Child Family Health International
La Paz and Tarija, Bolivia
MARISA SALAZAR '17
Shadowing Experience

- I shadowed a different doctor each week.
- In La Paz I shadowed in a Pediatric Hospital and in Tarija I shadowed in different clinics.
- I interacted with patients, helped do paperwork, and observed surgery in the OR, learned how to do an EKG.
- I learned about the social and cultural aspects of cases.
- One week I went with physicians in a mobile clinic to the local rural community.
Rotation Highlights
Volunteering Experience

- In La Paz I volunteered at an NGO which worked with the children in a government children’s home.
- I helped tutor and do activities with the children.
- In Tarija I volunteered at La Libélula, an after-school tutoring program for children with low resources.
- I helped tutor the children in math and Spanish.
- I translated Spanish letters and composed emails in English for the coordinator who spoke Spanish.
Children’s home
Perspectives on Poverty
Seeing the passion and ingenuity of the Bolivian doctors was the most rewarding aspect of the shadowing experience.

In volunteering, helping the coordinator of La Libélula compose emails in English for sponsors from the U.S.
My Impact

- I used my craft skills to help lead some of the activities in the children’s home and interested them in origami.
- I was a cultural ambassador to the doctors and helped build understanding of the U.S. system of health.
- I was a cultural ambassador to host families.
- I helped the tutoring center give individualized attention to the children who had trouble in group settings.
Academic and Career Impact

- This experience strongly confirmed my desire to become a doctor and to practice in an underserved country.
- The Spanish I learned and the environment have made me determined to continue taking Spanish.
Personal Growth

- I grew in my identity as a Mexican-American through some of the shared Latin American cultural practices and perspectives.
- I learned about how cultures can impact medicine.
- My bias to assume that the U.S. system is superior was challenged in many aspects.
- I improved greatly in my Spanish fluency and understanding.
- I learned flexibility in dealing with other cultural practices—especially time.