

ICADS SEMESTER PROGRAM COSTA RICA: POSSIBLE INTERNSHIPS 2005

This is a small selection of internships. There are many more options in similar and different areas.

ANDAR

This is an NGO that has been working for many years carrying out different community development projects to enhance sustainability mainly in rural areas. Most of the projects are targeted at women and are focused on economic development aimed at improving the quality of life of poor families. Through the creation of a sustainable and stable economic situation, women are able to empower themselves and have greater flexibility to deal with discrimination, domestic violence and gender issues. ANDAR offers the women small loans, teaches them basic accounting as well as business strategies and skills. Furthermore, they also offer courses to teach handicrafts, agro-eco-tourism and the production of medicinal plants. ANDAR has a 22 hectare farm located in Cartagena de Pococi, Province of Limon. The facility has a large conservation area dedicated to agro-ecotourist projects and the rest is allocated for the production of medicinal plants.

APROZONOC/Asociación de Productores Orgánicos de la Zona Norte de Cartago

This organization gathers about 35 farmers, men and women, who live and work in villages located on the slopes of the Irazu volcano. Their aim is to produce, develop, commercialize and promote organic farming in the area of Cartago in order to sustainably develop the area. The organization believes that organic farming is a means to improve the quality of life, the natural and social environment, as well as the economic situation of people. In order to achieve their goals, APROZONOC engages in and carries out a series of activities in three main areas: research, education, and commercialization and consumer education. Members participate in different agricultural fairs and markets, selling their products and educating consumers.

EBAIS Y CLÍNICAS DE ATENCIÓN PRIMARIA

The clinics provide basic health care services to the communities around them, mostly in the area of general medicine, gynecology, emergency service and minor surgery. They also have a strong focus on preventive care. The clinics and EBAIS are in charge of coordinating the preventive health care programs that health technicians and social workers carry out daily in the field in different communities. Students can engage in vaccination campaigns, hypertension, diabetes, and obesity control of the population, pregnancy control, teen pregnancy detection, environmental and social health issues.

FORO EMAUS

This is a non profit NGO working in defense of ecology and human rights on the banana plantations in Costa Rica's Atlantic Zone. It carries out research, education and information campaigns, political activism and networking with many human rights, ecological, governmental and non-governmental organizations searching for a system of banana production in harmony with nature. The organization engages in a great diversity of activities to defend the environment from traditional banana production, to denounce violations committed against workers on banana plantations and loading docks as well as against indigenous people and peasants in the Atlantic Zone. Besides focusing on social and environmental problems in the Atlantic Zone, the forum also engages in grass roots and economical struggle, the life of migrant workers, the struggle of women, their problems and health risks as banana workers. Students can be involved in research support and participate in the organization's different activities.

FUNDACIÓN ARTHUR GOUGH - ALBERGUE DE NIÑOS

The Aldea Infantil (Children's Home) is an institution of the Patronato Nacional de la Infancia (PANI), the Costa Rican governmental childcare agency. The home serves abandoned or abused children who are waiting to be reunited with their families after the latter have gone through intensive counseling, or who will be assigned to host families or adoptive parents. Interns work with groups of children in coordination with psychologists and social workers to create entertaining and educational activities: theater, music, walks, games, etc.

FUNDACIÓN ECOTROPICA - LA CANGREJA / THE CRAB

ECOTRÓPICA, an environmental foundation in Puriscal, is working to protect the only remaining patch of virgin forest in the region with immense biodiversity and water resources and to regenerate adjacent lands. A protected zone under Costa Rican law, "La Cangreja", is in the hands of private owners whose ability to use the land is limited by special rules for protected zones. Ecotrópica has slowly purchased part of the land and is presently working with landowners within the protected zone and with the surrounding communities, to manage the area accordingly, to regenerate the forest and allow only environmentally sound farming, sustainable forest harvesting, or scientific research. An important component of the internship is to promote the Foundation's work with local community groups to raise consciousness about sustainable-development projects.

FUNDACIÓN MUJER

Fundación Mujer is a non-profit organization to help women who own, run, or administrate small enterprises by providing technical and administrative training, as well as access to credit. Interns will collect case histories of successful micro-enterprises throughout the country, evaluate the Foundation's impact on women in micro-enterprises, assist facilitators

during training workshops and contribute to the elaboration of the Foundation's Annual Report. The main office is located in San José.

KINDERGARTEN SAN LUIS, SANTA ELENA-MONTEVERDE REGION

San Luis in the Santa Elena-Monteverde region is a small farming village, located in the wide valley adjacent to the Monteverde cloud forest. The community set up a Kinder that takes care of 15-20 children of Costa Rican farmers, working and living in the village, as well as a one room school house to impart primary education to children from the first to the sixth grade. The Intern can take part in both English and Spanish learning activities, and may simultaneously be active at other nearby internship sites.

ASEPROLA

ASEPROLA is a non-governmental non-profit labor organization providing support to local communities in Central America since 1985. They work specifically with labor organizations to progress and protect the rights of Central American working populations. Developing the capacity of local organizations through consultancy, investigation, and education to eradicate inequality and injustice in the workplace is our primary goal.

Currently ASEPROLA is working on three major campaigns that include: the labor struggle and its particular effect on the identity of women, the growing pressures of the flexibility of labor, and the consequences of free trade agreements and foreign investment on local populations.

OVSICORI. UNA (UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL). LABORATORIO DE QUÍMICA DE LA ATMÓSFERA

The Laboratory of Atmospheric Chemistry of the National University focuses its research on the study of ozone and volcanic emissions. It specializes in the analysis of air, water, and gas samples and carries out diverse studies related to volcanic gases, acid rain and other gases and liquids. The laboratory performs different kinds of analyses to detect the proportion and nature of particles in industrial emissions, air pollution, and environmental contamination for the Ministry of Health and private industries. Interns can engage in regular work, preparing reagents and samples, injecting rain samples in chromatographs, recording data on the computer and graphing results, as well as carry out special projects.

PANI/ PATRONATO NACIONAL DE LA INFANCIA

This is a Costa Rican governmental childcare institution for abandoned children or children who face difficult family situations, from ages 0-18. PANI runs shelters for 10-12 children. The children reside temporarily in these homes and leave for adoptive families, or when families resolve their problems, return home. The children stay in the homes anywhere from several days to several years. Interns have helped with counseling, physical education, library development, special education projects, and recreational activities.

VECINOS

Vecinos is a non-governmental community organization serving the youth and women of one of the most impoverished and stigmatized neighborhoods (impoverished neighborhoods) of San Jose. Community members opened Vecinos in the early 80's by a group of young artists, social workers, immigrants and others interested in the improvement of the community by offering activities and workshops aimed at changing racist attitudes, breaking cycles of intra-familial and community violence, creating positive activities for the communities' youth and offering training and education to all community members.

They currently offer extracurricular programs for youth, open-classroom education programs for adults, art and cultural programs for the community, support groups for abused members of the community, and individual counseling. They also have extension program in the local elementary schools that are a combination of recreation, art and counseling working on self-esteem, violence prevention, interracial understanding, and further community improvement. Finally, they are working with the schools and governmental institutions to establish citizen committees in the neighborhoods of the city working to detect situations of violence and to provide support and counseling for victims.

DESARROLLO INTEGRAL DE LAS MUJERES DE LA ZONA RURAL DEL GOLFO DE NICOYA

The Institute for Women's Studies (IEM) of the National University of Costa Rica is carrying out a series of projects in the region, aiming at improving the quality of life of women in this poor area of the country. Focusing on gender, the projects address health issues, education, human rights, community organization and development as well as the management of small-scale productive projects to provide income for the women. Thus, in some communities women are planting and raising oysters and other mollusks, in others women are interested in developing eco-tourism and a butterfly farm, yet in another village, the women are raising Iguanas for local consumption. Interns can participate in outward focusing and community focused project development in different communities.