YOUR JOURNEY STARTS HERE
SITE HANDBOOK

PINE RIDGE
> Introduction
This handbook was written to provide you with useful information regarding your participation in an Amizade sponsored program. It answers many of the frequently asked questions by previous participants. Read this entire handbook carefully and contact our office if you have any questions. Please note that the best resource for you during your pre-departure planning is our website, which can be found at amizade.org

> Amizade's Mission & Vision
Amizade inspires empathy, catalyzes social action, and links diverse communities through Fair Trade Learning. We want to create a world where diverse communities connect freely, forge lasting relationships, and build a more just world together.

> Amizade's Commitment
At the heart of Amizade is the sincere belief that intercultural understanding and the development of global citizens is essential to our increasingly connected global world. We are committed to providing you with an intercultural experience that allows you to make concrete contributions to a community resulting in a deeper understanding of your role in the global community.
> 1. Approach to Service

> Ethic of Service

Amizade strives to promote an “ethic of service” on all our programs. This means that we envision the entire experience as one of service to our fellow human beings. There will be scheduled time for completing service projects on each program, but we also encourage you to carry your ethic of service with you throughout the program. You can do this by volunteering to help with food preparation, cleaning, or various other daily tasks.

As guests in the host community, Amizade volunteers are encouraged to act respectfully in all community interactions. The global service experience provides a unique opportunity to learn from the traditions, beliefs, and customs of a new community. Since most Amizade volunteers come from outside of the community, they are often seen as “ambassadors” representing their countries and are able to use this opportunity to share positively about their culture. At the same time, volunteers have the unique opportunity of experiencing another culture while taking the time to absorb and respect new world views.

> Volunteer Opportunities

One of Amizade’s core values is providing community-driven service, meaning that the community defines their biggest needs and we contribute in that way.

The Lakota often feel that volunteers who spend time learning about their life and culture and use this knowledge and their experience to educate their home communities have served the Pine Ridge community in the greatest way.

Through this program, participants will have the opportunity to learn about Lakota life and culture, work on a community-led service project, and explore the natural beauty of the area. Cultural and recreational activities may include visiting cultural museums, visiting nearby national landmarks, learning from local Lakota about family land use, traditional arts, and sampling traditional foods.

Participants will have a number of service opportunities relating to community needs and cultural learning. Amizade has emerging relationships with a network that engages agricultural initiatives, programming on youth and education, and cultural learning. Community partners include the Pine Ridge Agricultural Initiative and other local community groups.
2. The On-Site Experience

The Amizade Experience

The time that you spend in Pine Ridge is sure to be one filled with many new experiences: new outlooks, new cultures, and new situations. In order to get the most out of your Amizade experience, we recommend doing some basic research and reading into the history of Pine Ridge as well as familiarizing yourself with some of the issues over the last several years. This will allow you to begin your experience with an informed set of questions in mind. Your experience is about getting in deep enough and starting to dream enough to realize that your time can’t possibly be enough to see and understand all of Pine Ridge but it can be enough to get an idea of it, connect with new friends, meet and struggle with some significant challenges, make connections, create difference, and begin to understand an entirely different kind of place.

All of this will take place in the context of a relatively unpredictable environment. Unpredictable does not mean that it is unsafe. All programs work through our partner individuals and community organizations. Unpredictable simply describes the “climate” of Amizade programs in Pine Ridge often characterized by something called a “lack of redundancy.” This refers to an absence of continuously present and reliable systems and products. With water supply and electricity, that means it may go out sporadically. With transportation, it means roads may be closed. In stores or restaurants, it may mean the things they sell are not what they advertise outside, but rather whatever they have in stock (or can quickly get from a neighbor). All of this relates to an absolutely essential ongoing Amizade motto, “Okay, Good.”
> **Group Living**
Amizade programs generally have a strong core element built around group living. For many people, living, volunteering, studying, completing projects, and spending leisure time in a group may be new. Therefore we ask all Amizade volunteers to approach group interaction with flexibility, openness, and constructive communication. We strive to respect each other's space and needs while also supporting each other to achieve personal goals on the program.

> **Flexibility**
Flexibility on behalf of the participants is the most important element on an Amizade program. Itineraries may change at the last minute in order to meet current community needs or participate in unexpected opportunities for recreational, educational, or cultural exploration. Many aspects of traveling are unpredictable and time-consuming, so be prepared to enjoy the unexpected surprises and embrace the opportunities they provide!

> **Housing**
All volunteers participating in the program will be housed at a local motel about 20 minutes away from Allen. The motel is basic, but comfortable and has nice meeting spaces.

> **Meals**
Amizade staff will provide a light breakfast each morning. For recreational outings, Amizade will provide volunteers with food to pack a lunch. Dinners will vary and will include homemade traditional meals.

> **Note to Vegetarians and Other Dietary Needs**
While vegetarians are becoming more familiar in Pine Ridge it is still new to much of the community. Vegetarian options will be made available but you should be prepared for limited variety. You will want to talk to the Amizade staff to find out what can be arranged in terms of cooked meals and to have them purchase vegetarian options for lunches.

> **Climate and Weather**
During the summer months you will experience daytime temperatures of 80-90 degrees and nighttime lows in the 50s. During the winter months you will experience daytime highs in the 30s and nighttime lows in the teens. Weather is notoriously unpredictable in the spring and fall. We suggest always packing and preparing to wear layers during this year. In addition, tornados are of legitimate concern during the summer months and participants should be prepared to evacuate areas at any sign of threat. The average annual rainfall received is approximately 15-16 inches a year. The Rainy Season takes place for Pine Ridge during May, June and July.

> **Cultural and Recreational Activities**
Pine Ridge is overflowing with opportunities for cultural education and recreation. Some possibilities include presentations from local community members on topics such as The Importance of the Sun Dance: Jim Cross and The Mt. Rushmore Desecration. Playing traditional Lakota games. Hiking and visits to various scenic spots in South Dakota, such as Badlands National Park, Wounded Knee Memorial and Crazy Horse Monument are also possible.
> 3. Local Considerations

For more information on the region and our partners, please visit:

https://www.bia.gov/regional-offices/great-plains/south-dakota/pine-ridge-agency

> 4. Preparing for Your Program

> Download the Vamoos App

We ask that you download the app before your program begins. Enter the user ID and passcode shared by your group leader to find your program. Vamoos is a convenient way to access information about your program, including maps, itineraries, and important documents. Find it on your phone's app store.

> Transportation to Site

We recommend volunteers fly in and out of the Rapid City, SD airport. However, it is possible to fly into Denver, CO. All volunteers are required to arrive on or before the scheduled program start date and depart on or after the scheduled finish date. If volunteers arrive early or stay late, the individual volunteer must make his/her own arrangements for food, lodging, and airport transfer.

> Transportation on Site

Volunteers are responsible for arranging their own transportation from the airport to Allen, SD and for the duration of the program. Amizade can arrange for group transportation for an additional fee.

> Travel Documents

US citizens and residents will need standard proof of identification (such as driver's license or passport) if traveling to the site via airplane. Please check with your airline for acceptable forms of identification.

If you are a non-US citizen, you must check with the consulate in your country regarding travel documents, including passport and visa requirements.

If you need to obtain a visa to the United States, you can visit the US consular site for further information at:

http://www.travel.state.gov/
5. Health and Safety

> Safety Information
- While participants are on site for the service project, it is essential that participants adhere to all safety requirements and guidelines as determined by the service project supervisor and their staff.
- An on-site Amizade staff member will have a first aid kit and information on local medical facilities.
- As a volunteer in the community you will have local companions and friends. Volunteers should observe and imitate local customs regarding safety. Regardless of where you are it is best to travel in pairs, especially at night. Be cautious with your money and make sure you store it in a safe place or money belt. If you have any concerns about traveling at night, especially, Amizade recommends you take a taxi or ridesharing service.
- COVID-19 mitigation is very important to ensuring a safe and healthy experience, not only for you, but for the community as well. In addition to mandatory vaccination, we ask that you adhere to standard social distancing and hygiene best practices, including mask wearing, hand-washing, and maintaining distance in closed spaces.

> Drug Use
We adhere to a drug-free policy for all of our programs. We ask that all volunteers please respect this as a rule of Amizade. Failure to comply with this rule is grounds for removal from the program.

> Prescription Medicines
If you have prescription medicines, bring them in the original prescription bottles with your name on them and bring an ample supply for the duration of your program. Always ensure they are legal in the community you are visiting.

> The Best Medicine is Preventative Medicine
Throughout the program, please rest and drink plenty of water. While on the program, let the Amizade staff know if you have any concerns about your health and contact them immediately if you experience a health emergency.

6. Money Matters

> Accessing Money
Pine Ridge has a number of ATMs located throughout the town. Credit and debit cards are widely accepted at the majority of restaurants, stores and tourist attractions.

> Spending Money
Please bring some spending money for souvenirs and for costs beyond those covered by the Amizade fee, such as meals (if they are not included in your program), taxi fare, etc.
7. General Packing List

>> PLEASE PACK LIGHTLY!
You should bring a maximum of two bags. Ideally, this includes one medium-sized suitcase/duffel/backpackers bag and a smaller daypack for daily activities. You should be able to carry your luggage comfortably by yourself. Please use your best judgment regarding valuables. Amizade does not recommend that volunteers bring expensive jewelry or electronics. Amizade is not liable for lost, stolen, or damaged articles.

> Recommended packing list
- Documents: health insurance card, passport and/or ID, vaccination cards
- Backup digital copies of all important documents
- Cell phone and charger (check roaming rates)
- Money: ATM/credit cards (set travel alert with bank), US cash ($100 or less), Local currency (small amounts if possible)
- Cell phone and charger (check roaming rates)
- Universal travel outlet adapter (when applicable)
- Water bottle
- Masks, hand sanitizer, and other PPE
- Notebook or journal and pens
- Knapsack or backpack
- Towel and washcloth
- Toiletries – just the basics such as toothbrush, toothpaste, travel-size shampoo, soap, menstrual products
- Sun protection - Hat, sunscreen (reef-safe recommended, sunglasses
- Bug repellant
- Prescriptions in original bottles (be sure to bring enough for the entire program and verify that your medicine is legal in destination)
- Over-the-counter medications (headache, stomach, band-aids, anti-itch cream)
- Preferred snacks (like granola or protein bars)

- Clothing:
  - One nicer outfit
  - Socks and underwear
  - Pajamas
  - Rain gear
  - Shower shoes or flip-flops
  - Comfortable (closed-toe) walking shoes
  - Weather-appropriate clothing (swimsuits, winter jackets, etc.)

> Gifts
You may choose to bring small gifts or thank you cards for community members. Ideal gifts include those that reflect who you are and where you are from. For example, you may bring pens, flags, or t-shirts with your institution’s logo, or magnets with a picture of your city.

> Specific items for Pine Ridge
Pine Ridge is well known for extreme changes to weather in a very quick manner. It can be brutally cold in the early spring and extremely hot during the days, in the summer, while very cool in the evenings.
- Hiking Boots that are comfortable for walking and standing
- Loose-fitting (just not skin tight) long sleeve shirts that cover your shoulders, armpits, and stomach
- 2-3 pairs of long pants that are not leggings.
- Baseball cap to protect from the sun.

Amizade will remind you about specific items to pack for Pine Ridge and answer any questions about clothing during your pre-departure orientation. Please remember to check the weather and your itinerary as you pack.
> 8. While You’re Away

> Cultural Adjustment
Cultural adjustment is a term used to describe the variety of reactions including stress, excitement, or frustration that can occur when you travel to a new culture. People sometimes feel unsure about what is appropriate in the new culture, confused about how to manage daily tasks, amazed by a new cultural practice, frustrated with managing language and cultural barriers, and/or generally vulnerable. This is normal and affects people at different times throughout a cultural immersion program. It is possible to experience cultural adjustment even if you’re traveling within your home country — no two communities are exactly alike! Remember to rest, eat, and take care of your physical and emotional needs in order to function at your best! Don’t be afraid to communicate how you’re feeling.

> Reverse Cultural Adjustment
Many participants find that they encounter difficulties when transitioning home. Volunteers will be happy to return home and visit with family and friends, but after the initial reunions take place, they often find that they experience problems when trying to communicate the experience that they had in the community they visited. Many people feel alienated, knowing that they have grown while many of those around them remain the same. This is also a normal reaction. It may help to connect with others who have had similar travel experiences, as they understand the need to talk about the experience in greater detail. If you would like to be connected with past participants from an Amizade program, please let an Amizade staff member know and we will connect you.

> AMIZADE CONTACT INFORMATION
If someone from home needs to contact a volunteer with an emergency message and can’t reach them directly, they can phone the Amizade US office to relay a message.

- **Amizade US Office Phone**: 412-586-4986.
- Have the person leave:
  - Their name
  - Your name
  - Their phone number
  - The message to be relayed

For non-emergencies, please try to limit phone calls to Amizade’s business hours: 9 am – 4 pm EST from Monday - Friday.

- **Amizade Emergency Phone #**: 412-586-4986.
In an emergency, call the Amizade office phone number at any time. The line is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week during volunteer programs.

Your journey has now started!

See you in Pine Ridge