

A New Way To Go

Contributed by Felicia Bruce

Impact Travel may be the new way to go... After reading about NYSUT'S new Ken Kurzweil Social Justice Recognition Award I was motivated to expand my community service experiences. Already involved and committed to living a purposeful life and 'making a difference', I knew there were other opportunities from which I could learn and help others. Luckily, I found out about **impact travel** which meant I could learn, grow, help, and have fun all at the same time and in foreign countries!

We tried a cultural exchange program to Cuba first. The ship, the Adonia, anchored at three harbors to experience Cuban culture firsthand.



Art Cooperative in Old Havana

Music, art cooperatives, neighborhood chorale groups, native food in restaurants and private homes is the focus of that trip.

Travel to the Dominican Republic, by contrast, involved getting dirty hands on reforestation projects either in the mountains or on the beach, helping a community make a water filtration system, working in the many production aspects of a cocoa business to help a group of female entrepreneurs in their sustainable operation, teaching English to adults or children or laying a cement floor for the benefit of an extended family unit. Each activity is a half day long and cruisers can sign up for one or more of these unique opportunities.



Frequently educators want to 'make a difference' and these impact travel experiences are the perfect way to combine social purpose, fun and learning. People who sign up for the Peace Corps are committed to immersing themselves in a foreign culture in order to make a difference but that requires much more time and sacrifice.

Like ripples from a pebble tossed in the water, the effect we have on others is exponential. To view some of the statistics of the Adonia's impact travel go to their website <https://www.fathom.org>.