

MEDICAL AND SPANISH IMMERSION EXCHANGE TO BOLIVIA



This pilot exchange project has been created to assist medical practitioners who seek to improve their Spanish skills and cultural awareness of Spanish speaking clients. Participants in the exchange will also have the opportunity to provide medical services to one of the poorest populations in Latin America.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: Participants in the medical exchange will spend approximately half of their day in Spanish immersion courses and half of their day in medical clinics run by *Pro-Mujer*. In addition, participants will have the opportunity to live with Bolivian families, or if they desire, in their own apartments. For a greater immersion experience, living with families is encouraged.

Health Care Services:

- *Pro-Mujer* is a women's development organization that provides micro-financial services to 35,000 women in Bolivia (7,500 in Cochabamba in seven health care centers). *Pro-Mujer* also provides training in: business development, credit services, and health care services. Health care services are delivered by one nurse in each center. Two physicians, Dr. Tarifa (a Bolivian physician) and Dr. Rafael Olivares (a former Kaiser-Permanente physician) visit the centers throughout the week. Program participants will shadow in one of *Pro-Mujer*'s centers each morning and attend Spanish lessons in the afternoon.

Spanish Immersion: Participants will have several options for the Spanish immersion component of the exchange. Two language institutes are located near *Pro Mujer* clinics.

Maryknoll Institute -- The Maryknoll Institute is a language institute providing Spanish immersion courses to the volunteer/missionary communities for over 40 years.

Maryknoll has the reputation for being one of the best language schools in Latin America and is eager to enroll medical providers in the program. Instruction is often one-on-one and never exceeds one teacher for every two students. At the beginning of the course, Maryknoll tests students to determine each individual's personal learning methods and level of Spanish skills. They have one pupil learning through music!



Maryknoll contact information: Director Steve Judd, e-mail: sjudd@supernet.com.bo (for general questions). Specific questions should be directed to Rita Gomez, Registrar, through <http://www.ideim.org/>

- **Runawasi Language School** – The Runawasi Language School has been teaching foreign students Spanish in Bolivia for 14 years. It has a completely flexible class schedule in which students can choose both the time of day and number of hours per day of instruction.

Escuela Runawasi uses the communicative method and utilizes exercises, images, videos, dialogues, etc. as the means to facilitate communication. The school will use material adapted to the needs of every student (by employment, interests, etc.) Classes normally are one-on-one (one student-one teacher) or groups not to exceed three students can be formed for a day.

Exchange participants choosing this option, can register for the school by either filling in the online form of at <http://www.runawasi.org>. Students at a medium or advanced level should also indicate the subject and vocabulary they are interested in studying (*e.g.*, medical). They will try to satisfy your personal needs of learning the language and learning about another culture. For long stays (more than 180 hours) considerable discounts are offered.

Escuela Runawasi contact information: Director: Joaquin Hinojosa

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- **Private lessons:** Private lessons can be coordinated through Alejandro Alcazar Quiroz, Director of Linguistics at the Maryknoll Institute. Mr. Quiroz can coordinate private lessons between exchange participants and teachers at the Institute, outside of the Institute's regular schedule and fees. These lessons would be recommended for those participants who are not able to adhere to the regular schedule of either language institution. (See their web sites for details)

EXPENSES:

Participants will need to pay for airline tickets. Health/travel insurance is optional but recommended. If participants choose to stay with Bolivian families selected by the Maryknoll Institute, room and board will be approximately \$300/month. Families will provide 3 meals per day and laundry. The cost for a couple is around \$475 a month. For fees of the language institutes and schedules, please refer to their websites.

VISAS:

US citizens receive a 90-day tourist visa upon entering Bolivia. Extensions can be granted for longer stays.

INDIVIDUALS ELIGIBLE: University of Colorado-affiliated health care students and practitioners will be given first priority. Academic credit will be granted at the discretion of the home department. All other health care students and health care professionals will be considered on a rolling basis as slots become available.

For further information please contact: Dr. Rafael Olivares (USA) (303) 388-1195
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