

## Malaspina GHANA PROJECT

### Recruiting “Pioneer Students” for First Year of Five Year Project

**What is the project.** This project is a **collaboration** between Malaspina and two colleges located in Ghana: the Sunyani Polytechnic, and the Sunyani Faculty of Forest Resource Technology. Sunyani is located in central Ghana, and is similar in size as Nanaimo. During each of the next five years Malaspina will bring students and faculty to Ghana on a study tour, that will take place for about three weeks during April – May. For some students, it may be possible to stay longer, to participate in work experiences (e.g. cooperative education or internship placements), to be involved in other extended field experiences, or to travel.

Each year a group from our partner institutes in Ghana will travel to visit Malaspina and the Nanaimo area. We anticipate this visit will occur annually, commencing in September, 2007.

**What is the purpose of the project.** The aim of the project is to help *reduce poverty* in the Sunyani district of Ghana, through four community development projects identified by our Sunyani partners:

- **Reducing household waste.** Untreated waste, particularly plastic waste, impedes irrigation systems and contributes to low agricultural productivity.
- **Reducing HIV AIDS.** This is a major health problem in most parts of Africa, including Ghana, and contributes to poverty by reducing the workforce, and destabilizing families and village social structure.
- **Improving forest fire management.** Wildfire, usually a consequence of slash and burn agriculture, contributes to the loss of agricultural land and livelihood of people living in rural communities.
- **Developing ecotourism.** Ecotourism has been successful in reducing poverty in many parts of the developing world, including some areas in Africa, in providing sustainable employment, while at the same time contributing to the conservation of natural resources and local cultures.

**What will participants students do in Ghana.** The intent of this project is to enhance/foster *knowledge transfer*, whereby we participate with our Sunyani partners to develop outreach programs and other strategies, aimed at providing rural communities with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively address the four project areas described above. Our work in Ghana will vary from year to year as the project evolves, but in year one (April-May of 2007), the Malaspina team will be a *pioneering mission*, charged with the responsibility of fine-tuning the project, to set the stage for subsequent study tours. The objectives for this first study tour are:

- To meet with faculty and students at our Sunyani partner institutes to *determine roles, working relationships*, etc
- With the help of our Sunyani partners, to identify *target communities* in the Sunyani area where we will focus our efforts over the next five years.
- With our Sunyani partners, to develop working relationships in the communities targeted above, in order to better understand these communities and develop with these communities strategies and processes that could be used in the life of this project to address the four project activities aimed at reducing poverty (i.e. to conduct a *needs assessment*)
- To meet with non-government organizations, and other groups doing similar working Ghana, *to build potential partnerships* and opportunities to collaborate.
- To prepare a *work plan* to be used in subsequent years of the project, describing the roles and activities of Malaspina, our Sunyani partners, and the targeted Sunyani communities.

### **What are benefits for participating Malaspina students.**

- Getting Malaspina course credits for participating in field based learning experiences
- Working and living in a different culture and unique part of the world.
- Getting experience in a community development project
- “Pioneering” the project, setting the stage for future study tours

**Living conditions while in Ghana.** Living conditions in Ghana are safe, but very basic compared to what we are used to in Canada. Before traveling to Ghana we will review reading materials about Ghana and meet with others who have been there before.

**What will students do before going to Ghana.** Students will participate in planning meetings, help select and review reading materials, and participate in international orientation sessions before leaving for Ghana.

**What will students do when they return from Ghana.** When participants return from Ghana, they will participate in the following activities during the next academic term:

- Awareness projects at Malaspina. This will involve meeting with students and Faculties to share learning highlights and experiences, and to help recruit students for the next study tour.
- Awareness projects in the greater Nanaimo area, helping prepare media packages describing our experiences, and participating in other community awareness activities (e.g. meeting with Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce, and Rotary Clubs).
- Hosting the Ghana delegation. When the Ghana group visits the Malaspina area, during September of 2007, they will be want to see “best practices” developed in Canada that can be used or adapted for use in Ghana

**Dates.** The study tour will be approximately three weeks. The exact start and end dates will reflect a period that allows for good participation for our Ghana partners, as well as for Malaspina students and faculty. With this in mind, precise dates will be identified by the end of January, likely April 15 – May 6. As these dates overlap with the examination period, there may be opportunity for students to negotiate arrangements with course instructors.

**Course credit.** Students will receive 3-9 course credits upon completion of all three components of the experience (pre trip activities, trip activities, post trip activities)

**Cost.** This study tour is supported by a grant from CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency), which will defray expenses listed below by about \$1000 per student:

- Airfare, return between Vancouver and Accra                      approximately \$1800
  - Ground transportation in Ghana                                      approximately \$100
  - Accommodation and food in Ghana                                  approximately \$1400
  - Immunizations    approximately \$200
  - Course tuition fees (3 to 9 credits)                                  approximately \$350 for 3 credits
- Note:** If you select the 9 course credit option (above), you are eligible to obtain a student loan, and your tuition can be used as a tax credit.

**How do you apply.** This study tour is open to any Malaspina student, but from year-to-year students may be recruited from designated departments, to reflect special needs that may emerge as the project develops. For this first study tour in 2007 the group will be small, consisting of 3-4 students and 2-3 instructors. To apply,

- Submit by January 26, 2007 a letter of application, outlining why you want to apply, indicating how this experience will contribute to your personal growth and future career plans (2 pages maximum). Submit by email to Rick Rollins (rollins@mala.bc.ca)

- With your letter of application include a brief resume (2-3 pages maximum), highlighting any relevant experiences (e.g. travel), education, or training (e.g. courses in tourism, forestry, nursing, global studies, anthropology, etc).
- Attend interviews to be scheduled on Wednesday, January 31. Further details for these interviews will be provided to applicants,
- Make a partial payment by February 23, 2007 of \$1000.00
- Pay the remaining fees by March 16, 2007