belongings and medications.
- Adhering to the directives of the leadership and their designates.
- Maintaining the good name of AAUSA.
- Following the guidelines and principles of your profession in good faith.

Travel

The group departs from the USA on Friday March 27, 2009, time dependent upon your departure airport. Checked luggage allowance is now a major issue, and because all medical supplies travel with the group, it will be part of the decision for which airline and route is used. Volunteers all “donate” their checked luggage allowance for supplies: all your personal items must fit into your carry on luggage. Flights from all departure points meet in Lagos, Nigeria, and then a domestic flight, followed by a bus ride to the village of Arochukwu completes the travel. It may be up to 26 hours of continuous travel time, and may include an overnight hotel stay in Lagos. You will be advised of total costs and details before you commit to purchase tickets. Departure back to the USA is Saturday, for arrival home on Sunday April 5, time dependent upon airport, and using the same flight routes.

Accommodations

While in the village of Arochukwu, accommodations are provided in one of/or the private family homes of Mazi Eni P. Kanu, Mazi David Iphie and Dr Okey Ijomanta. These homes are screened, air-conditioned, have electrical power (mainly supplied by generator) and running water. Each house has many bedrooms, and all Volunteers will be expected to share a room, and possibly also share a king-sized bed with someone whom you may have just met. Couples and families can share a room. Most bedrooms are large and have a private bathroom. Nutritious meals are provided in these homes, and a “box lunch” is served at the clinic.

Visa

A Visa is required for entrance into Nigeria, unless you have a Nigerian passport. Currently, that fee is \$125 + \$20 processing fee for US citizens, and \$85 + \$20 for Canadians. Please refer to the Nigerian Embassy website for other nationalities. http://www.nigeriaembassyusa.org/visa_req.shtml. The protocol for applications has changed, and details will be sent to you well before the due date.

If you do not have a Passport, please apply now. The processing time can be several months. You will also require 2 passport photos with your application for a Visa. **Your current passport must be valid until at least Sept 30 2009.** To make it easier, Volunteers give all completed documents to a Mission Director, and all the applications and passports are then sent as a group to contacts in the Nigerian Embassy for expedience of issue. The passports will be returned to the AAUSA office in Dallas and distributed from there.

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Immunizations

There are no required immunizations for entry into Nigeria. It is strongly recommended to have adequate titers of Hepatitis A and B vaccines, and be sure that your own required immunizations, especially Tetanus, are up to date. Most health care workers already have this coverage. Yellow fever is now being encouraged on the websites, and you may consider the Typhoid immunization as well.

Anti-Malaria Tablets are required, and are available by prescription. This is the CDC website for anti-malarial medication. <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/regionalmalaria/wafrica.htm#malariarisk> .

This is the CDC link for Health information for travelers to West Africa:

<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/wafrica.htm>. It offers many tips for staying healthy in a tropical climate.

Expenses

With the low international value of the American dollar and the high price of fuel, fares for international flights are much higher than in previous years. When the balance of price, flight convenience and luggage allowance has been found, a block of tickets will be reserved for the Volunteers. Travel agent, airline and flights will be specified, and volunteers are individually responsible for their bookings and payments. Unfortunately, at this time there are no sponsors to pay for or subsidize flights. No deviation of arrival or departure from Nigeria is possible, as the logistics of getting to and from the airport is a huge undertaking. It remains imperative that everyone arrives and departs with a group, and stays with the group, *unless* Nigeria is your homeland.

It may be possible to take an alternate flight to Europe out of Lagos, if you wish to spend personal time in Europe after the mission. Again, this flight would have to coincide with the group departure time, and all changes would be your own additional expense and responsibility.

At this time, these are estimated costs (in \$US) and may fluctuate up or down;

International flights from Detroit to Lagos (Lufthansa/KLM)	\$1400	(Delta \$1540)
International flight from Savannah (Delta)	\$1575	(KLM/Lufthansa \$1760)
International flight from Washington DC (NW/KLM)	\$1300	(Delta \$1520)
International flight from Atlanta (Lufthansa)	\$1375	(Delta \$1570)
<i>For reference, any other departure airport that will require a connection to a major airport (such as ATL, JFK, IAD, DTW) will be approx \$100 - \$350 more than what has been quoted.</i>		
Nigeria Visa (American)	\$ 145	
Nigeria Visa (Canadian)	\$ 105	
Domestic flights, (hotel stay in Nigeria if applicable)	\$ 300	
Food and transportation in Arochukwu	\$ 200	

Your spending money, allowing for nominal souvenirs, approx \$150 to \$300 (are you a shopper?)

Time frame for payments:

International Airline tickets: October or November; when the most reasonable fare is obtained. Tickets will be reserved only for those who have indicated a commitment to participate in the mission. (Ensure that you supply the full name that is on your passport! There is a charge to correct names later)

Details of payments are variable, *all dependent upon airline or travel agent*. You may have 3 -5 days for a down payment (usually one half of fare) and 2 - 4 weeks for completion of payments. **Please note**: if the best fare is only available with direct booking, you may be required to reserve and pay by credit card immediately. Travel insurance is extra and at your own discretion and expense. If you join the group after the main tickets are booked, the fares may be quite different and only available with credit card

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payment. You are always welcome to use your own travel agent *as long as you are on the same flights as the group*. Variations just cannot be accommodated.

Visa application and passport photos: January

Domestic air tickets and accommodation subsidy: March

Everything, except your personal spending money, can be noted as a donation to the All Aro (USA) Inc, and is tax deductible. Official tax receipts will be issued to you by the AAUSA Office after returning from Nigeria.

There will be frequent communication with confirmed volunteers so that you will have adequate notice of due dates, information meetings and opportunities to participate with preparations. Please ask questions or for clarification whenever necessary to any of the contacts listed below. A colorful and informative volunteer handbook with details on accommodations, what to pack, and what to expect during the mission will be issued, and Christina Harrison can provide any essentials you require now.

The BAMC of AAUSA is striving to make lifelong differences in the quality of people’s lives. The purpose is to offer a “hand up”, rather than a “hand out”. The doctors actively encourage the participation of African professionals in the clinics, which are run according to North American standards of care.

This is not a vacation. Mission volunteers prepare for months, use vacation time, pay travel expenses, endure long travel to reach the villages, and work long hours each day. Occasionally, there is not enough water, toilets, electricity, or reliable contact home, and accommodations can be tight and without much privacy. Food is abundant and good, but not your usual diet – and there is no alternative. One must cope with the heat, sun and bugs of an African summer, and learn to improvise or do without. Yet, every year, on that long journey home, the volunteers remain amazed at the beauty of the land and her people, and believe that they got much more than they gave. It is worthwhile.

If these opportunities to travel and provide health care in Africa are appealing, and the planned dates can fit into your schedule, you are invited to contact one of the Mission Directors, and/or the AAUSA Office. We welcome you to our Volunteer family.

All Aro (USA), Inc.

P. O. Box 810088, Dallas, Texas 75381-0088

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Volunteer Profile

Name (Mr Mrs Ms) _____ DOB (mm/dd/yy) _____

Home Address _____

Telephone Home # (_____) _____ Cell /work # (_____) _____

Email Address _____ Do you have regular email access? Y N

Emergency Contact (while at the mission) _____

Relationship _____ Phone number _____

Name as it appears on your Passport _____

Country of Issue _____ Expiry Date _____

Profession _____ Degree / Title _____

Specialty or Training _____

Current License Y / N State/Prov Issued _____ Expiry _____ License # _____

Current Employer _____ Position _____

Previous Medical Missions (if any) _____

Other Mission/Volunteer Experience _____

Immunizations: Tetanus _____ Hep A _____ Hep B _____ Yellow Fever _____ Typhoid _____

Any special requirements or medical conditions of which we should be aware? _____

Allergies _____ Special Diet _____

Languages spoken _____ Can you interpret? _____

Relevant Skills, Abilities or Hobbies _____

It is crucial for the success of the mission and the safety of the team that all Volunteers abide by the guidelines and decisions of the designated team leaders in all areas of activity. Your signature on this application form indicates that you agree to respect this policy and act in the best interest of the team.

Signature _____ Date _____