GUATEMALA FACULTY ABROAD

NURSING IMMERSION EXPERIENCE
Immersion Experience for Nursing Educators in Guatemala

Immersion experiences are often cited as being among the most powerful and life-changing experiences of one’s life. Beyond knowledge and reflection from educational preparation, immersion experiences have been proven to contribute to increased levels of personal and cultural awareness along with providing concrete experiences that lead to higher levels of professionalism. It provides nurse educators a more global view which has the ability to enhance the education of the next generation of nurses.

Immersion experiences typically range from a few days to an academic year. Even the shortest immersion experiences have proven to have lasting benefits and effects on educators. In a review of international immersion programs, Button, Green, Tengnah, Johansson, & Baker (2005) state “educational institutions are strongly encouraged to provide opportunities for students and educators to participate in nursing care and education in another country” (p. 316). They found four primary benefits of immersion experience: learning cultural differences, comparing health care systems and nursing practices, and personal development.

As OADN continues to be one of the leading national nursing organizations this program would provide another opportunity for our members. Cultural healthcare experiences are becoming more important to nurse educators in the global environment.

Mustard Seed Peace Project

OADN will partner with the Mustard Seed Peace Project for this immersion experience. The Mustard Seed Peace Project (MSPP) is a not for profit organization with 501(c) (3) status. The Founder and President of the Mustard Seed Peace Project is Teresa Cranmer, a resident of Godfrey, IL. The mission of the organization is to empower families worldwide by building sustainable programs and by raising global awareness. MSPP has been working with the families in the community of Virginia located in the rural Ixcan region of Guatemala since 2004.

The past few years have been years of tremendous growth for the organization. Several colleges and Universities have partnered with MSPP to help address the needs of the families in rural Guatemala. Not only has the scope of their work expanded but they have also reached out to several other communities. Their current work includes clean water projects, school repair and expansion, health, education and womens development projects. They are working with three communities in the Ixcan region, Virginia, Las Mojarras and San Alfonso.
Guatemala and the Communities of Virginia, Las Mojarras and San Alfonso

Guatemala is part of Central America and touches the southern border of Mexico. The primary language spoken in Guatemala is Spanish. The country has just over 14 million residents from many different ethnic groups. Guatemala has the lowest median age of any country in the Western Hemisphere and comparable to most of central Africa and Iraq.

Located in the northwest part of the country in a region known as the Ixcan these three communities suffered greatly during the 36 year long civil war, lasting from 1990-1996. During this time most of the families fled their homes and their ancestral lands. In the 1980’s under the government of Lucas Garcia in an attempt to repopulate this region, land was given to the poorest of the country. People of many ethnicities and cultures came from across the country to repopulate this promising area.

The community of Virginia is located a little less than 3 miles along a dirt road from the municipal seat of Playa Grande. According to the census of March 2012, there are approximately 488 residents in the community comprising 71 households. Unfortunately, because of the remoteness of the community, the lack of infrastructure and the fact that employment opportunities are limited, these families continue to suffer from malnourishment and extreme poverty.

Las Mojarras is located just 10 miles from Playa Grande but due to the conditions of the roads it sometimes takes about an hour to reach the community. There are approximately 500 inhabitants in Las Mojarras. Like Virginia, their needs are many and their resources are few.

San Alfonso is the smallest and the poorest of the three communities. Located 4.5 miles from Virginia, the opportunity to expand to this community seemed logical. Their wells consist of holes dug in the ground filled with highly contaminated water. This contaminated water directly affects the health of the community.

The experience will include: one day of clinic set-up, three days working directly with the providing basic medical/nursing care and three days in Guatemala City touring some of the local cultural and historical sites. The care provider will include: health assessments, treating basic skin disorders, oral care, providing vitamins, and health education on various topics.

Objectives for the cultural immersion experience:

1. Develop scholarship within the discipline of nursing.
2. Understand the importance of teaching transcultural care in nursing programs.
3. Increase cultural awareness as a provider of care to promote a more holistic approach in caring for patients through their cultural context.
4. Develop collaborative relationships internationally.
5. Develop leadership in organizing a transcultural experience.
6. Understand the importance of providing effective transcultural nursing care to diverse populations.
7. Provide basic nursing care to an under-served population.
Guatemala Faculty Abroad Nursing Immersion Experience

Approximate travel dates the third week of July, 2017

Sample Itinerary

Day 1
Depart from the United States
Arrive Guatemala City early afternoon depart for Coban stay at Casa de la Abuela
Dinner at the hotel in Coban

Day 2
Depart to Playa Grande by bus
Set up clinic, will be staying at the clinic site

Day 3
Clinic, approximately 8:00 am – 6:00 pm

Day 4 -5
Clinic Days, approximately 8:00 am – 6:00 pm

Day 6-8 and return to the United States.
Cultural experiences

Expense and Expectations

The approximate cost of the trip is $2000. The cost will include airfare from a major US city. Airfare to the city will be the responsibility of the OADN member. Additionally, the cost includes housing, transportation within Guatemala, most meals, and miscellaneous expenses such as drinking water. For those selected to participate in the Guatemala Faculty Abroad Nursing Immersion Experience a deposit of $1000 will be due on **February 6, 2017**, with the signed confirmation of acceptance letter. The remaining balance will be due on **March 30, 2017**. The OADN Foundation has provided a limited number of scholarships to offset some of the expense for the scholarship recipients. More information about the scholarship can be found at [www.oadn.org](http://www.oadn.org).

**Important Information:** Individuals selected for the trip will be required to disseminate information related to the experience through **one** of the following:

1. Present a concurrent session at the OADN National Conference
2. Present a poster at the OADN National Conference
3. Publish an article in the Teaching and Learning in Nursing journal

**Additionally all participants will be required to submit a two page written summary of the experience to the OADN Board of Directors and the Foundation Board of Directors by September 15, 2017.**
Guatemala Faculty Abroad Nursing Immersion Experience
Application

To be considered for the Guatemala Study Abroad Faculty Nursing Immersion Experience, you must submit the following:

1. A completed application, with your individual OADN membership number
2. Statement of your professional and personal interest for participating in the Guatemalan Immersion Experience? (750 words maximum)
3. Description of your accomplishments, professional affiliations, community service, educational and career goals. (750 words)
4. Two letters of recommendation, one of which should be from the Dean of Nursing at your school.
5. Current curriculum vitae

Please print or type.

Name __________________________ Email __________________________

Address: __________________________________________________________

Street
City
State
Zip

Phone (Day)________________________ (Cell)________________________

OADN Individual Member Number_________________ Member since __________________________

Credentials____________________________________ Professional Title________________________

Current Employer________________________________________

Current Position________________________________________

Employer’s Address: ______________________________________________

Street
City
State
Zip

By submitting this application I agree to submit a two page written summary of the experience to the OADN Board of Directors and OADN Foundation Board of Directors by September 15, 2017. I further agree to disseminate information related to the experience through one of the following:

1. Present a concurrent session at the OADN National Conference
2. Present a poster at the OADN National Conference
3. Publish an article in the Teaching and Learning in Nursing journal

_________________________________________________________ Date

Applicant’s Signature

It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide all required documents. Incomplete applications may not be reviewed by the Guatemala Study Abroad Nursing Immersion Experience Selection Committee. The Selection Committee reserves the right to screen applicants and make final decisions. All applications will be reviewed and notification of status will be sent to all applicants.

Completed applications along with all required supporting documentation must be received in the OADN National Office no later than 4:30 pm on January 15, 2017.

Mail: OADN National Office, 7794 Grow Drive, Pensacola, FL 32514
Email: harriet.mcclung@oadn.org
Questions: 877-966-6236