

ICADS SEMESTER PROGRAM NICARAGUA POSSIBLE INTERNSHIPS 2005

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

ASOCIACIÓN PARA EL DESARROLLO DE CHAGÜTILLO

The rural community of Chagütillo is located 20 kilometers to the south of Matagalpa. In 1986 the community formed a non-profit community association to ensure the educational and health needs of the community. The association has formed a child care center that attends more than 100 children and provides the children with lunch. They also provide educational opportunities for adults and eventually hope to build a high school for the community. The community has built a health center, a community building, and a basketball court which is used for fund-raisers for community projects. The association was instrumental in providing the community with potable water and electricity, and has also built homes. There is a community garden of medicinal plants, and several women have been trained in traditional healing. A student could work in the preschool, the health clinic, in the garden and with other community activities.

ASOCIACION PARA EL DESARROLLO CAMPESINO, ADEC

ADEC is a small group of young activists working with few resources but tremendous initiative and energy. The group is interested in sustainable development and community development. Through the use of participatory methods, they provide technical agricultural assistance with an environment awareness. They have trained small cooperatives in the use of organic compost, the reduction of pesticides, the formation of nurseries as well as the development of reforestation efforts.

CENTRO DE PROMOCION CRISTIANA POR LA PAZ Y LA VIDA, (CASA DEL NINO)

This center was formed to attend to health concerns of women and the nutritional needs of children in the small community of San Ramon. The organizers plan activities with midwives and health promoters, and they cultivate and dry medicinal plants to distribute in the community. There are soy projects for children in the surrounding communities to address nutritional deficiencies. The project provides support for women who are developing small income generating projects, such as raising hens. The promoters organize workshops and visit the different groups and surrounding communities to attend to problems and provide follow up for the on-going projects.

“LAS HORMIGUITAS,” NIÑOS TRABAJADORES DE LA CALLE

The ‘Movimiento Comunal’ of Matagalpa initiated a program in 1993 to support the growing number of children who are forced to work in the streets to support their families. From a very early age, these children assume economic responsibility and abandon the opportunity to study. They are subjected to violence and abuse in the streets. The program has established a central meeting place where these children can receive a daily meal and learn to read and write. Projects could include tutoring, helping to maintain the center, etc.

MOVIMIENTO COMUNAL

The ‘Movimiento Comunal’ is a national, non-partisan organization that began as the Sandinista Committees for Community Development, which were formed to promote community participation, organization, and development immediately after the revolution. In the Matagalpa region the organization has developed projects that involve education, street children, community and household gardens, reforestation, potable water, and lobbying local governments around human rights (i.e. to defend the achievements of the housing reforms during the Sandinista regime). Currently, they are conducting a housing survey in Matagalpa to assess housing problems within the city. Projects would involve living in a neighborhood and working on a variety of community projects.

THE NICARAGUAN ASSOCIATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (ANPDH)

Is a non-governmental organization dedicated to upholding the basic rights of Nicaraguan citizens. ANPDH is based in the Nicaraguan capital, Managua, and has six other provincial offices. ANPDH publishes a bi-monthly publication – *Reflexión* – on human rights abuses both in Nicaragua and internationally. They also release pamphlets on how to know when human rights are violated which are targeted towards Nicaraguans with a less educated background. ANPDH is a non-partisan organization that avoids endorsing politicians or party politics. One of ANPDH’s most publicized actions was the creation in 1997 of successful municipal committees of human rights that are located throughout the country. Among other actions, ANPDH in Estelí provides inmates at ‘La Chacara’ prison with several support services. The volunteers can work at ANPDH attending to clients that come to the office, studying cases, serving as a liaison between the prisoners at ‘La Chácara’ and the ANPDH office, interviewing and evaluating eligible parole prisoners and teaching English and giving other classes to the inmates. In addition, student also can participate in trips to related offices and services and to the courts in the area.

RED DE MUJERES DE CONDEGA Y MUJERES CONSTRUCTORAS

The network of Mujeres de Condega is a feminist women’s group. This women group helps with the fight against domestic violence and deals with legal support for these women. Recently they have been working on the local agenda for proposal of further development in their local area on a government level, developing activities that involve citizen participation. In the

same area exists a project called “Las Mujeres Constructoras”, this group of women are working, building houses involving all aspects of construction. They also work in educational programs in a center for women’s issues and also they have a big workshop where they build furniture and woodwork. The student that choose this internship with “las mujeres de la Red” will have the opportunity to share and experience the work of these Nicaraguan women in this small, but interesting community of Condega.

SEMBRANDO ESPERANZAS (PLANTING HOPE), BIBLIOTECA LA CHISPA

Set in a poor neighborhood on the mountainous outskirts of Matagalpa, Sembrando Esperanzas’ mission is to broaden the educational opportunities for members of this somewhat marginalized community. The focal point of the project is a recently-opened library and small community center. Possible activities include teaching basic literacy to out of school street-kids, organizing reading groups, children’s and teenage theater activities, music in English classes, sports, gardening projects, baking classes and collaborating with teenage volunteers to coordinate tutoring and extra-curricular activities, as well as recruiting new youth and adult students. Depending on particular interests, students may also develop projects for the center. This year, the project expands its mission to help in the construction of a pre-school and a kitchen in the rural community of Pueblo Viejo.

SERVICIOS INFANTILES COMUNALES

In 1990 different neighborhoods in Matagalpa established six child care centers (Servicios Infantiles Comunales - SICs) in coordination with the Movimiento Comunal de Matagalpa to support working mothers. The centers provide education and recreation, as well as milk and a daily meal to over 400 children aged 0 - 6. The voluntary staff of 35 women work in education, health care, nutrition for the children, and administration of the project. Parents and community members help with caring for the grounds and maintenance. Funding and food is provided through governmental and non-governmental agencies. Many students have worked with these SICs in the past as teachers, substitute teachers, and have developed special projects with art, gardening, or recreation. Most recently, the Movimiento Comunal Matagalpa obtained financing to establish income generating projects in the SICs to address the long term economic sustainability of these centers. One of the SICs opened a food mill, one a small store, and one a butcher shop.

UNION DE COOPERATIVAS AGRICOLAS-UCA MIRAFLOR

Is a union of fourteen cooperatives that produce organic vegetables and coffee as well as cattle. This organization was founded to support social organization, technical assistance and credit and financial access of producers in the region of Miraflor. It conducts various programs to support agricultural production, technical and financial training and health and educational programs for women. Their gender program has created a women’s agricultural cooperative in the community of Cebollal, known as ‘Mujeres en Marcha’. They are producing organic vegetables, potatoes and coffee, in addition to cattle and milk. They have also established a nursery for the production and commercialization of fruit and other types of trees. Interns can also participate in the facilitations of girls and women’s support groups for the community.

FUNDACIÓN XOCHIQETZAL

This is an educational center where specialists work on the prevention of AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases. They develop workshops about sexuality and prejudice as it pertains to homosexuality. Their principal focus is around AIDS education and prevention. They offer confidential AIDS tests to the public and also pre and post-test counseling from their central clinic in Managua. This clinic offers both medical attention and psychological help. Additionally, they have a telephone-counseling program that is broadcast over the radio that covers themes like AIDS, STDs, and domestic violence. In Matagalpa, the organization has an office where they conduct workshops on sex education and AIDS and as coordinate with other projects in the city, as well as with rural communities. They also visit prisons and give information about the work they do.

LA LIMA RURAL HEALTH POST

This is a public health care facility, located in the community of La Lima, within the municipality of San Ramón. The center provides basic health services to 50 residents daily. This rural center attends patients from La Lima as well as surrounding communities who are without nearby access to healthcare. The majority of the patients are mothers and children, seeking routine check-ups, vaccinations, birth control and treatment for common illnesses. The center provides basic medications prescribed and vaccinations to its patients free of charge. The Post is served by a nurse practitioner and recently, due to high patient demand, a doctor.

NATURAL HEALER, MATAGALPA

Doña Juan Emilia Zeledón has become a well-respected natural healer in the Matagalpa area as well for residents in surrounding communities who travel as far as 2 hours to receive treatment. Basing her treatments on the urine samples of her patients, Doña Juana prescribes and cooks natural teas in her home in the Las Marias neighborhood of Matagalpa where she attends to her patients. Doña Juana, through oral recitation, has given talks to international visitors on her herbal remedies. Her advice and remedies are sought for nearly every medical problem, from kidney problems to unexplained rashes to intestinal problems. She attends around 50 patients daily.