



CRISPAZ Christians for Peace in El Salvador
Cristianos por la Paz en El Salvador

Summer Immersion Program

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Program Description for Prospective Interns

Thank you for your interest in CRISPAZ and our Summer Immersion Program in El Salvador. In addition to the information in the brochure, it is important for you to be aware of the goals of our program, our expectations, the criteria for selecting interns and the process of discernment for acceptance of applicants. The 2007 program will run from May 29 through August 13.

The CRISPAZ Summer Immersion Program is designed to provide an intense learning and service experience in a poor community in El Salvador. The program will offer support to interns and at the same time require them to be resourceful in adapting independently to the way of life of their Salvadoran community during a ten week period. There will be directed learning experiences as well as space and time for spiritual celebration and reflection. Interns will have an opportunity to contribute to the well-being of their community through the sharing of life experiences, skills and interests. Interns will also be expected to continue to follow up on the relationship of solidarity which they will establish with their Salvadoran community when they get back to the United States. Such activities may include speaking events at churches or universities, publishing an article or newsletter about the experience, organizing a CRISPAZ delegation to visit El Salvador, etc.

Goals and Objectives of the Program:

To provide an immersion experience for North Americans in El Salvador which will raise consciousness for both Salvadorans and North Americans on a personal, spiritual, political, cultural, social and economic level.

The program will provide:

- intensive learning experiences via an initial orientation, readings, and frequent discussions
- experience of daily life and work in a specific poor community
- frequent reflections and formation days

To accompany Salvadoran communities and organizations during this crucial time of transition out of the war, through the challenges of natural disaster and economic marginalization, and into the construction of a peaceful and democratic society. The program will:

- place interns in a community where they will accompany, live with and share in the daily life of the community
- offer an opportunity for interns to participate in and contribute to a grassroots effort, project, or organization that exists within their Salvadoran community
- encourage spaces of analysis, interchange of ideas, and mutual learning for the interns and their community

To contribute to the building of the community of Christian solidarity in El Salvador and the United States through an intense relationship with a community and on-going commitment to the people of El Salvador.

The program will:

- provide an experience of solidarity in a specific community in El Salvador
- work with interns to develop awareness in their communities and countries of origin
- give interns the opportunity to meet CRISPAZ staff and volunteers and to see our programs in action
- support interns efforts to promote solidarity with their Salvadoran community when they return home

Expectations of the SIP participants (Interns):

We expect that interns will participate fully in the program's activities. Opportunity will be given to provide input into the design and content of the program. We expect that interns will offer one another moral, spiritual and logistical support to the extent that they are able. Interns will live and work in poor communities that are usually located in rural areas. As foreigners living in El Salvador, we expect that interns will commit to "immersing" themselves in the community while maintaining their own perspective, integrity and identity as members of the CRISPAZ community.

CRISPAZ expects that interns will be proactive in helping us to facilitate the definition of their role in the community. At the same time we hope that interns will maintain an openness to the rhythms and perspectives of the Salvadoran culture regarding the definition of that role. Interns will become a vital link between their community in North America and their community in El Salvador, in a way that avoids paternalism and dependency.

Finally, interns are expected to adhere to the policies of CRISPAZ. Interns will act as members of our community while they are a part of the program and are expected to adhere to our mission statement. To this end, all interns will be required to sign a covenant with CRISPAZ as a condition of their acceptance to the program. (Copies available from the CRISPAZ office).

Requirements for acceptance to the SIP:

An intern will meet the following criteria:

- Willingness to live in a poor community with few amenities and participate actively in daily life.
- Ability to live with and operate in a culture other than culture of origin.
- Emotional, spiritual and relational resources necessary for living in a demanding situation which occasionally may involve some risk.
- Openness to accompaniment and to the fullness of the experience without undue focus on accomplishment.
- Attitude of openness, respect and tolerance toward Salvadorans and CRISPAZ team members.
- Willingness to participate in reflection, discussion and formation in an ecumenical setting.
- Willingness to learn about El Salvador and the people in non-formal settings.
- Willingness to share skills and knowledge according to needs and readiness of the community.
- Commitment to adhere to the policies, guidelines, and decisions of the CRISPAZ Coordinator and Team.
- Specific commitment to share knowledge acquired during the time in El Salvador with their home community upon return to the U.S.
- Willingness to continue to provide on-going solidarity with Salvadoran community as defined by the intern and community during their SIP experience.

- Intermediate college level Spanish (or equivalent). It is possible to be accepted to the program with a lower level of Spanish if the applicant agrees to complete a minimum of three intensive weeks of Spanish-language training prior to the June start date.
- Signature of a covenant with CRISPAZ.

Acceptance Process

- Fill out and submit the application form to CRISPAZ either:
 - before February 1 for early applicants — application fee is waived — or
 - before March 15 for late applicants. Late applicants must include check for the non-refundable \$50 application fee.
- Reference Forms should be completed and sent to CRISPAZ with your application.
- Applications and references will be reviewed by staff with input from CRISPAZ volunteers.
- If the application and references meet the established criteria, an interview will be scheduled. This includes discussion on the applicant's skills and interests and a language assessment.
- Applicants will be informed of a decision regarding their acceptance to the program within two weeks of receipt of their full completed application including references. Those accepted must inform CRISPAZ of their commitment to participate within one month of notification of acceptance.
- 50% of program fees must be paid to CRISPAZ by April 15. The remaining 50% must be paid by May 15.
- Interns accepted to the program will communicate with the SIP coordinator regarding their placements, language school needs, preparations, etc. during the time prior to their arrival.
- Applicants must sign a covenant with CRISPAZ before beginning the program.

Program fee: US\$1700.

Program fee includes: room and board, transportation *within El Salvador*, and all program related costs.

Program fee *does not include*: airfare, health insurance (which you must have in order to participate), immigration costs (\$10 tourist visa), entertainment, extra food and drink, souvenirs, personal travel, or language school.

If you have any questions regarding any aspect of the program please feel free to contact us. Our staff and volunteers are willing to respond to any questions or concerns you might have regarding living and working in El Salvador. We hope that you are interested in taking this opportunity to transform your life through immersing yourself in the reality of El Salvador. We believe that this program has great potential to build new and lasting bridges of solidarity between El Salvador and the United States. We need committed people to make that happen!