

IT IS MORE
BLESSED TO
GIVE THAN
TO RECEIVE
- HAY MAS
DICHA EN
DAR QUE EN
RECIBIR

ACTS 20:35



EL AYUDANTE

INTERN HANDBOOK
2024



OUR MISSION

El Ayudante is a nonprofit located in Leon, Nicaragua. We have been in operation since 2001. Although our organization has changed and developed over the years, our focus is to create sustainable growth in the lives of families and communities in Leon. We support 34 children living in adverse situations and host mission teams throughout the year that strategically work in communities throughout the city.

PARTNERSHIP

Because El Ayudante partners with mission teams from all over the US and works with many communities in Leon, we have the Principles of Partnership which help teams, EA staff, and communities to share a common vision. Our principles of partnership are based on the church, relationships, holistic work, empowerment, strengths, and longevity.

**ACT AS IF
WHAT YOU
DO MAKES
A
DIFFERENCE
- WILLIAM JAMES
- IT DOES**

INTERNSHIPS

DESIGN

Design interns will work on daily projects as well as long term projects involving photography and graphic design. Projects will vary depending on the time of the year but range from social media posts to ad campaigns and will involve working in the communities, with the HCN kids, and with staff on campus

EDUCATION/ PSYCH

Education and Psych interns will be primarily focused on working with the children at the HCN. This includes tutoring, leading extracurricular classes, assisting our trained teachers and psychologist, and working with parents.

MINISTRY

This internship will focus on serving communities with the mission teams that come to El Ayudante. Interns will participate in activities such as handing out food bags, constructing houses, leading workshops, assisting with devotionals, and much more.

WELCOME FROM THE DIRECTOR:



I would like to offer a warm welcome full of brotherly love in Jesus Christ on the part of El Ayudante, your new home in Leon, Nicaragua.

El Ayudante is a Christian ministry where we work with the Nicaraguan people to bring opportunities and transform lives of many families and communities.

The work of an intern is very important to El Ayudante. Interns are used across campus in different areas according to their strengths and abilities. Interns bring us great support in developing the programs of EA, in the HCN as well as in communities with mission teams.

I invite you to be open to getting to know our culture, our language, and our food and to feel like part of our family - interacting with our kids, staff, communities, and groups, and maintaining an enriched experience spiritually, personally, and socially.

We are very excited for you to be a part of El Ayudante and that you are open to the service of others.

Once child, one family, one community at a time.

God Bless You!
Vanessa Paz

CONTENTS

RESPONSIBILITIES

See a list of responsibilities for each internship divided by daily tasks, long term projects from the board, and other tasks that may come up.

WEEKLY REFLECTIONS

Read an overview of the intern program focus and a list of topics for each week of intern meetings.

HOURS & DRESS CODE

Find expected work hours, a dress code for different settings, and a helpful packing list.

FAQ'S & TIPS

Find frequently asked questions along with other helpful tips to have your best internship experience.

CHILD AWARENESS

Find important information about our child awareness training policy. This information will be covered in detail during orientation on site in Leon.

EXPECTATIONS & HOUSE RULES

Get list of rules and expectations for your time as an intern and living in the intern house.

NAVIGATING LEON

Get helpful and important information about travelling around Leon.

RELEASE FORMS

Print the release forms for being an intern at El Ayudante. Make sure to get them notarized!

EDUCATION

DAILY

Visiting communities and spending time on campus with staff and the HCN kids

Taking pictures for social media, marketing campaigns, and the EA website

FROM THE BOARD

Working on projects for the current campaigns of El Ayudante - may include creating infographics, brochures, social media posts, etc.

ADDITIONAL

Helping with campus projects, teams, or at the HCN as needed.

Other Tasks and Projects as needed

DESIGN

DAILY

Leading classes or activities with HCN kids

FROM THE BOARD

Assisting with projects for our sponsorship program such as newsletters, crafts, or Skypes.

ADDITIONAL

Helping with ongoing projects and activities at the HCN

Other Tasks and Projects as needed

DESIGN

DAILY

Assisting visiting mission teams with projects in communities on EA's campus, and at the HCN

FROM THE BOARD

Working on special projects such as social media posts or blogging

ADDITIONAL

Assisting campus staff with any special projects such as organizing donations, or running errands for teams

Other Tasks and Projects as needed

MINISTRY

HOURS:

Sunday - Friday 7 am - 6 pm

Saturday - Schedule Varies

When teams are on campus interns are expected to be at breakfast at the team house at 7 am, You will have a lunch break at 12 pm and then dinner at 5 pm. Normally you will have free time for the rest of the night after dinner, but occasionally you may be asked to help give a tour of the HCN or prep for the team's activities for the next day by packing food bags or other similar activities.

Generally teams leave on Fridays, so you will have Friday evening free. Most teams arrive on Saturday afternoons. You will have some Saturdays free. You may be asked to go to Managua to pick up a team on some Saturdays.

When no teams are on campus, working hours are 8:30 am - 5 pm.

DRESSCODE

WITH TEAMS & KIDS

Dress modestly - nothing see-through!
No spaghetti straps or low cut shirts!

Shorts are acceptable, but make sure they're a reasonable length.

Wear close toed shoes at work sites.

AT CHURCHES

Pants and a nice shirt are acceptable for both men and women.

Ladies - if you wear a dress or skirt, aim for knee length or longer and avoid low cut shirts.

IN TOWN

You are free to wear what you like during your free time. Keep in mind that you will automatically stand out if you are not Nicaraguan, Generally, Nicaraguans don't wear shorts in public. Try to avoid carrying a wallet in the open or carrying large bags in town.

PACKING LIST

CLOTHES

Pants/Capri/Shorts
Dress Clothes for Church with Teams
Shirts - Don't forget your EA T-shirt!
Bathing Suit (One piece when with the kids!) - Beach or Pool with Kids
Close-Toed Shoes and Shower Flip Flops
Rain Jacket (July - October)

OTHER GOODIES

Hammock	Sunscreen
Flashlight	Water Bottle
Laptop/Camera	Journal
Beach Towel	Headphones/earplugs
Bible	Allergy Meds, etc.
Bug Spray	Passport!!!

FOOD

Some food is very expensive or hard to find in Nicaragua. Below is a list of some items you may want to bring:
Peanut Butter/ Nutella
Granola Bars/Protein Bars or Powder

CHILD AWARENESS TRAINING

TEN SAFETY POLICIES

REASONING FOR POLICIES

1. Protect El Ayudante's children
2. Protect Adults interacting with EA's children
3. Teach kids healthy boundaries with adults
4. Be an example and set expectations so that our children know how to act with significant others and so that they recognize a situation where an adult may be behaving inappropriately with a child

1. When hugging a child, always give a side hug. High fives and knuckles are fine too.
2. When working one on one in a room with a child, always make sure there is an uncovered window where others can look in, or leave the door open.
3. When mentors are working with their mentee, do so in an open area or in a group setting.
4. Males (adults or adolescents) shall not be alone with a female or vice versa.

5. When a child goes off campus in a n El Ayudante vehicle, there always needs to be a second adult in the vehicle.

6. Be careful holding children. For kids 5 and under it is appropriate to hold them, For kids over 5 it is not appropriate.

7. If a child tells you something confidentially, you should maintain that confidentiality UNLESS the child is hurting someone else, hurting themselves, or someone is hurting them. These situation must be reported to Marisol and Maria Mercedes immediately.

8. Field Trips Off Campus with Kids

- Permission notes must be signed by a parent or guardian
- teen boys and girls cannot share a seat unless an adult is sitting across from them.
- teen boys and girls can't sit next to each other at the movies
- an EA representative must go with children and sponsors on all trips off campus if the child is under 18.

9. Always try to send children with a partner if they are going to another part of campus such as up to the team house or out to the garden.

10. When older children are interacting with the younger kids, make sure an adult is present, boys and girls aren't alone together, and that they are in a group setting.

OFF CAMPUS POLICY

Interns are allowed to travel off campus during their free time but never alone. You must be accompanied by at least one other intern or EA staff member.

The EA Director or Mission Team Liaison must ALWAYS be asked for permission to leave before going off campus.

No overnight trips are allowed.

TRAVEL COSTS

INEXPENSIVE, BUT NEEDS UPDATED

Bus into town one way = C\$10
(about \$0.25)

Taxi into town = C\$50 (about \$2)

Taxi from town to EA = C\$75
(about \$3.00)

ACTIVITIES IN LEON

MUSEUMS & PARKS

There are a number of art museums with small entrance costs including art, historical, and cultural museums.

Central Park is a great place to hang out in town. You can visit the cathedral and look out over the city, eat at a number of restaurants, visit vendors, or just people watch.

TOUR COMPANY TRIPS

there are a number of tour companies in town that offer trips to go volcano boarding, ziplining, or even surfing on the beach. Big Foot Hostel offers dependable tours. We also have a translator that is a professional tour guide and offers private tour options.

EATING OUT IN LEON

Leon has a number of food options from street food to formal restaurants. You can get a small snack or meal for a couple of dollars. The more expensive restaurants can cost between \$10 and \$15.

WEEKLY REFLECTIONS

OVERVIEW

Each week you will have a meeting with the Mission Team Liaison and EA Director to discuss the teams coming in, responsibilities for the week, and anything else you may need.

Part of this meeting time will be feedback on what you are doing well, how you can improve and what are the upcoming priorities based on the status of your projects. Part of it will be reflection. The goal of this reflection time is for you to grow in your professional skills and take initiative in developing your own internship experience. You will have one topic each week to reflect on and be prepared to discuss at the meeting. Over the 6 to 8 week internship, you will develop your problem solving skills and complete a finished product.

WEEK ONE:

Update your expectations and goals for your internship and time at El Ayudante? What have you been imagining or what are your first impressions? Consider both the personal and professional aspects.

WEEK TWO:

Now that you've had a week on the job, what is different than you expected? What are some potential challenges you're seeing? Think about yourself personally. Also think about EA as a whole.

WEEK THREE:

How have things changed? Have any of the potential problems been resolved? What are some action steps for solving the challenges that haven't been resolved?

WEEK FOUR:

What has been your biggest takeaway so far? It can be personal or professional. If you feel like you haven't had an "aha" moment, what's something that you think you could focus on for growth?

WEEK FIVE:

How are you feeling about leaving? What is one thing you'd like to accomplish before going? This can be something fun but also think of something meaningful for yourself or someone else.

WEEK SIX:

Choose any topic and write a blog post reflecting on your time at EA. This will be reviewed and posted on our website or Facebook page. You may write it on your personal blog if you have one. Please include at least 2 pictures.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: What costs can I expect for this internship?

A: You will need to purchase your plane ticket to and from Nicaragua and food for when there are no teams on campus. Plan to bring some extra money for transportation around Leon, souvenirs, and any other activities you want to do. You may have to book a hotel room the night before your departing flight depending on the time. This will be explained during pre-arrival orientation.

Q: Is there a certain day I need to book my flight? How do I get from the airport to EA?

A: You will need to coordinate your incoming and outgoing flight with the mission teams coming and leaving EA. A staff member will verify dates with you. EA will pick you up and take you to the airport or your hotel in Managua.

Q: Do I need to bring all of my money in cash?

A: No, there are multiple ATM's in town. It is best to not carry all of your money in cash at once. Your location on campus is safe and anything left in your room will be secure. Make sure to activate your debit/credit card for international use.

Q: I have a food allergy/ am a vegetaria/vegan/gluten free. Will there be food available for me?

A: Yes, our kitchen staff will make arrangements to meet your dietary needs when teams are on campus. When teams are gone, you can find suitable food choices at the supermarkets.

Q: What will the living conditions be like?

A: You will be living in a house with other interns with a kitchen, washer/ dryer, and common living area. You will have roommate(s) and may share a bathroom with the same sex. Each bedroom has two twin beds along with a sink, fans and windows, hanging wardrobe space, and closet shelf space. Detergent can be bought at the local supermarket.

Q: What vaccinations should I get, and do I need to bring any medications with me?

A: You should make sure that all of your general vaccinations are up to date, especially tetanus. No vaccines are required to enter Nicaragua, but the CDC recommends getting Hep A, Hep B, Typhoid, Influenza, and Rabies. Malaria pills are also suggested. Some of these are series of shots, so you'll need to look into this early. You may also want to bring hydrocortisone for mosquitos or allergy medicine because of the dust and pollen (December - June).

Q: What do I do if I need to come home early?

A: If you need to leave your internship early for an emergency, go straight to the MTL & Vanessa and explain your situation. They will confer with the board of directors and get back to you in a timely manner. Do NOT book anything until you have approval.

Q: What is emergency contact information for El Ayudante?

**A: John Button (US Contact) -
(269)601-2377 - john@eanicaragua.com
El Ayudante Office - (505)7832-0109**

**Address (No physical mail can be sent here):
De Laboratorios Divina, 1.3 Km Al Este
Reparto Rubén Darío, León, Nicaragua**

TIPS:

Keep a crisp \$10 bill in your carry on luggage. You will have to pay the immigration agent at the MGA airport before you go through baggage.

Keep your baggage claim tag in a place you can access it easily. You will be asked to show it before you are allowed to leave the baggage area in the Managua airport.

Make sure that all the cash you bring is crisp with no tears. Also, pack money in different places in case a piece of luggage gets lost or stolen.

INTERN EXPECTATIONS:

CHARACTERISTICS:

Be Timely - Be punctual to schedule activities and meetings. Turn all work in on time. Be sure to communicate ahead of time if there is an issue with an assigned deadline.

Be Flexible - Be ready to go anywhere or do anything. Your assignment may change or get moved to another day. Have the mindset to adjust your plans and attitude accordingly.

Be Joyful - Remember that you are the face of El Ayudante on campus and off. Do your best to start each day with a positive outlook that inspires others.

Put your Whole Heart into Everything - Rather you are working on a written assignment or out serving in a community, do your best and turn that time into an opportunity to learn and share with others.

Be Professional - Keep your professional relationships professional with teams, translators, and staff.

DAY TO DAY:

Always check in with the MTL - You must ask permission before planning outings off campus. Also check in with the MTL in case of emergency or if you are unsure of any situations at a work site.

Teams are our Guests - Treat them as Such - Always allow our guests to go through the meal line first and treat them as guests during their time at EA. Always be available to assist them during working hours.

Be a Leader on Site - No matter what internship you are a part of, you are a point person when working with teams. Be sure to know what the plan is for that activity. Do not take work away from team members, but be participatory.

INTERN HOUSE RULES:

1. Always turn the lights and electric fans off in any rooms you are not using and before leaving the house.

2. Always turn the living room air conditioning off when no one is using it and before leaving the house.

3. You may not sleep in the common areas of the house overnight.

4. Wash all dishes in a timely manner out of respect for your housemates.

5. Always ask permission before eating another intern's food.

6. Keep the floors in the common area clean.

7. Keep all personal possessions in your own room including shoes.

8. You will have an assigned day for laundry. Only do laundry on your day or be sure to ask permission among your housemates to do it another day.

9. Keep all bedroom doors closed. This helps the air conditioning work more effectively to cool the common area.

10. Keep the front and back door to the house closed. This helps prevent unwanted pests in the house.

11. Keep food sealed up and in cabinets or the refrigerator. Food left on counters attracts pests.

12. Be sure to clean out the cabinets and refrigerator at the end of your internship as well as your bedroom area.