Paulita Lara Mejia ‘18
Child Family Health International
Bolivia
Work Description

- Placed in a pediatric hospital in La Paz and various medical clinics in Tarija
- Rotated each week to shadow doctors in different areas of medicine
- Observed a wide range of medical procedures, asked questions, and interacted with patients
- Volunteered at an orphanage in the evenings where we helped with homework, led dance workshops, and organized a field trip
In Quirofano with Dr. Chamón, Anesthesiologist

Rural Medicine, Tarija
Leading a music activity at the orphanage

Playing with one of the patients in El Hospital del Niño, La Paz
Most Rewarding Aspects

- Understanding the Bolivian healthcare system and being able to see its pros and cons firsthand
- Being invited to shadow surgical residents during their night shifts in the emergency department
- Getting the opportunity to observe an extraordinary variety of medical procedures
- Learning about the doctors’ education, training, and experiences
- Being immersed in the culture with Bolivian friends
- Traveling
Biking down Death Road

Coroico
Chorros de Marquiri

Aymarran New Year, Isla del Sol, Lago Titicaca
Sunset in Tarija

Casa Vieja
Impact on the Organization

- Indirect impact on the organization due to the shadowing nature of the program

- My interactions with the doctors and other medical professionals allowed me to share a little bit about US healthcare and culture

- In this way, the CFHI medical professionals were able to feel that they also benefitted from the program
Academic and Career Plans

- Confirmed my plans to pursue a medical career
- Enforced my passion for emergency medicine
- Appreciated the neurology rotation to continue my studies in the neuroscience major
- Gained an interest in healthcare systems and policies due to my exposure to global health
Personal Growth

- Fell in love with Bolivia, the culture, and the healthcare community
- Would like to go back to further research and experience Bolivian healthcare
- Gained a new perspective in life— I want to travel and experience the world
“The worst mistake in life is not living it.”