

Application Procedure:

Thank you for your interest in the Child Family Health International (CFHI) Medical Student Exchange Program in Ecuador!

A minimum four week enrollment is required, however, we recommend at least 6 weeks to take better advantage of this extraordinary professional and cultural experience. Academic credit can be arranged with cooperation from your institution.

CFHI does not provide any type of insurance. All students **MUST** provide proof of active health coverage and medical liability insurance (medical students/residents only) before final confirmation of acceptance to our program. Most medical schools automatically provide you with this if you are actively enrolled.

You are free to make your own living arrangements in Ecuador. If you choose to take advantage of our homestay, arrangements must be made in advance. The cost of this homestay is paid directly to the family upon your arrival in Ecuador. Spanish instruction is arranged by the student and fees paid directly to the tutor or language school. Spanish lessons are approximately four American dollars per hour. Travel arrangements are the responsibility of each student.

Should you decide to apply to our program, please fill out the application form along with the \$25.00 non-refundable application fee. There are no deadlines for applications. Please apply at least four to six months in advance of your desired departure date to ensure space availability. The program in Cuenca is closed August 15-September 15 each year.

To keep our administrative costs to a minimum, we request that you correspond with us through our email address, cfhi@cfhi.org.

We look forward to hearing from you soon!

Outline of the Programs:

The programs are centered around two historical and majestic cities in Ecuador.

Cuenca

Available ONLY to 3rd and 4th year medical students with a conversational level of Spanish skills.

The city of Cuenca is where Fundacion CINTERANDES was founded. It is here where Dr. Rodas lives and where the Mobile Surgical Facility (MSF) is located. Students participating at this site will spend their time divided between the Mobile Surgical Facility, the Turi Integrative Rural Health Project, and medical school classes and hospital rounds at the University of Cuenca. Your preceptors here will be Dr. Edgar Rodas, his assistant and MSF anesthesiologist Ana Vacuna, and Dr. Francisco Vidal. Dra. Vicuna is the person who is responsible for assisting the students with their clinic schedules and other program details such as housing and transportation. She will also provide students with a general orientation upon arrival to Cuenca. Dr. Vidal is a General Practitioner and the Medical Director for Project Turi. He is well-liked by all students that work with him. Neither Dra. Vacuna or Dr. Vidal speak English very well. Dr. Rodas is fluent in English.

The University of Cuenca consists of three schools; the Law School, the Architectural School, and the Medical School. Students will be given the chance to sit in on classes at the Medical School and, depending on their level of Spanish, to do rounds and give talks. The university has its own community hospital where students will have the opportunity to see the comparisons and contrasts between a typical hospital in Ecuador and what they are most likely accustomed to here in the United States.

Please note, however, that for the last week of July, all of August and September, and later, in February, there are no classes at the university.

A typical student experience will consist of a combination of 1) rural clinical work, 2) visits to the university's medical school, and 3) the opportunity to accompany the Mobile Surgical Facility on its rounds. Pre-operative and post-operative visits to the rural villages may also be available.

Quito

Available to 1st to 4th year medical students with no requirement for level of Spanish skills. All students with minimal Spanish skills must devote 50% of their training to language classes or a private tutor.

This site is organized through the Ecuadorian Society of Family Medicine. Students will rotate through Hospitals Voz Andes and Enrique Garzes (General Internal Medicine), Baca Ortiz (Pediatric Hospital) and L'Hospital Maternidad (Obstetrics and Gynecology).

Urban clinics for the poor and a few rural clinical experiences are available.

A typical student experience will consist of a combination of 1) urban and rural clinical work, and 2) visits to the Catolica University's Medical School 3) visits to the other large specialty hospitals for the poor in Quito (Baca Ortiz and Maternidad)

HCJB Medical Caravan (Quito)

On an occasional basis, students may participate in the HCJB Medical Caravan clinical experience, where the students travel to distant parts of the Ecuadorian jungle with Missionary physicians from Voz Andes Hospital. This involves generally 3-6 day long trips into more remote areas of the country with a van equipped to do general medical work and some dentistry. They coordinate with a local community, often through a local church, for the time and accommodations. The medical work done is strictly general medicine; there is almost no follow-up, although urgent or severe problems are usually sent directly to Hospital Voz Andes. There is often an associated evangelistic outreach, but not always. It is a great experience for students, as they get to see a remote bit of country, get some good experience diagnosing and treating, and see what this aspect of mission work is all about. It is not a particularly effective way to deliver medical care because of its fragmentation and intermittent nature, but it does serve to draw people together, which is why HCJB continues it. Over the years, the caravan teams have visited almost every single corner of the country.

Medical Student Exchange Program

Why was this program developed?

While travelling as a medical student in Ecuador, South America, Dr. Evaleen Jones saw many parallels between health issues in developing countries and in the medically underserved in the United States. She also realized that speaking Spanish was a very useful skill for primary care physicians. To encourage and facilitate U.S. medical students to work abroad and learn Spanish, she created Child Family Health International.

Who is this program for?

Academic Training Requirements

The program is designed for students who have a comfortable level of Spanish language proficiency* and the following academic training:

- Medical Students, all levels
- Masters of Public Health Students (for periods of 4-6 months minimum)
- Medical Residents

* Students with minimal language abilities are accepted with the provision that the emphasis of their program experience will be directed to Spanish language training.

What opportunities does this program offer

- **Community Oriented Primary Care / Rural Clinics**
Students are placed in one of several Andean Mountain district clinics where they are involved with direct patient care, including completion of medical histories and examinations, physical diagnosis, and treatment plans. Participation in the clinics also exposes students to preventive services, including nutrition, immunizations, dental education, prenatal care, and water sanitation.
- **The Cinterandes Mobile Surgical Facility**
Students may participate in a variety of activities of the Mobile Surgical Facility (MSF) designed, constructed, and shipped to Ecuador by Child Family Health International. This 24 foot surgical suite is operated by Dr. Edgar Rodas, our program director in Cuenca, Ecuador. The MSF travels throughout the Andean Rain Forest providing free surgery to families unable to travel to the metropolitan areas for medical treatment.
- **University of Cuenca School of Medicine and the University Hospital**
Depending on the University calendar, students may participate on morning rounds, attend lectures and present clinical topics to their Ecuadorian peers at the University of Cuenca School of Medicine.
- **Research Opportunities**
Mini research projects can be arranged for interested students. Projects will be designed to support larger ongoing research programs of Child Family Health International.
- **Spanish Language Training**
Participants need a comfortable level of Spanish proficiency to communicate with patients. If you feel you need to improve your Spanish speaking skills, we can direct you to private tutorial sessions and language schools that will accommodate your clinical schedule.
- **Cross-Cultural Benefits**
Integrated in the clinical training are the personal benefits gained by immersing yourself in another culture. Homestays and daily activities such as shopping, transportation, and eating become valued and memorable experiences.

Child Family Health International

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Child Family Health International

Mobile Surgical Facility:

Fundacion CINTERANDES and the Mobile Surgical Facility (MSF) is a very popular rotation in Child Family Health International clerkship programs. A majority of students are interested in this rotation. For this reason, time in the Mobile Surgical Facility (MSF) will be rationed between all participants. Please also keep in mind that students at the University of Cuenca are also vying for spaces on the MSF! Dr. Rodas, president and founder of Fundacion CINTERANDES, will be responsible for all rotation schedules. **This rotation is restricted to upper level medical students (3rd and 4th year students) that have good to excellent Spanish communication skills.**

The Mobile Surgical Facility is a 24 foot self-contained operating room and health clinic attached to an Isuzu chassis. The money for the MSF was raised through fundraising activities by Child Family Health International and through some grant money given by the Ecuadorian government. It is equipped to complete ambulatory elective surgeries, such as the repair of hernias and undescended testes. Obstetrical and gynecological surgeries, including hysterectomies and tubal ligations are also performed. Ophthalmologic, orthopedic, and plastic surgery are performed in special circumstances.

The MSF travels to selected sites in rural villages the first and third Tuesday of each month and performs operations every Thursday at a clinic in Cuenca. Typically, doctors in the outlying areas will refer patients for surgery. Then a surgeon, along with the anesthesiologist, will visit the site to determine that an operation is indeed necessary before scheduling the patient for one of the MSF visits. After surgery has been performed there are post-operative visits at one week, one month, six months, and one year. Students may have the opportunity to go on these post-operative trips in the jeep as well.

The MSF makes four major excursions a year to the jungle region. These trips are of two weeks duration each and usually occur in February, May, July, and November. Other minor excursions are as follows but all schedules are subject to change:

- Guabo - 3 or 4 day trip, Province of Machala
- Sucua - 4 day trip, Province of Morono Santiago
- San Miguel de Porotos - 1 day trip, Province of Canar
- Cumbe - 1 day, Azuay Province
- Victoria de Portete - 1 day, Azuay Province
- Parcoloma - 1 day, Azuay Province
- Turi - 1 day, Azuay Province
- Manchangra - 1 day, Azuay Province
- San Joaquin - 1 day, Azuay Province

Side note : post-operative complications have been minimal at 1.06% compared with international standards of 1.5%. Also, the MSF was projecting 250 surgeries a year - in its two and one-half years it has already completed 1,092!

[Back to Student Handbook!](#)

