

Crew Bio



Sarah Scheible (DEU) loved her job back in her home country, Germany. She spent five years flourishing as a strategical buyer for a start-up solar company. But when the organization unexpectedly had to shut its doors, it opened another door for Sarah.

“I heard of Mercy Ships years before, and the idea of volunteering in Africa on a hospital ship stuck with me. I had a choice to make – either get situated with a new company, or take time to explore what I could do with Mercy Ships.” With that in mind, given her background and experience in strategic supply management, a position in the supplies department on the *Africa Mercy* seemed like a perfect fit.

Sarah met the ship in Madagascar in May 2016 as it sailed to South Africa. Her initial three-and-a-half month commitment turned into a year as she decided to continue to the ship’s next field service in Benin. She hit the ground running, adding value to the supply team and feeling part of a larger mission from the start.

“We all work together towards something greater, sharing a common goal. Because of each person’s skills and their commitment to serving the people of the country we visit, we’re able to provide free, safe surgeries to those who don’t have access. Every part is essential in making this happen.”

The supply department is a key piece of the big puzzle (actually, they probably ordered the puzzle). Sarah and team support the ship’s operation by supplying almost anything and everything (excluding hospital and engineering supplies, which are handled by different departments). This includes food, furniture, cleaning and office supplies – you name it, Sarah’s probably procured it! Needs are identified, costed out, ordered, shipped, received, stored and delivered to the right department’s hands. And there’s no part of the world she won’t explore to find the best item at the best value – including hitting the streets of Benin, supporting local markets and vendors whenever possible.

Needless to say, the work, culture and life experiences are very different from what Sarah was used to at home – but in a refreshing way. She loves working with the hundreds of other volunteers from all around the world: “Different cultures have differing mindsets. We get to take our variety of views and put them together to create a great blend.” And the overall experience is broadening and reshaping her personally: “I have global values now,” she says. “When I leave, rather than revert back to old ways, I will take my global values with me and keep them as part of my life.”

In her day-to-day job, Sarah doesn’t interact with patients, but she knows her work is impacting them: “What we do - ordering supplies like food - helps feed our patients!” During her personal time, Sarah visits the hospital wards to remind herself of what Mercy Ships is all about - hope and healing for the patients we serve. Not long ago, she visited a young girl who’d been severely burned and was unable to move because of her bandages. She had been crying from the pain so Sarah decided to try and distract her by gently stroking her arms. The girl stopped crying and the patient’s mother said, “When you do this, she doesn’t feel the pain any more!” It made a lasting impact on Sarah.

Another lasting impact? Sarah says she's learned some valuable lessons like this one: "Doing the right thing' is now a higher priority for me than simply 'doing something right.' I'm learning to keep my focus on people, not tasks, making sure that love and appreciation comes across in what I do and how I do it."

Interested in being a key piece of the Mercy Ships puzzle? Check out our list of volunteer openings at [www.mercyships.org/volunteer!](http://www.mercyships.org/volunteer)