

Specialty: A combination of many specialties including family medicine, internal medicine, ID - TB, etc.

Country: Peru

Location: Lima

Rural/Urban: Rural

Hospital or non-hospital placement: Both – hospital, schools, clinics, & shanty towns.

Type of placement: Pre-clerkship

Date: 07/31/2010 to 08/28/2010

Project title: SEA – Queen's Medicine, Peru 2010

Organization: Solidarity Experiences Abroad

Website: www.brocku.ca/campus-ministries/solidarity

Main language spoken: Spanish

Other language(s): Translators speak English

Project description: The general goal of Solidarity Experiences Abroad is to offer students an international solidarity experience to explore the realms of social justice and community development projects related to their career goals, open to explore the culture and spirituality, in developing countries. In addition, students are encouraged to explore possible volunteer hands-on opportunities in a cultural exposure to Latin American and/or African cultures of the country through a series of experiences, language classes, lectures and discussions.

In this particular SEA – Medicine Peru 2010 the focus is more specific into the development of hands-on health and medical projects like: "Policlinico and Hospitals" Experience, "Children's Health Check-up" Project, "Dental Hygiene Campaign" Project, "Blood Pressure" Project, "Vaccination Campaign" Project, "Alegria-Children with Disabilities" Project, "Shadowing Doctors and RNs In a Walk-in Clinic" Experience, etc.

Student experience description: During this elective, I participated in health campaigns and projects, triaged patients, distributed medicines, shadowed physicians, and performed house calls in the shantytowns, schools, clinics, and hospitals. This experience showed me practically and through first-hand experience the reality of what it means to work in a poor community and a low-resource setting. It was also an opportunity to compare and contrast the differences in healthcare available to different people within a country based on their wealth, as well as to see differences between medicine practiced in Canada and in other parts of the world. Having only completed one year of medical education prior to going on this trip, I felt that my knowledge and skills were very limited and so I was often not able to actually contribute as much to the medical work as I would have liked. However, this experience was still valuable for me as I learned a lot through observing and through the times when I was able to confidently participate.

Placement safety: Yes, as there was never really any reason to feel like I was in danger. The accommodations had good security as well.

Educational experience (out of 10): 7

Social/cultural experience (out of 10): 10

Does the organization have any religious affiliations? Yes

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

Program fee: \$5000

Dress code: Casual and/or scrubs.

Accommodation: In Lima-Peru, Santa Maria Retreat House is a clean, comfortable, inexpensive accommodation located in the district of Santiago de Surco in Lima, Peru. It is only a short drive away from many of the placements where students are able to volunteer. Found only a ten minute walk from the retreat house is a supermarket and internet cafes, allowing students easy access to most necessities. Also, the retreat house contains rooms ideal for group meetings and Spanish lessons along with a large dining room that easily accommodates a large group. Food is carefully and well prepared three times a day with special food concerns catered to, such as vegetarianism or special needs. Bottled water is always available. The compound is completely enclosed and safe at all entrances and exits, ensuring the security of the students.

Accommodation cost: Included in fee.

Helpful hints: While Spanish classes are provided on the trip and there are translators, it is probably a good idea to learn as much Spanish as you can prior to the trip, as more fluency in the language will enhance your experience.

Questions you are glad to have asked before leaving on placement: I am glad that the pre-departure training sessions provided me with practical tips for preparing for the trip.

Questions you WISHED you asked before leaving on placement: I wish I had a better idea of what things I would actually be doing while on the placement.

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