

# DOCARE INTERNATIONAL and JUSTHOPE ROTATION GUIDEBOOK: CHACRASECA, NICARAGUA



Welcome to the DOCARE International Rotation Program. DOCARE offers global health rotations for students to gain practical clinical experience in Chacraseca, Nicaragua, while providing medical assistance to this rural, disadvantaged community.

We expect this rotation will challenge your abilities and enrich your mind. During your rotation, you will encounter many medical situations specific to the local population. You will gain an understanding of how healthcare can be delivered with limited equipment and resources, and you will be encouraged to rely on your mind and hands. In addition, you'll have the opportunity to immerse yourself in a rich cultural experience of daily life in this community.

We hope you will find your global health rotation a valuable addition to your learning experience in U.S. healthcare facilities. This guidebook exists to ensure you can quickly arrange travel, complete administrative steps, and protect your health, to ensure you can proceed with your work as smoothly as possible.

Take every opportunity to understand the medical system in Nicaragua, practice your Spanish, and have a great time. This will be one of the most rewarding rotations in medical school if you are able to fully immerse yourself in the Nicaraguan culture.

## ABOUT DOCARE INTERNATIONAL AND JUSTHOPE

### DOCARE International

For over 50 years, DOCARE's volunteers have brought much-needed health services to people with insufficient access to care. Our early teams flew their own airplanes to serve the Tarahumara Indians in Northern Mexico (who have since been made slightly famous by Christopher MacDougall's 2009 book *Born to Run*). DOCARE International has since expanded our mission to serve populations around the world, with special attention to Central America.

Today, DOCARE is a not-for-profit, tax-exempt organization with continuity of care clinics in Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Kenya. Our volunteer workforce represents a wide range of medical disciplines: osteopathic physicians, osteopathic medical students, plus nurses, dentists, veterinarians, pharmacists, podiatrists, physician assistants, physical therapists, paramedical personnel, and translators. We're bound together by a common thread: concern for the unmet health needs of underserved populations.

DOCARE has been a partner with JustHope for several years, primarily providing clinical support, short-term medical mission trips, and rotation opportunities for US-based osteopathic medical students.



### Partnership with JustHope, Inc.

Our clinic is operated in partnership with JustHope, Inc., an Oklahoma-based nonprofit. JustHope began in 1986 as a project of founder Leslie Penrose. At first an informal group, the organization is now a not-for-profit organization whose vision is to create a network of long-term partnerships between North American communities and Nicaraguan communities, working collaboratively to increase cultural understanding, combat extreme poverty, and nurture sustainable communities, and achieving more together than any single group could do alone.

JustHope has a 31-year history in Chacraseca, and has also expanded to additional sites in Nicaragua. In addition to clinical services, the organization has worked to provide clean water, improved education, and a cultural center to Chacraseca. "More than investing a week in one another's lives..... Solidarity is about knowing what the real struggles and joys are in a partner's life, and making those struggles and joys your own in a way that has real, concrete effects on the priorities you set, the options you explore."

## CHECKLIST: YOUR ROTATION IN A SINGLE PAGE

1. [Read the rotation pages of DOCARE International's website.](#)
2. [Apply to the rotation \(timeline: 4-16 months before travel\)](#). All rotation applications are managed through My Clinical Exchange (mCE). Once your rotation is approved you will need to set up an account with mCE and upload all required documents there.
3. A DOCARE staff member ([docare@osteopathic.org](mailto:docare@osteopathic.org)) will contact you to confirm dates that are feasible for both the clinic and you.
4. Once you have received this, you can consider the rotation arrangement confirmed. Please
  - a. Communicate about the rotation to your university/residency program,
  - b. Download and review the rotation guidebook (PDF) ([available on the DOCARE website](#)),
  - c. [Review and submit this form to JustHope](#) (PDF),
  - d. [Pay the DOCARE rotation fee online, and](#)
  - e. [Register, upload a passport page, and pay at the JustHope website](#) (timeline: **by 60 days before rotation starts**).
6. Make travel arrangements.
  - a. If you are not a US citizen, secure any visas and travel permission (timeline: **ASAP**).
  - b. Book flights (timeline: **ASAP for best airfares; at least 30 days before the travel date**).
  - c. Make lodging arrangements (timeline: **at least 30 days before the rotation start date**).
  - d. Purchase travel insurance (timeline: **before your departure**).
  - e. Send copies of passport page and insurance document to JustHope. Share [your flight itinerary via the JustHope website](#) (timeline: **before your departure**).
  - f. Prepare to travel: complete visa procedures (if any), travel medical appointments, packing, and currency exchange (timeline: **before your departure**).
7. Prepare for evaluations and university/residency requirements.
  - a. Complete any procedures at your university/residency (e.g., registering for credits).
  - b. Ensure you have the right university/program paperwork for the Nicaraguan supervising physician to evaluate you (timeline: **before your departure**).
8. Do the rotation: travel to Chacraseca and work in the clinic with Dr. Somarriba.
9. Complete evaluations and surveys.
  - a. Dr. Somarriba will meet with you to complete university/residency evaluations (timeline: **by the final day of your rotation**).
  - b. Complete [a post-rotation survey from DOCARE](#) (timeline: **within 30 days after the rotation is completed**). (Communicate any additional comments whenever you like.)

## TRAVEL PLANNING

### Passport and Visa

A passport is required to enter and exit Nicaragua. If you are a U.S. citizen but do not have a current passport, please keep in mind that it takes 6-8 weeks to obtain or renew a passport in advance of travel.

No visa to Nicaragua is required of U.S. citizens who plan to stay in the country less than three months. A visa may be required for individuals with passports from a country other than the US. If you are not an American citizen, it is up to you to contact government offices to fulfill your specific visa requirements.

We advise that all volunteers photograph or photocopy their passport and keep a copy in three places: printed and on your person; in electronic form in your email inbox; and in the hands of a family member back home. This ensures that the passport information will remain accessible in any circumstance. In particular, this will facilitate replacement in case of loss or theft. U.S. citizens whose passports are lost or stolen in Nicaragua must obtain a new passport and present it together with a police report of the incident to the main immigration office in Managua to obtain permission to depart Nicaragua. If you are not a U.S. citizen, please check in with government officials regarding this requirement.

### Air Travel

It is your responsibility to secure a round-trip ticket into Augusto C. Sandino Airport (MGA) in Managua, Nicaragua. Delta, American, United, and Spirit Airlines fly to and from Nicaragua, but you may use any carrier convenient to you. Direct flights from LA, Miami, and Houston are available daily. Airfares change frequently, especially in January, and you are encouraged to book your flight early to get the best fares.

The rotation will begin on a Monday. Students should plan to fly into Managua on a Sunday by noon, to be available for an orientation session that afternoon. If you can't find a flight that lands by Sunday at noon, please book a flight that lands on Saturday by 5:30 p.m. As Chacraseca is two hours from Managua, this timing facilitates travel to the village.

### Insurance

Insurance is required for all rotation participants. Most United States plans do not cover any medical treatment abroad, so it is necessary for all volunteers to purchase medical and evacuation (medevac) insurance for the trip. We require a minimum coverage level of \$500,000. Vendors can be found in [the links section](#) of the DOCARE website. Students might wish to check the insurance policies available via their degree program, as some schools include medevac insurance.

Travel insurance designed to protect you against cancellation or trip interruption is an optional addition. This is not a substitute against medevac insurance.

Please note that most travel insurance policies do not cover high-risk activities, such as mountain-climbing or scuba-diving, even with high-risk activity riders. They also do not cover incidents that occur as a result of alcohol or drug use. Therefore, DOCARE recommends all participants exercise caution in high-risk activities and alcohol use. (DOCARE strictly prohibits drug use.)

### Submit These Documents

Send copies of your flight itinerary, passport page, and insurance policy to [office@justhope.com](mailto:office@justhope.com) and [docare@osteopathic.org](mailto:docare@osteopathic.org).

## ARRIVING IN NICARAGUA

### Departure Tips

Keep your personal luggage on board the plane as a carry-on bag rather than checking it. Checked luggage is often lost or arrives to Nicaragua several days late.

If you do need to check a bag, be sure you keep any luggage claim tickets you have. You will need them in Nicaragua to clear customs or claim a lost bag.

Fill your water bottles in the U.S, if you have a chance once you are through security. You'll get water in Nicaragua, but it may take a couple of hours, so having a full water bottle will be helpful.

### Customs and Immigration

On your flight to Managua, flight attendants will pass out forms for Nicaraguan Immigration and Customs. Please fill out the immigration form as follows:

- **Reason for visiting:** tourism (this category includes short-term students whose credits/degrees are via institutions outside Nicaragua).
- **Destination in Nicaragua:** La Casa de Paz, Chacraseca, León.
- **Declarations:** none (any donation items you might have brought are classified as gifts and do not need to be listed).

If a health form is provided, please be aware that checking "yes" to anything is likely to trigger a special check at customs.

At the Managua airport, you will go directly to the Immigration line for "Visitors." The agent will ask for your passport, immigration form, a health form, and US\$10 cash. (Please bring the money in bills that have not been torn or marked on, as these will be rejected.) The agent put a small piece of paper in your passport, which you should leave as is. You will need this when exiting the country.

### Avoid Passport Theft or Loss

Put away your passport immediately when you leave the immigration desk, as passport loss and theft can be an issue in the busy airport. Keep a close eye on it throughout your time in the airport.

### Luggage

Claim your luggage in the baggage claim and complete customs. They will ask for a customs form you filled out on the plane. Customs may or may not inspect your luggage, but you should be prepared to show prescriptions for any medications you have brought for your personal use (to avoid confiscation).

If part of your luggage doesn't make it, work with baggage claim workers to have them deliver the bags to San Juan de León Hotel in León. The Chacraseca clinic staff will help you retrieve them there.

### Ground Transport

When you arrive at the airport in Managua and have gone through Customs and Immigration, your driver will be waiting for you with a small sign that says "JustHope." He has already been paid. He will take you to León, where your interpreter will meet you and go with you to Chacraseca to show you around. If you cannot find your driver, go to the Best Western Las Mercedes across from the airport and call JustHope Director of Operations Julio Delgado at 011-505-8723-1567.

## MONEY MATTERS

### Currency

The exchange rates in the Managua airport are very unfavorable to travelers. You might wish to change US\$100-200 into the local currency, the *córdoba*, before leaving the United States, where you might be able to secure the best exchange rate. Do this several days before your departure, as local banks or currency exchanges might need to order the currency for you, and if possible ask specifically for clean, undamaged *córdobas*. Nicaraguan vendors and even banks will not accept dirty or torn *córdobas*.

If you wish to exchange currency upon arrival in Nicaragua, we recommend waiting until you reach León. Wherever you change money in Nicaragua, it is advisable to carry US\$10, \$20 or \$50 bills, as smaller notes sometimes draw a worse exchange rate. Nicaraguan bank regulations are such that almost all merchants can accept U.S. dollars, but, as with *córdobas*, only on the condition that they are not worn, damaged, or written upon. When you withdraw cash before traveling, ask your US bank for clean bills.

Businesses that accept U.S. dollars will often give change in *córdobas*, often at a lower exchange rate than a bank might give. Finally, owners of smaller and rural businesses, informal vendors, and drivers of collective taxis and buses might not know the exchange rate or have easy access to a bank. For all these reasons, *córdobas* are typically easier to use than U.S. dollars, and it is beneficial for your convenience and your personal safety to keep Nicaraguan currency on hand.

### Credit Cards

Visa and MasterCard are sometimes accepted in the larger towns, and you can often count on midrange hotels and restaurants to take them. In places where electricity is unreliable (for instance, most of the Caribbean Coast), credit cards may not be widely accepted, so be prepared and carry cash. Expect a surcharge for using a credit card.

### ATMs

You can get cash from the ATMs (usually located in banks and gas stations), but be alert of your surroundings and use common sense. At this writing, there were ATM machines in León and Managua. ATMs will dispense *córdobas*. Your originating bank might charge a currency exchange fee; contact them for details prior to traveling. You might wish to make sure that the ATM you're using is part of the networks listed on the back of your bank card.

### Banks

Most large bank branches in Nicaragua have at least one employee or manager that speaks English, but most banks provide few services for non-resident expats and tourists. Expect to manage your bank account online via your usual internet-based account; via direct requests for customer service through the same internet resources or toll-free numbers you use in the US; or by delaying personal banking operations until you return to the U.S. if possible. Make sure you bring your passport when exchanging money or completing any other transaction at a bank.

### Budget

A budget will be forthcoming in a revised version of this document.

## LIFE IN NICARAGUA: ACCOMMODATIONS & PRACTICALITIES

### Basics

*Time Zone:* Nicaragua is in the Central Standard Time zone and does not observe daylight savings time.

*Electricity:* Nicaraguan electric current is 110 V/60 Hz, which means American plugs will work. Circuits are generally weak and can be overloaded easily, so avoid running multiple appliances/devices at once.

### Lodging

*Managua:* If you need to spend Saturday night in Managua upon arrival at the airport, you're free to book the hotel of your choosing. JustHope recommends the Best Western hotel across from the airport.

*Peace House:* In Chacraseca, your lodging will be at the Peace House. The Peace House is a home and retreat built by a Maryknoll nun. It is located steps away from the clinic. There are two small rooms for residents, plus a shared bathroom, a living room with a television, a wraparound porch, internet, and a kitchen for your use. The Peace House offers cots that you can move to sleep where you like, including the porch. The rate is six dollars per night. JustHope will arrange your stay prior to your arrival.

The Peace House administrator is Janet Chevez. Two other women are often available at the Peace House: Maria and Naomi, Maria's daughter. All three will be around helping with your arrangements, including food, laundry, and any questions you might have. If the water goes off, you can contact them or go to Auxiliadora Salgado's house, which is half a block from the peace house. In addition, Auxiliadora's father works at the Peace House, has a key, and can assist you if you lose your key.

*León:* If you want to spend a night in León, there is a hostel called "La Herradura," which is on the same street as the JustHope office. It is seven US dollars per day. Additional hostel options are available in the \$10-30 range, as well as fancier hotels and additional rental accommodations.



### Food

*At the Peace House:* You can opt to have three cooked meals per day at the Peace House. The rate is ten dollars per day. The meals typically consist of beans and rice, with one meal a day containing chicken, pork, or another meat; if you are a vegetarian or have dietary restrictions, please communicate with JustHope staff about an accommodation. Bottled water is available for your use while at the Peace House. You may also cook for yourself at the Peace House, and can shop at the local supermarket or at supermarkets in León.

*Outside the Peace House:* In addition, you might wish to sample the delicious local fare available outside the house. Please see the "Time outside the Clinic" section for more information on Nicaraguan cuisine. By all means, enjoy. But keep in mind that food safety is a concern for any traveler, and please abide by the guidance in the health and safety section in this guidebook.

## **Internet and Phone**

*Internet:* Wifi is available in the Peace House. This is the password: **CPD8S1DF45**

*Cell Phones:* JustHope will provide a Nicaraguan cellphone as a safety measure. Your phone works on prepaid credits, so when you run out, you'll have to load more credits onto the phone. It is affordable and easy. Ask one of your translators for assistance the first time.

Please see the appendix for a list of contacts for JustHope and the clinics. In case of any emergency, please call Julio Delgado, and, if necessary, other JustHope staff. You can reach police by dialing 811.

## **Clothing**

*Laundry:* Workers in Chacraseca will do laundry by hand for US\$1 per six items. Leave your laundry and money with Jeaneth, the Peace House Administrator, in the morning, and she will arrange for it to be washed and returned to you that evening.

*Appropriate Clinical Attire:* DOCARE will provide you with two scrub tops to wear at the clinic. Scrub bottoms are encouraged, but these will not be provided to you. Nice khaki or denim pants are also allowed. No white coat is needed.

*Casual Attire:* For your time outside of the clinic, keep in mind that Nicaraguan people dress modestly, especially in rural areas. Shorts and skirts above the knee should be avoided. Also, avoid bringing expensive jewelry or watches. Demonstrating wealth can be insulting and might draw the attention of thieves, as in any other city worldwide.

Most places you go will be casual. Spring- or summer-weight clothing is fine during the day for most of the year. The evenings are cool, and the rainy season is May through October, so sweaters and rain jackets are useful. Comfortable shoes are a must since walking is the primary means of transportation. Wearing sandals or flip flops could result in foot injury. (See the appendix for a packing list.)

## **Transportation**

*General Information:* You can feel confident and safe using the local public transportation. If you have a question, you can ask the medical staff and your translator. They also take public transportation, and will be able to assist with directions to any place you would like to go. In addition, a bus schedule to and from León might be available in the clinic, but please use it with the caveat that schedules often change.

*Within Chacraseca:* The clinic is steps away from the Peace House, so no transportation is necessary.

*Starting from Chacraseca:* The bus stop to go to León or to JustHope's partner clinic in Las Mulas is in front of the only hardware store in town. The bus fare to go to León or to the other clinic is 10 *cordobas*. The last bus stop is "La Estacion." Buses into León typically depart Chacraseca until about 2 p.m. If you need or want to go to León after this point, you will need to hire a taxi. Please see details on taxis below.

*In León:* Although León is very walkable, you can also access taxis to any place you wish to go. Taxi services in León are generally safe and low-priced (in the US\$1 range).

*Returning to Chacraseca:* The last bus leaves from León to Chacraseca at about 6:30 p.m., but you need to be there at 6:00 p.m. to ensure you catch it and can get a seat. If you wish to stay in León after 6 p.m., you will need to plan on hiring a taxi to take you all the way back to Chacraseca. Hiring a taxi to or from León will cost about US\$15. If you prefer, you can get a hostel bed in León for about US\$15 and return to Chacraseca early the next morning. If you do this, please be very mindful of getting to clinic by 7 a.m. sharp.

*Taxi Contact Numbers:* If you would like to hire a private taxi, here are numbers for local drivers:  
Don Victor: 86346451  
Juan Ocampo: 81348571

*Taking Precautions on Motorcycles and Bicycles:* Additional transportation options include motorcycles and bicycles. JustHope approves of bicycle usage during daylight hours only. JustHope and DOCARE advise against using motorcycles at any hour, but especially after nightfall (6 p.m. or so). If you are taking a motorcycle, we require you to wear a helmet.

## **TRANSLATION SERVICES**

### **Language**

The language is primarily Central American dialect-Spanish. Nicaraguan accents, dialect, and grammar can be unfamiliar to participants who speak other dialects of Spanish.

### **Translation in the Clinic**

Rotation participants who wish to go without a translator must be competent to speak both the local dialect *and* correct medical Spanish. Because fluency can be hard to assess before rotation participants arrive, the clinic books three days of translation service for every rotation participant. After this introductory period, the clinic makes the final determination of the participant's ability to function without a translator.

### **Budget**

If the participant needs a translator for the duration of the rotation, the service will cost \$20/day, payable to the translator via JustHope. Please assume you will need to pay this, and include the amount in your budgeting prior to travel.

## **TOWN, CITY, AND COUNTRY**

### **Around the Peace House**

In addition to being lodging for rotation participants, the Peace House is also a public place for community members, which means that you might see people walking in and out. A nonprofit organization called ACOPADES is located nearby, and they use the front porch of the Peace House for a worship service and meeting every Tuesday morning at 10:30 a.m.

Generally speaking, the Peace House is in a crowded area. Nearby buildings include the clinic, a grocery store, the hardware store, and a nonprofit called ACOPADES. There is also an organization called Stitching Hope, a women's sewing cooperative. The library is the newest building in the area. It is open from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and there is a good flow of students going there to do homework, access internet, get books, or go to music and computer lessons there. It is run by the Juan 23 organization.

If you wish, both the sewing coop and the after-school program can accept you to volunteer with non-medical and health outreach activities during the afternoons after you have completed clinic hours.

### Chacraseca

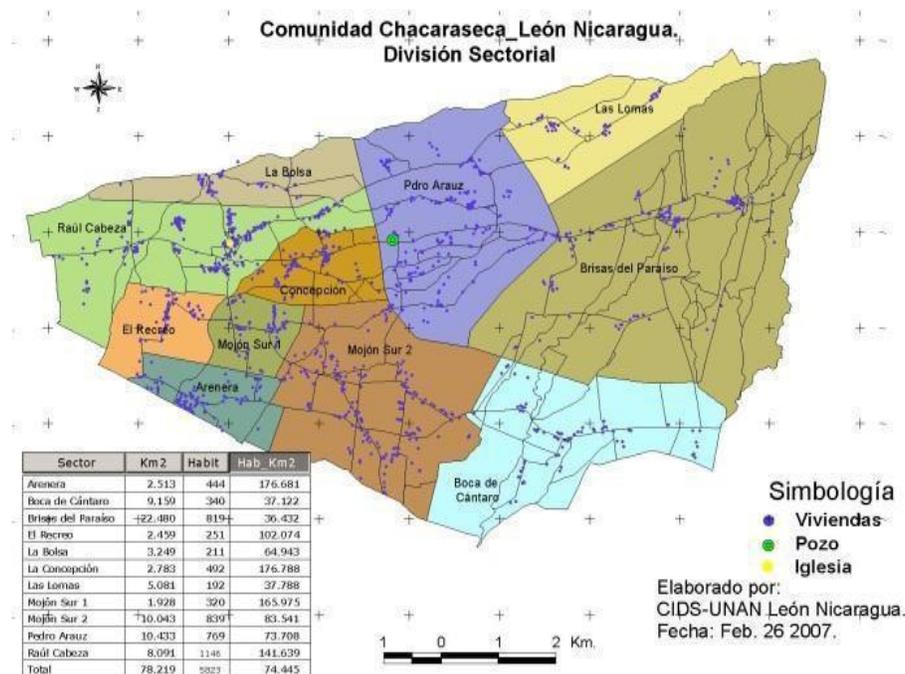
Chacraseca is a 49-mi<sup>2</sup> *comarca* (county) just outside León. It is an area of old cotton/banana land, which was deforested and depleted by these industries in the 1950s-60s. It is populated by about 8,000 people (1,500 families). The population includes about 3,200 children under 16.

Most people in Chacraseca are subsistence farmers. Some work in nearby *maquiladoras* (factories), but several have closed. The area has an estimated 90% unemployment. Average income is \$2/day/family. Central environmental issues in the area are the high deforestation generated by consumption of fuelwood, and a water table that is 100-300 meters below ground.

The community has 13 primary schools and two secondary schools, with 54 teachers and 1,450 students. There is also a communal bakery, a clean water project, and a housing project that has built 500 homes since Hurricane Mitch (1998). There is a microcredit project that is engaging 100+ women in a small loan, small business, and business management training. In addition, the local hardware store is the area's first women-managed commercial project. It opened in Jan 2011 and is a thriving example of a social entrepreneurship whose profits help fund micro-credit. Also, a local organization, Stitching Hope, employs 12 women in creating fabric art pieces for export and local sale.

In addition, the community has had a strong Maryknoll (Catholic) presence from the 1980s until 2007, which was responsible for much of the community organizing in this area. The community was and remains 90% Roman Catholic. In addition, there are several small Evangelical churches in the area.

The community is divided into 11 sectors for community organization and development, with annual elections of representatives and weekly meetings to coordinate community development.



## The City of León

León is the second largest city in Nicaragua (after Managua). It was founded by the Spaniards as León Santiago de los Caballeros has a number of historic Spanish colonial churches, secular buildings, and private residences. As of 2015, the city had an estimated population of 210,000. It is the capital of the municipality of León department.

## The Country of Nicaragua

Nicaragua is the largest country in Central America, with an approximate area of 50,000 mi<sup>2</sup>. The population is just over 6 million. The capital, Managua, is the third largest city in Central America.

Nicaragua is the second poorest country in the Western hemisphere. Over the years Nicaragua has had many wars, disputes over land ownership, and natural disasters. Nicaragua has undergone periods of political unrest, dictatorship and fiscal crisis, the most notable causes of the Nicaraguan Revolution of the 1960s and 1970s and the conflict with the Contras sponsored by the Reagan administration in the 1980s. Current issues in the country include poverty, a high rate of migration to the US, Mexico and other countries, and environmental problems.

Despite the historical problems, Nicaragua is an increasingly popular tourist destination known as the land of lakes and volcanoes. Tourism can be safe, accessible and appropriate for rotation participants during time off. León offers numerous restaurants, historical and religious sites, and museums that cover Nicaraguan history. Nearby excursions, adventure tours, and trips to beaches might also appeal.

## Nicaraguan Cuisine

Nicaraguan cuisine is a mixture of Spanish food and dishes of a pre-Colombian origin. As in many other Latin American countries, corn is a staple food. Corn is used in many of the widely consumed dishes, such as the *nacatamal*, and *indio viejo*. Corn is also an ingredient for drinks such as *pinolillo* and *chicha* as well as sweets and desserts. In addition to corn, rice and beans are eaten very often. The Pacific coast's cuisine revolves around local fruits and corn, while coastal cuisine also makes use of seafood and coconut. Many of Nicaragua's dishes include indigenous fruits and vegetables such as jocote, mango, papaya, tamarindo, squash, banana, avocado, and yuca, and herbs such as cilantro, oregano, and chili.

*Gallo pinto*, Nicaragua's national dish, is made with white rice and red beans cooked individually and then fried together. The dish has several variations, including coconut milk or grated coconut. *Gallo pinto* is usually served with *carne asada*, a salad, fried cheese, and plantains.

## Maps

A previous rotation participant recommends downloading the app [maps.me](https://www.maps.me/) to help you navigate Nicaragua. This app works without using data or a plan and can map areas without traditional addresses.

## For More Information

We highly recommend learning more about Nicaragua before traveling. Please see the appendix for a few suggestions for books, guidebooks, and articles, and for a brief history of Nicaragua.

## **CULTURAL REMINDERS FOR TRAVELING IN NICARAGUA**

### **You Are a Representative**

In going on this trip, you will be representing DOCARE, your COM and the US. Help us to maintain a strong, positive reputation in Nicaragua by being as caring, respectful and polite as you can be.

### **You Are a Guest**

As a guest, it is not our responsibility to analyze or critique established methods put into place by our host. Arguing or second-guessing clinic policy or procedure is not allowed. If you have an issue, please take it to your supervisor. Remember not to criticize our Nicaraguan friends as they are very sensitive and often understand everything you say, even if they don't speak English. As guests, we should treat our hosts with the utmost courtesy.

### **Greetings**

Nicaraguans will greet you and it is appreciated if you can respond in the appropriate way. Knowing basic Spanish phrases is always good. If you do not speak Spanish, please learn this basic vocabulary.

### **Handing Out Gifts**

Please avoid handing out items such as candy, crayons and money to Nicaraguan children. Candy can create a problem since children cannot brush their teeth on a regular basis. Handing out toys or money also sets a difficult precedent, in that Nicaraguans begin to see North Americans as people with unlimited wealth who come simply to offer gifts. Pens, pencils, or erasers are valuable, however, since children must bring their own writing instruments to school.

### **Cameras**

Please be considerate when taking pictures of people. It is respectful of their feelings to ask permission before taking a picture of an individual (if you do not speak Spanish, pointing to your camera and saying "Photo okay?" will get the point across). People may agree but ask for a small payment in exchange for their picture. Many people like it when you show them the image or give them a copy. If you take a picture of a Nicaraguan and tell them you will send them a copy of the picture, please do so. They take you at your word and since they have no way of getting pictures of themselves, the few pictures they have can be precious. (To print a copy, visit a print shop in León. Transfer the .jpg image from your phone by emailing it to your own account or from your camera card to a flash drive, and then ask the shop assistant to assist you with printing.)

### **Flexibility**

One of the most important things to remember is to go with a flexible attitude and open mind and heart. The pace in Guatemala is different and more relaxed than our rushed, time-conscious lifestyle. Nicaraguans do not judge themselves according to the speed with which tasks are done. This can be a very enlightening and enjoyable difference.

## THE DOCARE-JUSTHOPE CLINIC

### Hours of Operation

The clinic is open Monday through Thursday from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m. You should expect to be in the main clinic during all of its open hours.

### Location

The clinic doesn't have an exact postal address. To reach it, ask for *una cuadra norte de la ferreteria* (one block north of the hardware store), *La Hermita, Chacraseca*.



### Amenities

The clinic has three exam rooms, a dental facility, and a pharmacy. As of April and May 2017, the clinic will be undergoing a remodel. Changes include more exam space, designated wound care station, and office spaces for the head physician, Dr. Somarriba, and rotation participants.

### Staff

Dr. Reyna Sommariba is the main clinic physician, and she will supervise all rotation participants. Dr. Claudio Chevez is the other physician on site. Julio Delgado is in charge of clinic operations.

### Orientation

The rotation begins with three days of orientation and shadowing. After that point, you will begin seeing patients. Attendance is variable, but generally speaking, you can expect to see 10-15 patient visits a day.

### Common Presentations

Common presentations include respiratory disease, diarrhea, malnutrition, malaria, parasitosis, diabetes, arthritis, and renal failure.

### OMM

Dr. Sommariba is open to learning about OMM, and you may use it for musculoskeletal complaints.

### Preventive Medicine

Continuity of care is relatively new to Central America, and preventive medicine does not exist in the area where you will see patients. However, the staff is focused on prevention. The clinic nurse does most of this, rather than the doctor, who tends to be viewed as only to be seen for urgent or serious needs.

### Medical Records

All patients have paper charts. An introduction to the system will be part of your orientation.

### Pharmacy

DOCARE helps provide medical supplies and pharmaceuticals. The pharmacy carries limited medications.

## Evaluations

Dr. Somarriba will complete your evaluation. It is advisable to speak to her early about what you will need, to ensure that all assessments and paperwork are completed by the time of your departure.

# HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVICE

## Staying Healthy

The standard health precautions that apply to travel in any developing country apply to Nicaragua. We ask all volunteers to be proactive in protecting themselves for illness, injury, and other risks.

## Prepare Before You Go

- Consult their personal doctors or university travel medicine department for specific, individual advice regarding medical precautions, as well as checking the CDC website, State Department travel advisories, and guidebooks.
- Carry health and accident insurance documents and copies of any important medical records with you.
- Bring an adequate supply of all prescription medications, in their original packaging and/or with a letter from your doctor indicating they are prescribed to you.
- Although stores are available in Nicaragua for most hygiene items you might need, it is wise to carry an adequate supply of personal hygiene items.
- In addition, bring a spare pair of eyeglasses or contact lenses if you require them.

## Stay Safe While Traveling

- Wash hands often with soap and water or an antibacterial cleanser.
- Drink and brush your teeth only with bottled or boiled water. Avoid tap water, fountain drinks, and ice cubes. Opt for carbonated drinks in cans or bottles where water appears to be of uncertain origin.
- Avoid roadside stands and street vendors. Food prepared in recommended restaurants is usually safe. Eat only thoroughly cooked foods. Fruits and vegetables should be carefully washed or peeled. Remember: *cook it, boil it, peel it, or forget it.*
- Do not eat raw seafood, rare meat or unpasteurized products.
- To prevent fungal and parasitic infections, keep feet clean and dry and do not go barefoot.

## Immunizations

As a general rule, all routine vaccines (TB, polio, DTP or Td, Hib, MMR, varicella, influenza, and pneumococcal meningitis) should be kept up to date as a matter of good health practice and clinical professionalism.

## Advice on Specific Diseases

### Hepatitis A (Immune Globulin IG):

Hepatitis A immunization is strongly recommended. It is particularly important for persons to have this immunization who will be visiting rural areas, or who will have close contact with local persons in settings with poor sanitary conditions.

### Hepatitis B:

Hepatitis B immunization is required for health care professionals. Vaccination is always advised for persons anticipating contact with blood, other potentially infectious materials, or infected individuals.

### Cholera:

Cholera is a disease spread by the oral-fecal route, typically through unclean water. It causes the rapid onset of severe diarrhea, and while the illness is self-limiting and treatment is primarily supportive, an infection can be deadly. Incidence in Nicaragua is very low, but we advise taking care to ingest safe water and food. A cholera vaccine has been developed, but immunization is uncommon at this time and is not necessary for travel to Nicaragua.

### Malaria:

This is a blood-borne parasite that is spread by mosquitoes that fly at dusk and during the night. Malaria transmission is known to occur in León and Managua, but it is increasingly rare. As a nation, Nicaragua is on track to eliminate malaria fully by approximately 2020. There is no requirement to take malaria prophylaxis drugs, but we do recommend applying a DEET insect repellent every evening and wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants from dusk through dawn to avoid bites by night-flying mosquitoes. If you develop a relapsing fever (with a spike in temperature once every two to four days) with pain, fatigue and malaise, contact a doctor and the JustHope team and begin treatment with chloroquine immediately.

### Denque Fever:

This virus is transmitted by mosquitoes that bite during the day. There is no immunization. Care should be taken to cover exposed skin, and DEET or similar repellents are recommended, especially in the lowlands or during the rainy season.

### Zika:

Zika outbreaks have been reported in Nicaragua. Due to the risk of birth defects in babies born to women infected with Zika, we advise not traveling there if you become pregnant or planning to become pregnant in the near future. In all others, the disease is more unpleasant than dangerous. Nonetheless, we recommend all participants take precautions against mosquito bites to prevent infection.

### Chikungunya:

Chikungunya is an under-recognized but highly prevalent viral infection that can cause fever, malaise, and lasting joint pain similar to arthritis. It is spread by mosquitos, and travelers should take precautions against mosquito bites.

### Japanese Encephalitis and Yellow Fever:

These diseases are not found in Nicaragua.

### Gastroenteritis:

Past students have reported GI upset. This is a common part of international travel, and preventive measures mostly involve food and beverage safety. If you do get sick, stay hydrated with bottled water and Gatorade. Most mild GI upset can be treated with Pepto-Bismol alone. More severe GI upset may warrant treatment with Ciprofloxacin or an anti-parasitic drug. You can purchase these medications in Nicaraguan pharmacies without a prescription.

## Seeking Medical Care

Please notify Julio if you become ill, and please make sure to report all fevers in particular. Please notify DOCARE's office of any serious health event you experience by calling 312-202-8149. You may also opt to call your travel medical insurance policy or the US Embassy for advice on where to seek care.

## SAFETY ADVICE: CRIME

### Safety from Crime

While no rotation participant has experienced significant victimization, recent reports of incidences of theft and assault in Nicaragua, though few and scattered, create a climate of concern. We offer advice to help reduce your risk and ease reaction if you do experience crime during your time in the country.

### Risk Reduction

We advise all volunteers to use common sense while in Nicaragua, observe the rules of safe conduct and err on the side of caution. No area can be definitively characterized as "always safe." Pickpockets and purse-snatchers are prevalent in cities, and robberies can occur during daylight hours.

Be careful in crowded markets or on deserted streets. Do not carry large sums of money with you. Leave your passport at the hotel and take a copy with you unless you have a specific reason to take the passport. Make sure you have the numbers of your credit cards recorded somewhere safe, along with the information to phone customer service or login to your account. This will assist with canceling them quickly after loss or theft.

Avoid traveling alone, especially in remote areas including beaches, at night. Follow practical precautions such as walking only in groups and never late at night. Make sure any travel outside the city is accompanied by a trusted security escort/guide and that others in the group know where you plan to go and when you plan to return. Ask locals which areas are unsafe and how to best protect yourself.

For further tips, [consult the US Embassy website here](#).

Finally, please do not leave your things outside the Peace House in Chacraseca, as they might be stolen.

### How to Seek Help

You can immediately report crimes to the local police department by dialing 811. You can also report the crime to the US Embassy American Citizen Services at +(505) 2252-7888 or [acs.managua@state.gov](mailto:acs.managua@state.gov).

If your passport is lost or stolen, report this to the police and then go to the US Embassy at Kilometer 5 1/2 (5.5) Carretera Sur, in Managua, to report the theft and replace the passport.

## APPENDICES

- Sexual Harassment and Assault Policy
- Needlestick and Blood Borne Pathogen Policy
- Packing Suggestions
- Reading Suggestions

- A Brief History of Nicaragua
- Release from Liability and Acknowledgement of Assumption of Risk
- Budget
- Phone List

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT PREVENTION & ACTION POLICY

DOCARE strictly prohibits sexual violence of any kind, from harassment to assault. In the spirit of ensuring the safety and well-being of our participants, colleagues, and patients, we provide the following information.

**Harassment** is unwelcome conduct on the basis of gender, sex, sexual orientation, or many other personal attributes. Harassment covers a wide range of offensive behaviors.

**Sexual assault** is any sexual contact (including, but not limited to, sexual intercourse) when such contact is achieved without consent or with the use of force, coercion, deception, or threat. **Rape** is sexual intercourse achieved without consent or with the use of force.

**Consent** is informed, freely and actively given, and mutually understood. Consent cannot exist where one person uses physical force, coercion, intimidation, and /or threats against another. There is no consent if an individual is mentally or physically incapacitated or impaired, whether in conditions related to intoxication, sleep, unconsciousness or disability.

Cultural and social attitudes toward sexual violence can vary greatly in different countries. DOCARE believes that acts of sexual violence are attacks not only on a person's body, but also on the person's dignity. We will not tolerate them.

The following information is intended for use in any country where participants may travel.

### Witnessing

DOCARE strictly prohibits sexual harassment. If any DOCARE member, officer or employee is found to be participating in such acts, the executive director, president, and/or board shall take all necessary actions to correct the behavior for the betterment of the organization. Any member who witnesses discriminatory or harassing behavior, or is informed of incidents of such should contact the DOCARE executive director and/or president at [docare@osteopathic.org](mailto:docare@osteopathic.org) or phone 312-202-8149.

### Risk Reduction

While an assault is never the fault of the victim, there are actions that might protect a person from experiencing the risk of assault. We recommend that you

- Stay with your group and avoid traveling alone if possible.
- Avoid night travel.
- Use caution when socializing, particularly after work related activities have ceased.
- Consume alcohol in moderation and consume no recreational drugs.

### Aftercare

There is no “right way” to react to experiencing sexual assault. Each individual can decide whom to tell and what steps to take next. Below are a few tips to consider.

**Talk with someone:** We encourage you to immediately contact your program or trip director and our national office, at [docare@osteopathic.org](mailto:docare@osteopathic.org) or phone 312-202-8149. Alternatively, talk to a friend or relative, or contact the nearest resource, U.S. Embassy, Consulate, or Diplomatic Mission. Be sure to understand if the person you talk to is required to tell anyone else about what you share.

**Get medical care:** Have your medical needs attended to at a clinic or emergency room. If you have purchased international medical and evacuation insurance, your medical care may be covered and you can receive advice on locations by contacting them.

**Report the assault:** Consider whether you would like to make a police report. If there is any chance you want to report your assault: *Do not shower or douche; save the clothes you were wearing in a paper bag; save sheets, blankets, or anything else that may have evidence.* Do not throw anything away or try to clean up; go to a hospital, clinic, or emergency room where you can receive a sexual assault exam. This can be performed up to 72 hours after an assault, but is most successful within the first 24 hours. If you choose not to report the crime soon after the incident, forensic evidence may be lost. A sexual assault exam is subject to availability in the country in which you have visited. U.S. Embassies, your program director, and contacts listed in the Directory below can tell you about local police and legal procedures, as these can often be different from in the U.S. You may be covered by your homeowners or travel insurance for any belongings you may have lost at the time of the assault. It is likely you will have to report the incident to the police in the country that you are in for the insurance to be valid. If you choose to report the incident to the police, ask someone to go to the police station with you—many find it helps not to be alone. Remember, only you can decide if you want to take legal action; no one else can make that decision for you. In most countries, you must report the crime before leaving the country if you want it to be investigated. Many countries will not open a criminal investigation upon your departure.

**Remember:** You cannot change what has happened, but you do get to make their own decisions about what is best for their recovery. Some feel that it is a personal victory to finish their overseas experience while others feel their recovery will be hastened by returning home.

**Go here for a list of international [sexual assault resources](#).**

## **NEEDLE STICK AND BLOOD BORN PATHOGEN POLICY**

Access and follow your home institution’s Needle Stick and Blood-borne Pathogen Policy.

### **Prevention**

- Have adequate emergency medical coverage for international travel.
- Wash hands frequently and thoroughly before and after patient care.
- Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – gloves, gowns, boots, shoes covers, eyewear, and masks, as appropriate for the patient care situation.
- Gloves must be worn when any kind of percutaneous procedure is being performed.
- Use sharps with caution in a safe environment, dispose of properly, do not recap needles.
- Investigating the circumstances surrounding the exposure incident shall occur immediately.

### **If a blood born pathogen (BBP) exposure occurs, do the following:**

1. Treat exposure site:
  - Use soap and water to wash areas exposed to fluids as soon as possible after exposure.
  - Flush exposed mucous membranes with water.
  - Flush exposed eyes with water or saline solution.
  - Do NOT apply caustic agents or inject antiseptics/disinfectants into the wound.
2. Notify your supervisor.
3. Document the source patient's information (name, contact, and med history) if known.
4. Seek immediate medical care.
  - Most likely this will be at the nearest emergency room.
5. Steps in Managing BBP Exposures:
  - Assess risk:
    - nature of injury and type of fluid
    - source patient factors
  - Determine whether to offer PEP
  - Select PEP regimen
  - Obtain baseline laboratory tests (HIV, Hep C antibody)
  - Repeat labs 12 weeks post exposure
6. Provide written commentary of the injury to DOCARE and your home institution that includes the following information:
  - Date & Time of injury
  - Location of source patient
  - Describe procedures and measures taken
  - Explain the effect of the injury on you

### **For Additional Information and Advice**

National Physician's Post Exposure Prevention Hotline (PEP) (US): [1-888-448-4911](tel:1-888-448-4911)

[Updated U.S. Public Health Service Guidelines for the Management of Occupational Exposures to HIV and Recommendations for Post-exposure Prophylaxis.](#)

## **PACKING SUGGESTIONS**

### **Clothing**

- Jeans or other lightweight pants and T-shirts
- Scrubs for work week
- Sweater, sweatshirt, light jacket
- Rain jacket
- Underwear, socks
- Bathing suit
- Closed-toe shoes (for clinic days)
- Tennis shoes or sandals suitable for walking (for days off)
- Hat with visor or broad brim
- Water repellent jacket, poncho or umbrella (Rainy season: May-October)

### **Toiletries/Personal Medications**

- Personal toiletries: deodorant, shaving gear, cosmetics, soap, shampoo, toothpaste, etc.
- Personal medications, headache, allergy medication, cold or sore throat remedies
- Pepto-Bismol or other diarrhea medicine
- Lip balm
- Insect repellent with DEET for skin or to spray in the room
- Sunscreen (SPF 30+)
- First aid items such as Band-Aids or antibiotic ointment
- Hand sanitizer/wipes
- Towel (thin, to dry quickly)

### **Medical Equipment**

- Stethoscope
- Otoscope
- Ophthalmoscope
- blood pressure cuff
- Thermometer

### **Other**

- Copy of passport pages, stored separately from your passport
- Notebook, paper, pen
- Spanish/English dictionary or electronic Spanish dictionary (e.g. Franklin)
- Medical Spanish book or app
- Sunglasses
- Flashlight, with batteries
- Kleenex (some bathrooms have no toilet paper)
- Digital camera
- Flash drives for photo image transfers
- Multi-tool (be careful about placing in carry-on luggage)
- Laptop, tablet
- Water bottle

## **READING LIST**

These are optional suggestions for books and articles you might want to have on hand before or during your rotation.

### **Guidebooks**

*Moon Guide: Nicaragua*. 2013.

*Lonely Planet: Nicaragua*. 2016.

["36 Hours in Managua, Nicaragua,"](#) *the New York Times*.

### **Tropical Medicine Basics**

Brent, Andrew, Davidson, Robert, and Seale, Anna, Eds. *Oxford Handbook on Tropical Medicine*, 4th Edition. Oxford University Press, 2014.

Meunier, Yann. *Tropical Diseases: A Practical Guide for Medical Practitioners and Students*. Oxford University Press, 2013.

## Medical Spanish

Bongiovanni, Gail. *Medical Spanish*, 4th Edition. McGraw-Hill Education/Medical, 2005.

## Global Health Fact Sheets

[World Health Organization fact sheets on Nicaragua](#)

[Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation fact sheet on Nicaragua](#)

## History & Politics

The Best of What We Are by John Brentlinger

Blood of Brothers: Life and War in Nicaragua by Stephen Kinzer and Merilee S. Grindle

Born in Blood and Fire: A Concise History of Latin America by John Charles Chasteen

The Country Under My Skin: A Memoir of Love and War by Gioconda Belli

The Death of Ben Linder by Joan Kruckewitt

In Focus Nicaragua: A Guide to the People, Politics and Culture by Hazel Plunkett

The Jaguar Smile: A Nicaraguan Journey by Salman Rushdie

Life is Hard: Machismo, Danger, and the Intimacy of Power in Nicaragua by Roger N. Lancaster

Nicaragua: A Decade of Revolution by L. Dematteis

Nicaragua: The Land of Sandino by T.W. Walker

Nicaragua: Living in the Shadow of the Eagle by Thomas Walker

Open Veins of Latin America by Eduardo Galeano

Sandanista: Carlos Fonseca and the Nicaraguan Revolution by Matilde Zimmerman

The Sandinistas Speak: Speeches and Writings of Nicaragua's Leaders by Tomás Borge, et al.

Sandino's Daughters: Testimonies of Nicaraguan Women in Struggle by Margaret Randall

Turning the Tide: U.S. Intervention in Central America and the Struggle for Peace by Noam Chomsky

A Twilight Struggle: American Struggle and Nicaragua by R. Kagan

Unfinished Revolution: Daniel Ortega and Nicaragua's Struggle for Liberation by Kenneth E. Morris

Where is Nicaragua? by Peter Davis

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF NICARAGUA

(courtesy of JustHope; derived from multiple sources)

**Ancient:** Nicaragua's name is derived from Nicarao, a chief of the Nahuatl-speaking tribe which inhabited the shores of Lake Nicaragua before the Spanish conquest of the Americas, and the Spanish word *Agua*, meaning water, signifying the importance of Lake Cocibolca (or Lake Nicaragua) and Lake Xolotlán (or Lake Managua). The ancient footprints of Acahualinca, along with other archaeological evidences, confirm that Nicaragua was inhabited by Paleo-Indians as far back as 6000 years.

**1600s:** At the end of the 15th century, western Nicaragua was inhabited by several indigenous peoples related by culture and language to the Mayans, however, within three decades half of them died of diseases brought by the Spaniards. Eastern Nicaragua is home to a much smaller group of Native Americans who migrated from Colombia and Panama.

**Mid 1800s:** As the United States considered building a canal from the Atlantic to the Pacific, Nicaragua, with its natural waterway provided by Lake Nicaragua, rose as the first choice for the location of that canal.

**1860's:** William Walker, a mercenary from the US, invaded Nicaragua and proclaimed himself President. US Marines entered Nicaragua to protect him from violent response.

**Early 1900s:** Presence of US Marines continues as liberals and conservatives trade power in Nicaragua. In the 20's a small grassroots resistance movement began led by **Augusto Sandino**. The movement grew, and the Marines were withdrawn from Nicaragua, leaving in their place a military dictator who had been trained in the United States -- Anastasio Somoza. Within the first years of his "reign," Somoza had Sandino assassinated, initiated a program of brutal repression against the guerrilla movement, and began to amass significant wealth and land for himself. His two sons followed his presidency and furthered his reign of terror and oppression.

**In the 1960s,** another resistance movement began to grow and took for itself the name of the earlier hero, Sandino -- "FSLN-Frente Sandinista Liberacion Nacional." At the same time, a grass roots movement was beginning in the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America that would later become known as "liberation theology." The two movements coalesced in Nicaragua and "base communities" began to form all around the country in response both to the lack of presence and care from the Church for the poor, and its clear affiliation with the military government. One of the early leaders of this resistance movement was Carlos Fonseca. As the revolutionary movement grew, Somoza turned to the US for support and help, which was granted until the outcry in the US became loud enough that in the late 1970's Carter finally withdrew the overt aid to the Somoza dictatorship. By this time the Somoza family owned over 50% of the land in Nicaragua and an even higher percentage of the national industry and wealth. An earthquake in 1976 completely devastated downtown Managua. The relief funds from around the world were channeled by Somoza into his own pockets and used to buy many of the industries that would be needed to rebuild Managua -- including the concrete block company that made all the block for roads and highways in Nicaragua.

**January 10, 1978:** Pedro Juaquin Chamorro, beloved editor of Nicaragua's LaPrensa newspaper was assassinated by Somoza for his outspoken opposition to the Somoza regime. The response from Nicaraguans was swift and massive... their anger overflowed and gave new energy to the weary Sandinistas. Internationally, the event created such political pressure that President Carter was forced to withdraw US support from Somoza. Chamorro's assassination has come to be known as the beginning of the end of Somoza's reign.

**On July 18, 1979,** Somoza fled Nicaragua and went to Miami. He took the entire national treasure with him, and bombed much of Nicaragua's industry as he left, leaving Nicaragua penniless and in shambles.

**On July 19, 1979,** the Sandinistas finally overthrew Somoza and took leadership of the country. The first President of the Sandinista Party was Daniel Ortega. The Sandinistas immediately began a 'revolutionary renewal' of services for the people of Nicaragua. Literacy and Health clinics were established all across the nation. Land reform movements were initiated to confiscate unused land from "Somocistas" (wealthy Nicaraguans who had been part of Somoza's support and had fled to Miami when he did) and return the land to campesinos in the form of cooperatives. Loans were made to help them establish farms.

**1980:** The Marxist-Socialist philosophy of this new political group greatly threatened the United States and Ronald Reagan created a US trained and paid for military force to begin a counterrevolutionary movement against the Sandinistas, known as the “Contras.” The Contra movement grew into a war that killed over 50,000 Nicaraguans (in a country with a population of 3,000,000) and included an embargo, the mining of Nicaraguan harbors, and other efforts to economically destabilize the Sandinistas.

**In the mid 1980’s,** Father Miguel Descoto, Nicaraguan Foreign Minister (and Maryknoll priest), filed charges against the US in the World Court for mining Nicaraguan harbors. The US was found guilty by the World Court and ordered to pay millions of dollars in reparation fees. Not one dime was ever paid.

**1990:** After 12 years of struggle, in the election of 1990, the US supported candidate for President, Violetta Chamorro of the UNO Party, was elected President and the Sandinista reforms came to an end. In one of history’s most democratic moments, and surprising the whole world, the Sandinista’s honored the election and peacefully turned over power to the Chamorro Administration. Over the next few years, the country returned to increasing poverty rates and decreasing literacy and health rates as many of the Sandinista reforms were reversed.

**In 1997,** Arnaldo Aleman, a right-wing Somoza supporter was elected President of Nicaragua. One of his first decisions as the President of the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere was to build a “white house” for the President “like the United States has.” Money was diverted from support of the university and from social services to pay for the presidential residence.

**October 1998,** Hurricane Mitch hit Central America, and Nicaragua was particularly devastated. There has been a great deal of speculation that part of the reason Mitch had such a devastating effect on Nicaragua is due to the huge deforestation of the land that is taking place both by commercial forestry and by peasants seeking a means of economic support and wood for cooking and heating fuel. Whatever the reason, Mitch left thousands of people in Nicaragua homeless and destroyed crops for the entire year. Devastating poverty and unemployment grew even worse, and the Aleman Government took a page from Somoza’s book by misusing and misappropriating much of the world economic aid that came to Nicaragua in response to Mitch. By the time he left office, Aleman had amassed huge amounts of wealth, built a presidential “white house” and entrenched himself and several of his ‘cronies’ in places of significant power with life-time terms. Transparency International eventually listed Aleman as the 9th most corrupt national leader in the world.

**2001:** Enrique Bolanos was elected President, and proved to be a more moderate and reform-oriented president than anyone expected. He made several moves toward political cooperation and economic reform— including trying to bring Aleman to justice—and helped negotiate an 80% reduction in Nicaragua’s international debt. However, he also participated in several political “pactos” that further institutionalized corruption and limited control into Nicaragua’s political system.

**2007:** Despite strong US-backed resistance, Daniel Ortega was again elected President of Nicaragua. There is fierce disagreement in Nicaragua about the effectiveness of his leadership and the commitment of the new Sandinista government to their original ideals. However, since his election, many of the old programs in support of the poor have been re-instituted.

**2011:** By means of a highly controversial Supreme Court decision, Ortega gained the legal right to run for a third term as President of Nicaragua. And, despite continued resistance from the US, won with an

overwhelming 63% of the vote. Rumor continues to surround the Ortega presidency of intentions to change the Constitution to allow for 'president for life' status.

**RELEASE FROM LIABILITY & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ASSUMPTION OF RISK**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, an individual residing in the State of \_\_\_\_\_, apply to DOCARE International NFP ("DOCARE"), an Illinois not for profit corporation with offices located at 142 East Ontario Street, Chicago, Illinois, to participate in the upcoming global health outreach opportunity with DOCARE.

In making this application, I understand and agree that:

1. I will participate in this outreach opportunity as my free and voluntary act.
2. I recognize and assume all risks and expense as a result of participating in the global health outreach. These risks include but are not limited to:
  1. Exposure to blood-borne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials, where ability to access immediate treatment may be limited.
  2. Personal injury. Accidents inherent to travel in motorized vehicles.
  3. Sickness including exposure to endemic infectious disease.
  4. Death
3. I understand my existing health care coverage will most likely not provide any coverage outside of the United States and that I have been advised to obtain additional coverage at my own expense.
  1. DOCARE has determined that it is necessary for all volunteers to purchase medical/evacuation insurance as most insurances based in the US do not provide coverage outside the country. Medical care outside of the US can be very costly, and many providers ask for payment first. In the event medical evacuation is needed, the costs can exceed \$200,000 US dollars.
  2. It is important to know that most travel insurance policies do not cover incidents that occur as a result of high risk activities (mountain climbing, scuba diving...) even with high risk activity riders. They also do not cover incidents that occur as a result of alcohol use and drug use is strictly prohibited. Thus, we recommend that all participants exercise caution with regard to these activities.
  3. Some vendors for the medical/evacuation insurance can be found on the Resource page of our website: <http://docare.osteopathic.org/web/Resources/Links.aspx>
4. My travel to and presence in a foreign country will expose me to potential risks of disease, injury and physical and emotional harm, including death, that I would not otherwise be exposed to.
5. DOCARE is not a travel advisory service. It is my responsibility to review information from the U.S. State Department and other organizations regarding the travel risks involved for the host country.
6. I understand that laws of the host country will apply, and I will be subject to the host country's jurisdiction.
7. I bear full legal and financial responsibility for myself, including responsibility for all indebtedness or other legal obligations incurred by me while participating in this global health outreach.
8. DOCARE shall have the right to require my withdrawal from the global health outreach if it is determined in DOCARE's sole discretion, that my ongoing participation may be detrimental to me, to others, or to DOCARE.

I, do for myself and my heirs, executors, administrators, legal representatives and assigns (hereafter, collectively, "I" or "me") hereby release, forever discharge and agree to hold harmless DOCARE International, its directors, officers, agents, employees and clinic staff and employees from any and all liability, claims or demands for personal injury, sickness or death, as well as property damages and expenses, of any nature whatsoever which may be incurred by me in connection with or resulting from my participation in the DOCARE global health outreach. I certify that I have read and fully understood the provisions of this Release from Liability and Acknowledgment of Assumption of Risk and had the opportunity to review it with an attorney of my choosing if I so desire. I agree to be legally bound by this Release.

Signature

Date

## BUDGET FOR A ONE-MONTH ROTATION

NICARAGUA - CHACRASECA		
<b>DOCARE Membership Fee</b>	\$50	Fee for duration of medical school/residency
<b>DOCARE Application Fee</b>	\$350	
Includes:		
Scrub Tops (3)		\$45
Transportation to and from airport		\$170
<b>Airfare</b>	\$900	estimate
<b>Meals</b>	\$280	\$10/day; simple meals at Peace House
<b>Lodging in Managua (Arrival and Departure)</b>	\$184	\$92/night, estimate; may not be necessary
<b>Lodging</b>	\$168	\$6/night at Peace House
<b>Transportation for Translator</b>	\$0	\$1/day = \$20
<b>Translator</b>	\$600	at \$150/week x 4 weeks (This can be reduced by \$25/half-day if a participant's schedule warrants) \$250/weekday
	<b>\$1,932</b>	<b>Add \$400 if needs a translator, and \$26/day if lodges in León</b>
<b>JustHope Deposit</b>	\$200	Deposit that covers Peace House, Meals (?)

## PHONE LIST

### JustHope Contacts

Dr. Reyna Somarriba, MD:	8936-6565
Dr. Claudia Chevez, MD:	8613-8783
Julio Delgado, Clinical Operations Manager:	7833-8584
Juan Bautista, JustHope Director of Partnerships:	7826-8397
Orlando Morales, JustHope:	7826-8397
Janet Chevez, Peace House Administrator:	8901-8360

In case of any emergency, please call Julio first. If he is unreachable, call Juan and Orlando.

### DOCARE Contacts

Sophia Newman, Back office (US):	312-202-8149
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### US Embassy, Managua

American Citizens Services Unit (during office hours)	(505) 2252-7104
Emergency assistance (after hours):	(505) 2252-7100 or (505) 8768-7100

If calling after hours, ask for the Embassy duty officer.  
To report a crime, you can also email [acs.managua@state.gov](mailto:acs.managua@state.gov).  
[Click here for further information.](#)