

Clínica Esperanza

STUDENT & VOLUNTEER GUIDE





In this Student and Volunteer Guide you can find the answers to many of the questions you may have about volunteering at Clinica Esperanza, learn about different types of volunteers, discover housing opportunities and get a chance to meet some of the key players of our student and volunteer program!

While all of the information is vital, you will find a table of contents on the next page to help you navigate.

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Welcome Message



Peggy Stranges RN, Founder
Kallie Vallecillo RN, CEO

"Thank you for your interest in Clinica Esperanza. We would like to warmly welcome you as you are considering joining us as a student, instructor, or professional volunteer. We believe that our clinic will provide you with a life-changing experience, and we can't wait to embark on this adventure with you!"

About Clinca Esperanza

Clinica Esperanza is a Christian-oriented, non-denominational, non-profit organization that operates under the Honduran NGO, Asociacion de Salud Comunitaria, and is dedicated to the premise that healthcare is a basic human right. It is our commitment to create an environment where the best possible healthcare can be provided, with educational opportunities for both the people we serve and the local healthcare providers.

We are also committed to assisting healthcare professionals, medical students and others who wish to donate their resources, expertise, medications, and other supplies to improve the healthcare available to the people of the Bay Islands of Honduras.



Our Clinic

Clinica Esperanza, founded in 2000 from Peggy Stranges' kitchen table, is now a full-service medical clinic operating Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., serving over 100 patients per day.



Our clinic offers general medicine, pediatrics, women's health, obstetrics and gynecology, a diabetes program, dentistry, pharmacy, lab and a community health program. We are committed to serving the population who needs us the most. No one is ever turned away for the inability to pay. We strive to meet the long term needs of people with chronic conditions as well as being a light in the community for all.



Volunteer Opportunities

Are you looking for an experience as a volunteer in Honduras? Maybe you've dreamed of a medical mission trip in Roatan? Clinica Esperanza offers **volunteering opportunities** as well as an **International Medical Spanish Immersion Elective for students**.

Our clinic's operation depends on the time, talents, and donations of our volunteers and students who work alongside our employees during their service in the clinic. Depending on the education and skill level, medical volunteers will be allowed to take an active role in patient assessment and care.

We provide volunteer and student opportunities in the following areas:

- **Licensed Medical Professionals**
- **Residents and Students**
- **Non medical volunteers**

Read more on pages 4, 5, and 6 to learn about each opportunity





Licensed Medical Professionals (i.e MD, OD, DO, DDS, RN, NP)

Licensed medical professional volunteers join our staff in caring for our patients, in providing education, and assisting our staff in other ways in which they are qualified. We especially need medical specialists as their services are very limited on the island.

Licensed professionals are an asset to our team and are not required to make a donation to cover resources. If you are an instructor accompanying students you are considered a licensed medical professional and do not have to make the required donation for the clinical rotation.

Licensed professionals are allowed to stay at any housing accommodations they choose but are encouraged to take advantage of our housing facility. If you are staying at our housing facility you will receive a ride to and from the airport. (See pages 10-12 to learn more about housing).

Licensed professionals do not have to go through a licensing procedure in Honduras, rather they submit their documentation in our volunteer portal and will be working under the supervision of our medical director.





Residents and Students

(i.e. PA, MD, nursing, pharmacy, dental, pre-med students)

Resident doctors and various students are provided with a foreign rotation and assist our doctors and other staff in caring for our patients. They receive opportunities to increase their knowledge of their field or speciality as well as to fulfill hours required by their various programs of study, if needed. Visiting students will have the opportunity to get experience in multiple areas of our clinic, including our robust community health program, a student favorite.

There is a **required donation**, to continue the work of the clinic, associated with our student program. Please read more about the [International Medical Spanish Immersion Elective](#) on page 7 and 8.





Non medical volunteers (i.e. Maintenance, IT, Public Health)

Non medical volunteers allow us to focus on task that help our organization run more efficiently. Running a clinic requires more than just medical personnel. If you have skills you would like to offer Clinica Esperanza please contact us at info@clinicaesperanza.org to see if a placement can be made.

If you are on vacation and would like to come by for a tour and to meet our team please know you are welcome!



International Medical Spanish Immersion Elective

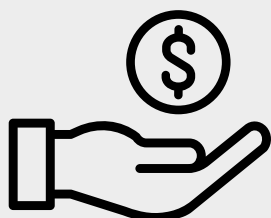
Student volunteers fall under our International Medical Spanish Immersion Elective.

Our elective provides a broad learning experience, combining great opportunities to learn from:

- **Clinical Instruction:** Students will be allowed to take an active role in patient assessment and care. Participants are actively involved in evaluating and managing the care of our patients. Depending on the education level there will be opportunities for students to work independently with our staff oversight. Sometimes universities travel in groups and will also provide an instructor.
- **Spanish Language Immersion Opportunity:** Our employees speak Spanish and most are bilingual. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to let the staff know their desire to be spoken to in Spanish in order to increase their proficiency in the language. Approximately 80% of our patients are Spanish speaking only. We suggest that our volunteers speak only in Spanish as much as possible. There are also additional immersion opportunities throughout the island. It is expected that one has an elementary understanding of Spanish and can converse some with others.
- **Culture Immersion:** Learning about a new culture and how health care extends beyond the exam room by participation in our Community Health Program.

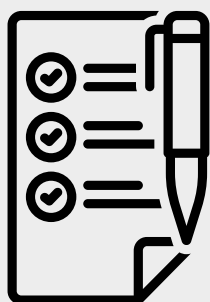


International Medical Spanish Immersion Elective (continued)



There is a **required donation**, to continue the work of the clinic, associated with our student program.

The donation fee is \$400 for two weeks or less or \$750 for up to 4 weeks. If you are interested in coming for more than one month it is \$750 per month.

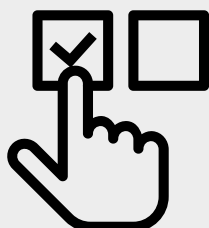


To assist in your preparation for your time with us we recommend the book "Manual for Relatively Painless Medical Spanish" (about \$20 on Amazon). This self-study program allows the volunteer to increase their knowledge of the Spanish language including their medical Spanish vocabulary.

While in Roatan if you complete 6-10 pages per day outside clinic hours you will feel more confident in conversing in Spanish. Our staff can assist with interpretation and questions. Please note that all is dependent on your assertiveness in learning and usage.



This does not include an immersion stay with a Spanish family. **Your housing will be with other volunteers and is not included in the required donation.** You can learn more about our housing on pages 10-12.



We ask that students are present in the clinic Monday-Friday 8am- 4pm unless otherwise cleared with accompanying instructor or our medical director.



How to Apply



- 1** Go to our website under the volunteer tab. Click the link for the volunteer program through Galaxy Digital. <https://clinicaesperanza.galaxydigital.com>
- 2** Click "Sign Up"
At the bottom of the first page please select 'yes' to receiving emails and then click 'continue' to go on to the full application. Complete sign up.
- 3** You will now see your dashboard. From the dashboard click "Opportunities". Browse for the opportunity that suits you. If you are traveling with a team, university group or ongoing partnership with Clinica Esperanza you will find your group name or institution. If you are a single traveler select either 'Student', 'Professional', or 'Non-medical'. Once you select your opportunity click 'respond' in the top right corner.
- 4** There will be a pop up asking you to submit the prerequisites needed to join us in Honduras. In this section you will upload the picture page of your passport, your medical license or student ID, and a University diploma or high school diploma or certificate if you have not graduated college. We realize that diplomas are not frequently asked for but the Ministry of Health in Honduras requires us to have one on file for all medical professionals.
- 5** After you submit your prerequisites you will be 'pending'. A member of our team will mark you as 'qualified', 'not qualified', or 'need to resubmit' if a document is not clear. You will receive these notifications via email. Please allow at least a week to receive notification.

When you are marked as 'qualified' you will receive an email inviting you back to the opportunity to finish responding. Click "respond" one last time to be added to the roster. You will receive an important email titled "Next steps for Clinica Esperanza". Congratulations, you are scheduled to come to Clinica Esperanza. See you soon!

Meet our Housing Directors



The Vanzee Family

“We are Nic and Adrien VanZee and along with our six children will be hosting your stay at the volunteer apartments, The Refuge. We look forward to meeting you and helping you along your journey. From getting to know you when you arrive, to fun activities and spending time together, we look forward to sharing our family and our beautiful island.”



The Vanzee family live on site and are excellent resources during your stay on Roatan. Nic and Adrien also do all the cooking and driving for **groups**.

If you are staying at the Refuge please email **nicvanzee@yahoo.com** to confirm your accommodations. If you are traveling as a group and participating in our meal program it is essential you make contact with Nic about food allergies and restrictions no less than 2 months before your arrival.



Housing



We offer mission housing for singles and groups. The housing facility, known as '**The Refuge**' is located about 5 minutes from the clinic in the neighborhood Mangrove Bight.

We require all **student volunteers** to stay at the Refuge for your safety and the protection of our program. Licensed and professional volunteers do have the option of staying off site but we recommend utilizing our housing. **If you stay off site, transportation to and from the clinic as well as to and from the airport are not included. Otherwise, when staying at the Refuge you will get airport transportation and a ride to and from the clinic each day for no extra cost.** The clinic is not in walking distance from the Refuge.



PRICING:

- Housing is \$150 per week per person. This does not include food.
- If you are traveling with a group of 6 or more we offer housing accommodations **plus** meals for \$69 per person per day. This includes 3 meals per day except for lunch on Sunday.



What will you find at The Refuge?



- The accommodations are apartment style with multiple rooms per space. There is a chance you will be in shared space with other volunteers of the same sex. Males and females are not placed together unless married. Students and instructors are also not placed together. Amenities include a kitchen in each apartment, a community pool, air conditioning, WIFI and outdoor space.
- The kitchen includes a gas stove, microwave, fridge/freezer and coffee maker. Additionally, each unit has: drinking water, dish soap, trash bags and a limited supply of cleaning products under the sink. There is a dining room table and chairs, and a living room with some combination of sofa and/or lounge chairs. The bedrooms contain single beds with linens, pillow and blanket for each bed. There is also a side table and shelving or dresser for storage. The bathroom includes bath towels, hand towels and toilet paper. Each unit has a balcony with seating and security doors for safety.
- Laundry isn't provided onsite but it can be sent out for a reasonable price and supports locals who provide this service.
- The Refuge has 24h security and is in a residential area. It is our responsibility to ensure we are doing all that we can to provide for the safety of our volunteers.

Example cost per person:

You are a student interested in coming for 3 weeks

\$750 required donation for student program

$\$150 \times 3 = \450 for housing

Total : \$1200

You are a licensed professional interested in coming for 2 weeks and staying at our housing

$\$150 \times 2 = \300 for housing

Total : \$300

You are part of a nursing school student group of 6 or more staying with us for 1 week

\$400 required donation

$\$69 \times 7 \text{ days} = \483 for housing and meals

Total : \$883

*Accompanying instructors do not pay the required donation



BEFORE YOU TRAVEL



1 SEND YOUR ITINERARY

Once you have booked your travel arrangements, **please upload a picture of your itinerary under the 'my files' section of the volunteer portal.** Be sure the airline, flight number, date, and arrival/departure times are clear.

We provide airport transportation for our volunteers and students staying at The Refuge.

2 Passport

The U.S. requires that your passport be **valid at least 6 months** beyond your U.S. departure date. The airlines will not allow you to board an international flight if your passport dates do not comply. You do NOT need a pre-arranged visa if coming from the U.S., it is provided at no cost upon arrival. Travelers from other countries besides the US, we ask that you check online with your government's web page.

3 COVID

You no longer need a COVID test for entry into Honduras or re-entry to the US. However, if you have any concerns and want a covid test, we can do that in the lab at the clinic.



4 Prechequeo

This is an online form that you need to fill out for the government as part of your entry. The actual form can only be completed 24h before entry but you can create your account earlier than that.

This also includes a health form that needs to be done within 48h of your flight, and it gets 'attached' to your online profile. The whole system is a bit tiresome so we suggest having patience and trying earlier than later.

Here is the link for that: <https://prechequeo.inm.gob.hn/login>

The part that is often a hang up for people is what to put for the arrival location. You want to choose the airport - Roatan's Airport is **Juan Manuel Galvez Int.** - from the drop-down menu. Additionally, it asks about the destination state/city and you want to select: Bay Islands and Roatan from those lists. It will also ask for your destination address, if you put **The Refuge, Mangrove Bight** in that box it will be fully sufficient.

5 TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is strongly recommended that all volunteers purchase travel insurance that provides for emergency air evacuation.

Some options are listed below:

- Travel Guard International www.travelguard.com
- CSA Travel Protection www.travelsecure.com
- Divers Alert network (DAN) www.diversalertnetwork.org
- Access America Travel Insurance www.allianztravelinsurance.com
- Travel Safe Insurance www.travelsafe.com
- Travelex insurance Services www.travelexinsurance.com
- Sevenscorners.com



WHAT TO PACK

- **Clothing:** Roatan is a tropical island and dress is casual. To maintain our high level of professionalism and to respect the local culture, we ask that you do not wear short shorts or sleeveless tops in the clinic or while participating in community outreach. Most volunteers wear scrubs in the clinic but they are not required. Don't forget your rain jacket.
- **Beach Towel:** We do not provide beach towels. Please bring one with you.
- **Snorkel gear:** (mask, snorkel & fins) – You are coming to one of the world's greatest reef systems.
- **Bathing suit:** We suggest bringing more than one so you'll always have a dry one ready to go.
- **Sun-screen:** You're coming to the land of sun! It is available on the island but the selection is limited and it is expensive.
- **Insect repellent:** We suggest 25-40% DEET. This is available at the grocery store but is expensive. The mosquitos and sand fleas are quite bothersome. It is very important to protect yourself from mosquito borne illnesses.
- **Small flashlight and extra batteries:** These are important to take with you, especially if you will be out after dark. It will also be useful in case of power outage.
- **Gloves:** The clinic is also asking that you bring a box or 2 of gloves in your size if possible. They have been running low and especially in some sizes so this will help ensure you have enough and help build our supply back up if you don't end up using them all before you go.

Important tip: Roatan has a ban on plastic grocery bags so you will not be given bags at the grocery store. If possible, bring a few small reusable shopping bags. Most stores will sell you reusable bags for less than a dollar if you forget to bring some.

ARRIVAL TO HONDURAS



1 IMMIGRATION

Immigration will stamp your passport upon arrival. This stamp acts as your VISA and has the required departure date. **Please take note of this date.** If you do not exit the country by this date or renew your VISA at the immigration office, you will be required to pay a significant fine. If you plan to stay in the country more than two weeks it is best if you get an invitation letter from us to show to an immigration officer to be sure you are given the amount of days you need. Our volunteer coordinator is aware of this and will communicate with you.

2 AIRPORT PICK UP

There will be a person holding a Clinica Esperanza sign with your name or group name on it. You will get a ride to the Refuge. Along the way there is an option to stop at a grocery store to stock up on essentials for your apartment or meals for your trip. There is a small grocery store in walking distance of the Refuge and clinic but this will give you an opportunity to get some of your shopping out of the way. The driver will also show you a few highlighted areas around the Refuge that will be helpful for you to know.



GOOD TO KNOW INFO

MONEY

US dollars (USD) are widely accepted on the island as well as the Honduran Lempira (Lemps). If you choose to use US dollars, bills that are torn, taped, written on or damaged in any way are not accepted here. It is best to bring denominations of \$10 or less. \$20 bills are the most counterfeited and some places of business will not accept them. The larger grocery stores usually accept larger bills.

CREDIT CARD

You will need a photo ID to use a credit card. We suggest using a copy of your driver's license or passport and keeping your passport in a safe and secure location.

Some stores and restaurants don't accept credit cards, so check before you order. We recommend you use credit cards or an ATM ONLY card. Debit cards can put you at risk for fraudulent withdrawals.

WATER

You should only drink bottled water. Most of the island restaurants, especially those frequented by tourists, use bottled water for customers, and they also use bottled water for the ice served in drinks. With the reduction in plastics on the island, please bring a water bottle with you. Roatan is reducing the impact of plastics and bottled water will no longer be widely available.



GOOD TO KNOW INFO

MAIL

Postal service in Honduras is not comparable to the United States Postal Service. Please do not expect to receive packages or letters while on Roatan.

SAFETY

Honduras is a developing nation and Roatan is a tourist destination. Please ask for advice before heading out on your own. Locals are very friendly, but some assume that tourists have lots of money and will steal items if given the opportunity. Keep your personal valuables such as your wallet/purse, camera, PC, etc. secure. You should always travel in groups of two or more. No one should take a taxi after dark by themselves. Please practice situational awareness and do not take money, cell phones, etc. out on the street or in public places.

GETTING AROUND

Always confirm the price before you get into a taxi. Most fares will be between Lps.40 and Lps.60 (25 lemps=\$1 USD) per person. Getting into West Bay or to the airport is quite expensive so please keep that in mind when planning your activities.



EXPECTATIONS



CONDUCT

You are a representative of the clinic while on the island. Our clinic is widely known and local residents that see any questionable behaviors won't hesitate to share with us. We take our standard of behavior very seriously and reserve the right to ask you to leave the program, without refund, if you do not adhere to our guidelines. You should not become intoxicated at any time during your stay on the Island. The legal drinking age is 21. You do not want to find yourself in a jail in Honduras. HIV and STD's are widespread and we suggest you avoid sexual relations during your time on the island.

COMMUNICATION

We take your safety and wellbeing very seriously. We ask that if you have a change in schedule, illness or other concern that you communicate that with a responsible member of our team.





WAYS TO PREPARE

We suggest that you read the following books in order to prepare to serve in a different culture:

1. When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor .and Yourself Paperback – by Steve Corbett & Brian Fikkert

2. When Healthcare Hurts: An Evidence Based Guide for Best Practices in Global Health Initiatives by Greg Seager

3. Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World by Tracy Kidder

4. The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures by Anne Fadiman



Download WhatsApp

All of the clinic staff, housing directors, and regular volunteers use Whatsapp in Honduras. It is our primary mode of communication. We ask that you download the app so you can easily communicate with us.



Q&A

What is there to do on weekends? The clinic is only open Monday-Friday so the weekend will be yours to enjoy and explore Roatan. We do not provide transportation for extra curricular activities unless agreed upon with someone on our team. There are snorkeling and beach opportunities with our staff at times. Nic and Adrien are excellent resources in guiding your choices of activities.

Will I learn Spanish on my trip? Our program, especially for students, is focused on immersion in a Spanish speaking clinic therefore you should come to Roatan with a basic level of Spanish. All of our staff members are bilingual and are available to help you. Between the workbook “Manual for Relatively Painless Medical Spanish” and working along side our staff your Spanish skills will greatly improve. Having the opportunity to practice with patients is a great way to be immersed in the language.

Are the outlets the same as the US? Yes, no need for any adapters.

Will my cell service work there? This depends on your carrier. Some carriers such as AT&T have full coverage in Honduras but if your carrier does not you can easily and inexpensively get a mobile chip here in Honduras. You will also have access to wifi at the Refuge and many other places on the island if you are unable to get cell service.

Is the Refuge walking distance to the clinic? No. We do not recommend walking to and from the clinic. It is approximately five minutes by car on a busy highway with poor shoulder space. We will provide you a ride to and from the clinic if you are staying at the Refuge. Your safety is very important to us.

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Contact Information

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