

**Volunteers around the world**

**CUSO people 'trying to become obsolete'**

By MONICA WILDE

Do you want the experience of another life-style, the chance to teach, to learn, to grow? Then maybe CUSO and you should get together.

"Every return volunteer comes back with a totally different outlook on life," says Greg Allen a member of York's CUSO committee. Their two-year term of service has given them a concerned, open mind, he says, — sometimes so open that they find it

difficult to readjust when they return to Canada.

CUSO, which stands for Canadian University Services Overseas, is a non-political, non-profit organization. At the request of host countries, CUSO sends volunteers to work as teachers and technicians in underdeveloped areas of the world.

In principle, CUSO takes all those who hold a university degree or have specialized technical training. In practice, those with a

technical or scientific degree are much more in demand than arts students.

Graduates in the social sciences, such as psychology or sociology, have found it especially difficult to be accepted by CUSO, since many of the requests from the host countries are for English and History teachers for their high schools. Such countries have not yet felt the need for the specialized knowledge of the social sciences.

CUSO's operations extend to 46 countries. Though volunteers have a choice of the area they wish to serve in, most are placed where the need is greatest. Many go to Africa, some to the Caribbean and South America. Volunteers also have a choice of serving in an urban versus an isolated area, or structured rather than unstructured job.

As teachers and advisors, CUSO volunteers are trying to help people to help themselves. As Allen puts it "the volunteers are trying to make themselves obsolete."

During their two-year term, volunteers are paid a small salary which corresponds to the appropriate wage level of the area they work in. Their travel expenses to and from the host country are

paid for them by CUSO. On their return volunteers are paid \$500 to help them get started in Canada.

For those who are still undergraduates, Crossroads International offers a chance to live, work and labor for one summer with students and residents of Africa or other underdeveloped areas. Crossroads teams have operated in many African countries to help build schools, community centres, hospitals, roads, and other projects.

Yet, for all the work projects meet vital local needs. Crossroads has been described as primarily "an experiment in communication." It aims to bring together people from different backgrounds into close understanding relationships.

Those who wish more information on Crossroads International or other summer exchange programs should contact the office of John Becker in 260 Vanier College.

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