

Daytime The Volunteer Traveler's Handbook

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By Daytime Web Staff

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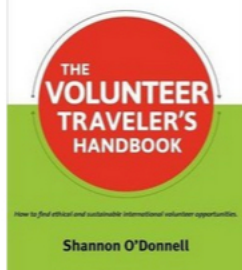
"Wanting to help is the easy part," says Shannon O'Donnell about the altruistic aspiration that hits many travelers to developing lands. "It's a wonderful motivation, but the who, what, where, and how of providing assistance really matter. Not every solution is right for the people you want to help."

While traveling, volunteering, and blogging (www.alittleadrift.com), the 29-year-old studied ethical ways for travelers to help and published her tips in *The Volunteer Traveler's Handbook*.

"One of the refrains I hear most is that it's hard to sort through the heaps of options," she says. O'Donnell launched [Grassroots Volunteering](#), a database of free and low-cost volunteering opportunities and sustainable tourism enterprises.

Working with students and volunteers, O'Donnell researches each organization and business in her growing list. It's a labor of love—and a slow one at that. But as her site grows, so do the opportunities and their impact. "More travelers would do good if it were easier to do good," she says. Her next step is to develop a mobile app that surfaces responsible enterprises nearby.

"Travel has the power to transform your life," says O'Donnell, who will spend the next year volunteering in Kenya. "With a little planning, it can also positively transform the places we visit."



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Riverbank Studios 200 South Parker St.

Tampa FL 33606

Telephone: 813.314.5337

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