

Name: Justues Chang

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Specialty: Family Medicine

Country: Peru

Location: Lima

Rural/Urban: Rural

Hospital or non-hospital placement: Non-hospital

Type of placement: Pre-clerkship

Date: July 25 – August 25, 2011

Project title:

Organization: Solidarity Experiences Abroad

Website: <http://www.brocku.ca/campus-ministries/solidarity>

Main language spoken: Spanish

Other language(s): English

Project description: The mainstay of our work was to assist in various health campaigns. This involved taking blood pressures, height & weight, fluoridation of teeth, general medicine, using finger lances to collect blood for anemia testing. On various occasions, we also had the opportunity to take some of the children in the shanty towns to the amusement park and zoo.

Student experience description: The objective of these global health trips is to learn. We learned about some of the disparities in healthcare between those with and without resources. We also learned that, as a community, people are able to adapt to even very difficult situations. This trip is not about gaining "medical" skills, but rather is an opportunity to expand our knowledge of the human aspect of medicine. We had many opportunities to take histories and complete very basic physicals. However, these were all in Spanish. Language was a huge barrier. With that said, I was still able to communicate through other means. I think this is one of the most important skills to take back from this trip.

Placement safety: Yes, I felt safe. The residence was fenced and had its own security guards. All transportation was provided or recommended through the organization. The group of us that went even felt safe enough to walk around the urban centres by ourselves at night.

Educational experience (out of 10): 9

Social/cultural experience (out of 10): 9

Does the organization have any religious affiliations? Yes

At any point did you feel expected to participate in religious activity? No

Program fee: \$4000-5000 (includes airfare, accommodation, and most meals)

Dress code: very casual (dress warm, Lima is cold!)

Accommodation: Within a retreat house (shared room with 1 other individual). Almost all meals are covered (except when we decided to go out). Sheets and blankets changed regularly. Some rooms had their own toilet/shower.

Accommodation cost: Note that cost of accommodation was included in the \$4900; no separate breakdown was provided.

Helpful hints: Bring warm clothes. If you go in the summer, it is the winter in Lima. (~10-15 degrees C), but very humid which makes it seem colder. A good sweater/fall jacket will be fine. Bring enough money for extra expenses (outings, gifts). (\$750-1000)

Questions you are glad to have asked before leaving on placement: What sources of funding are available (Queen's) What vaccinations are required (double check which are required, these are covered through Queen's health insurance)

Questions you WISHED you asked before leaving on placement: What clothes to bring. How much money to bring

Overall, would you recommend this placement for future students? Yes