



NDI INTERNSHIP & EXTERNSHIP GUIDE

For students and non-medical volunteers

Last updated October 5, 2011

Join Natural Doctors International (NDI) for a 2 - 12 month naturopathic global health internship. Based in Nicaragua, team members assist the long-term volunteer doctor with administrative duties in NDI clinics. Interns may participate in experiential educational courses that visiting teams of US doctors, students and citizens attend. Learn and understand the impact of global economics on healthcare. Student medical volunteers may shadow NDI and Nicaraguan doctors in clinics/hospital. The time commitment is 40 hours weekly and is located in Nicaragua. Internships are unpaid and must pay a monthly donation determined by length of service. Additionally, interns are responsible for their own personal expenses, health insurance & travel expenses while in Nicaragua. If you have any questions please email internships@ndimed.org

Requirements for NDI Internships:

1. Commitment to the NDI mission and principles.
2. Conversational Spanish fluency preferred.
3. NDI global health course experience preferred (may be combined with one)
4. Knowledge of and willingness to learn about global naturopathic medicine
5. Knowledge and willingness to learn about global economics, US foreign, economic and trade and labor issues related to healthcare.
6. Experience and/or interest in naturopathic medicine or alternative health care
7. Experience and/or interest in planning participatory group educational program
8. Experience working with groups, excellent communication & interpersonal skills.
9. Experience in living and traveling abroad, especially in Latin America.
10. Personal initiative.
11. Computer literacy including proficiency in excel & good writing skills
12. Physical endurance and good health
13. Bachelors Degree or equivalent experience. (NO medical experience required)
14. Willingness to live in the physically demanding and at times stressful conditions of a developing country.

Responsibilities for NDI Global Health Interns:

1. **Executive Director Assistance:** Work closely with NDI Executive Director
2. **Office Management and Administrative Assistance:** Assist doctors with data entry of confidential patient information on a bi-weekly basis, restock pharmacy, inventory, etc.
3. **Global Health Course Assistance:** Help with logistics and facilitating classes of NDI courses on natural medicine – during courses volunteers work 10 concurrent days.
4. **Newsletter Layout:** Assist in production of monthly NDI online newsletter.
5. **Research:** Participate in research regarding natural medicine globally.
6. **Community Project Development:** Participate in team efforts to develop community health projects both locally and globally.
7. **Grant Writing:** Assist with grant selection and writing.
8. **Preceptorship:** Student interns may shadow doctors in the NDI clinics with year -long volunteer doctor.

Before Applying

- Read this guide!
- Download our NDI Global Health Course Info Packet. It contains essential info for all volunteers, although designed for our short-term 10-day trip attendees.

Applying

- NDI Internship Application (*apply electronically on www.ndimed.org under **apply** and then **internships***)

The following must be uploaded to the online application:

- Copy of your passport (must be valid for 6 months post travel)
- A signed NDI Liability Release Form
- Curriculum vitae – have each page signed and notarized
- Personal Statement: indicating your reasons for applying to this program, where you feel your strengths and weaknesses will be, and how you overcome challenges.
- Cross cultural experience essay: give an example of a significant experience that illustrates your ability to adapt cross-culturally.
- If you are a licensed medical professional you also must have a current license that is valid for dates you will be in Nicaragua and have it signed and notarized.

Fees

The fees for your program are determined by the amount of time you commit to NDI as well as previous service with NDI. We charge a nominal program fee compared to the majority of international programs. In addition to this fee, you will be responsible for all personal expenses, health insurance, and travel expenses to and from Nicaragua.

Program Fees (including housing and 3 meals per day)

- All - \$100.00 Non-Refundable Application Fee (paid on the online application)
- 2-3 months – NDI Brigade Alumni - \$800/month; Non-alumni - \$1300/month
- 4-6 months – NDI Brigade Alumni - \$600/month; Non-alumni - \$1100/month
- 7-12 months - \$500/month; Non-alumni - \$900/month
- Global Health Course Fee - \$1300 (*this fee only applies if a global health course is occurring during your stay and you have NOT already attended one.*) (*Note you must complete a full month to qualify– for ex, if you stay 3 ½ mths, you will pay the \$800/month, plus \$400 for the ½ month. If you stay 6 ½ mths you will pay \$600/month, plus \$300 for the ½ month*)

Once accepted into the program you will pay these fees by going to www.ndimed.org and clicking on [donate now](#).

Travel & Living Expenses

- Flight - \$300 - \$900 depending on where your flying from
- Travel Insurance - \$50 - \$500 (varies according to program duration)
- Travel expenses within Nicaragua when arriving and leaving the country -\$10 - \$70 one way (varies according to type of travel)
- Health Insurance – you must have current health insurance and emergency evacuation insurance to participate!

ONCE YOU ARE ACCEPTED

1. Flight Information & travel insurance must be sent **60 days prior** to your arrival
2. Coordinate your pickup in Managua with TEAM NDI or transportation to island
3. Maintain email correspondence with internships@ndimed.org

DOCUMENTS CHECKLIST

In order to make your trip smoother, please keep a copy of the following documents or information on your person.

- Passport copy (must be valid for 6 mths post travel) (color laminated copy is best)
- Flight Information – Arrival date, time, airline
- NDI Phone Contact Numbers (when dialing from the USA and Canada add 011-505 to each of the numbers below.
 - NDI – Dr Parker: Cell 8902-9933, Home 2569-4613, email drparker@ndimed.org
 - NDI Taxi Driver – Evert Dinarte Cell 8417-1145
- Copy of travel/emergency evacuation/health insurance

ARRIVING IN MANAGUA

Immigration & Customs - When your plane is about to land, you will be given two documents you must fill out – a customs form and an immigration form. Here is what to write:

- **Immigration** –will ask what you are doing and where you are staying. *Please write TOURISM/TURISMO. Your address is Los Angeles, Isla de Ometepe. YOU PAY \$10 to IMMIGRATION – Bringing a \$10 bill makes this much easier.*
- **Once you're through immigration** – you will get your luggage. Luggage tags are checked, so please have these ready. You will then get in a line to go through customs. If you are carrying medicine – customs will have your name.

Transportation - Note: If you want a Team NDI Member to pick you up all expenses incurred to do that will be paid by you – otherwise choose one of the following:

Morning Arrivals

- *NDI will either arrange a taxi to pick you up at the airport or a Team NDI Member. If a Team NDI Member does not pick, Evert Dinarte Taxi Service will (8886-1580). He will meet you at the airport and bring you to the Ferry. Cost \$60*

Afternoon/Evening Arrivals

- *Evert will pick you up and bring you to a local hostel or hotel (Backpackers (\$15/nt shared rooms) or Hotel Almendro (\$70/nt). You will spend the night there, and then he will pick you up in the morning and drive you (2 ½ hour ride) to the Ferry (1 hour ride). Cost is \$70.*

Safety In Managua

IF YOU ARE ARRANGING YOUR OWN TAXI TRANSPORTATION ONLY USE AIRPORT TAXIS – DO NOT CROSS THE STREET TO GET A CHEAPER TAXI. Unregistered taxi drivers have carried out recent holdups of tourists, so using them is NOT RECOMMENDED.

ONCE YOU ARRIVE AT NDI HEADQUARTERS

Orientation

Upon arrival in Nicaragua you will go through orientation. The NDI Team will help you get settled as you acclimate to your new surroundings. During this time, you will get to know the NDI team members, familiarize yourself with the organization, staff, resources, and projects currently in progress.

NDI Global Health Internship Training

Throughout your internship, NDI supports you with a series of tools to ensure the success of your work. Initially you will learn the most pressing health, economic, environmental, educational, and rights related development issues and initiatives in the local region. You will continue your training through a series of exercises, NDI Team meetings, and individual reading and research to enhance your internship experience.

Group Processing Sessions

NDI believes that in order to cultivate leaders in the global health movement we must actively address the spiritual, emotional and psychological questions that come with this type of work. Weekly at maximum and bi-monthly (at minimum) meetings with team NDI will aid in addressing these often-difficult questions. These sessions will also allow us to share resources, develop project work, confront cultural issues, and process the volunteer experience.

Sustainability Plan/Evaluation Report

In summation of your internship, you will be asked to produce a formatted description of what you learned, accomplished, and experienced, as well as a comprehensive evaluation. A portion of this work involves detailing how a future volunteer can maintain or further develop your work.

NDI INTERNSHIP Roles, Expectations, & Goals!

ROLES - NDI is a small grassroots non-profit organization. Working in our team requires a lot of flexibility, willingness to do many different kinds of jobs and a lot of independence. Often our interns are coordinating projects on their own, taking initiative to initiate projects, or working with the team to get tasks done. If you are a medical intern you will not ONLY be in the clinic – you will be helping with all aspects of NDI. You will preceptor with the full time doctor that is doing their year of service as well as have an opportunity to work with local MDs and nurses. If you are an administrative intern, you will be working more on the admin side with Dr. Tabatha Parker but may have some things to do in the clinic. Often the boundaries between doctors, interns, friends, and community are blurred because we live in a very small community. Flexibility in this area is a necessity – and if you are someone who is used to very defined boundaries and roles, this may not be the internship for you. Our team makes a huge commitment to be available – and to lend a hand for whatever task is at hand at the time. Your independence is essential to this process, and your flexibility with time- tables, etc. This is a very different culture where time is often relative and learning to go with the flow is very important!

PERSONAL BEHAVIOR – SEX, DRUGS & ROCK & ROLL - NDI recruits mature individuals that can represent the organization in our small pueblo. Interns must act respectfully with locals, know their limits when it comes to alcohol consumption and not partake in any illegal activities. Furthermore, fraternizing with locals causes MANY problems not just for NDI but also often for the individual. If you are thinking about committing to do service work –

whether for a short, medium or long term – you must take a good hard look at this issue. If your goal is to have a romance – NDI is not the place for you. Your actions directly impact us, and cultural differences, especially machismo, have resulted in awkward, unwanted, and even dangerous situations, especially for female volunteers. Likewise, the cultural & social norms and mores in Nicaragua are VERY different than our own, and what may appear to be a very sexual society in some ways, is VERY conservative in more ways than one might first think. Volunteers have unintentionally found himself or herself the butt of gossip because they did not understand or follow these social norms. The complexity of dating in Nicaragua is also complicated by the underlying machismoism. Lastly, volunteers leave, and while you might think a summer fling would be fun, people who are left behind once you return to you life in North America can be devastated. The hope that dating a gringo (white person from the USA) brings to a person, the pressure the person gets from his or her peers to NOT loose the gringo, and then the humiliation that follows when the volunteer does return can be psychologically damaging. Obviously, this behavior has consequences not only for NDI, but the local population as well. While there are success stories of cross-cultural relationships between overseas volunteers and locals, there are many more that do not end on a happy note.

While NDI believes in personal freedom, we also know that there are many unintended repercussions to sexual relations across cultural boundaries when doing international work of this nature and advise volunteers to practice prudence in this area.

EVALUATION – Each volunteer will be evaluated, depending on your length of service. For long-term volunteers, the first month is your evaluation month. If for any reason you are not fulfilling your role, or are not suited for this type of work, your month evaluation will address this. For shorter-term interns, externs and volunteers, you will be evaluated at the midway point of your service.

TERMINATION NDI reserves the right to terminate your service for any reason. If you participate in any behavior that may jeopardize the work of NDI, you will be terminated. In the unfortunate event that NDI has to terminate your volunteer service, you will not be eligible for job referrals, references, or other future help from NDI.

EXPECTATIONS - You are expected to show up for work! We have a lot of flexibility at NDI; everyone works at least an 8-hour workday. Interns and volunteers generally work 9 am – 5 pm with a 1-hour lunch break, 5 days per week. Lunch is generally from 12-1 pm. Your internship role is highly valued and we depend on you to help run our organization, but in order to do this *you must show up*. **Please do not ask for vacation during your internship.**

You may have a lot of flexibility in what you may be doing, and may work out of your home on certain days when working on projects, or entering data. Your weekends are usually free, and we encourage interns to travel on weekends other than when we have special events or Global Health Courses. During our 10-day Global Health Courses our roles often change as we are attending groups of students and doctors, and these roles will be laid out before the groups arrive. However, all Team NDI members are expected to be present during the full 10 days of the Global Health Courses. **You cannot take time off during these days.**

GOALS - Each intern will have specific goals – and NDI will work with you to help determine these. In general you will learn about Nicaragua, cultural sensitivity, naturopathic medicine in the developing world, & grassroots NGO building – but more than that it is an exploration of the

heart and service work.

Natural Doctors International is an equal opportunity employer that does not discriminate in its hiring practices and, in order to build the strongest organization possible, actively seeks a diverse applicant pool and strongly encourages diverse individuals (including regarding race, religion, gender or sexual orientation) to apply. Persons of color are especially encouraged to apply.

NDI Intern Packing List

Clothes To Bring

- Bandana
- Flip flops for showering
- Hat
- Long pants (1-2 pairs)
- Long sleeved shirt (1) - thin
- Pajamas
- Rain poncho or rain-resistant *light* jacket
- 2 pairs shorts/skirt/dress
- 1 Sneakers or walking shoes for heavy walking
- 1 Shoes/sandals/chacos/tevas
- Socks, underwear, etc
- Swim suit
- T-Shirts or conservative tank tops
- SCRUBS – 2 pairs

Medical Interns

Must Haves

- Clinic clothes –scrubs are required and closed toed shoes for all medical clinics shifts
- Medical Bag with stethoscope, portable EENT kit with charger and ear speculums, BP cuff, thermometer and thermometer covers, hand sanitizer, gloves, 1 sharpie marker, small Ziploc bags (for dispensing), label stickers, small notebook, pen light, watch, pocket antibiotic reference book,
- Reference books: pocket physical exam book, dermatology book, homeopathy reference book, etc.

Gear & Supplies To Bring

- Laptop (*not required but highly recommended!*)
- Any medicines you may need (in original containers—pack in carry-on!)
- Any supplements, immune boosters, tinctures, etc
- Backpack (small – not hiking)
- Camera
- Earplugs (you will want earplugs!)
- Flashlight/extra batteries (Petzel headlamp works great!)
- Insect repellent (with DEET)
- Light weight sleeping bag and bed sheet (check out REI for light weight bags)
- Sheets and Pillow (we highly recommend bringing 2 sets of single sheets and your own pillow)
- Mosquito Net
- Notebook, journal and **pens**
- Snack foods (trail mix, granola bars, nuts, dried fruit)
- Spanish dictionary or phrase book
- Sun Block (15+ or 30+)
- Sunglasses
- Tampons (not easily found on the island)
- Toiletries: soap, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste
- Towel
- Travel alarm clock
- **Wide-mouthed water bottle**
- Work Gloves – we work on a farm 1 day – please come prepared with work gloves to protect your hands!