

**LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO
STRITCH SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
CENTER FOR COMMUNITY AND GLOBAL HEALTH**

SUBJECT: FOURTH YEAR ELECTIVE IN BOLIVIA

This is to invite your interest and participation in the elective clerkship in Bolivia sponsored through Loyola.

Overview of the Experience

Bolivia is a large, land-locked country in the heart of South America with a population nearing 9 million people. Its heritage dates to pre-Incan times. After spending three centuries under Spanish colonial rule, the country gained independence in 1823 and has managed to maintain rich indigenous traditions and cultures, particularly in the highlands. Presently, Bolivia faces many economic and political struggles. From the cool Andes Mountains to the tropical Amazonian rainforest, the country spans several types of geographic climates.

Centro Médico Susan Hou (CMSH) is a free nonprofit medical clinic founded and supported by Dr. Mark Molitch (Northwestern), his late wife, Dr. Susan Hou (Loyola), and Bolivian endocrinologist Dr. Douglas Villarroel. The clinic has been operating since July 2001. See the website at:

<http://centromedicosusanhou.org>. CMSH is currently run by three doctors:

- Dr. Mark Molitch, Professor of Medicine in the Division of Endocrinology, Metabolism and Molecular Medicine, Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University
- Dr. Ethan Molitch-Hou, Assistant Professor of Medicine in the Division of Hospitalist Medicine, University of Chicago School of Medicine
- Dr. Douglas Villarroel, Endocrinologist and Director, Centro Médico Susan Hou

The Daniels Hamant Foundation, a small foundation run by Drs. Molitch and Molitch-Hou in River Forest, IL, funds and helps manage the clinic. Dr. Villarroel is the Clinic Director, and Dr. Carlos Vargas serves as the Medical Director and On-Site Preceptor. CMSH has been operating since July 2001.

The clinic is located outside of Palacios, a rural village with a population of about 400, in the tropical lowlands, 92 kilometers outside of Santa Cruz, the largest city in Bolivia. Most of your learning will take place at CMSH in Palacios, a primary care clinic, but you will also have opportunities to work in a small regional hospital in Portachuelo (where you will work in the ED for a day) and possibly to visit Hospital Japones in Santa Cruz, the large public hospital in the city. On Wednesday mornings you will drive 2 hours to CMSH to see patients and will return to Santa Cruz on Saturday afternoons. Sunday and Monday are usually free for exploring the city and area attractions. You will also have the option of attending to patients on Mondays or Tuesdays at Dr. Villarroel's private endocrinology clinic. The exact opportunities available during your rotation may vary depending on the current COVID situation in Bolivia and any subsequent restrictions within the organizations we work with.

Covid 19

As of late April 2022, entry into Bolivia requires a negative PCR test no more than 72 hours prior to departure for all passengers over the age of 5. Unvaccinated individuals are additionally required to have another PCR test performed 72 hours after arrival and must quarantine until negative test results are obtained. Health insurance with coverage for COVID-19 is also required.

Re-entry into the United States from Bolivia requires a negative COVID-19 test within one calendar day of departure for all passengers over the age of 2. The ELISA quick test commonly used in Bolivia does NOT meet requirements set by the CDC. Therefore, a negative PCR or antigen test is required. We will help you obtain a COVID-19 test the day before your departure.

Current COVID guidelines can be found on the US Embassy to Bolivia website:
<https://bo.usembassy.gov/covid-19-information/>

Traveling into Bolivia

A valid passport is required to enter the country. If you lose your passport in Bolivia, you must travel to the American Consulate in La Paz (1 hour by plane or 1 day's drive) to obtain documentation prior to leaving the country.

Visas

Tourist visas are required to travel from the United States to Bolivia. It is recommended that you obtain this via mail from the Bolivian Consulate before leaving. For the Chicago area the appropriate consulate is in Washington D.C. The exact requirements to obtain your visa can be found at
<https://www.boliviawdc.org/en-us/consular-affairs/visas/tourist-visa>.

Once you have purchased your plane ticket, send it and a copy of your passport to the North American Coordinator, Steven Scott, at na.coordintor@hamantfoundation.org. He will forward it to Dr. Villarroel's office in Bolivia to obtain a hotel reservation used in obtaining your visa. Make sure that you provide ample time for mailing and processing.

Money and Currency Exchange

The Bolivian currency is the "boliviano." The exchange rate is about 6.9 bolivianos (6.9Bs) to \$1 US. Some vendors, such as the Hipermaxi supermarket near the volunteer house in Santa Cruz, accept both US dollars and bolivianos, but it is always helpful to have bolivianos on hand. American money must be in pristine condition and is not accepted if it has the slightest tear or marking. Credit cards are accepted at higher end shops and restaurants, but you should expect to pay cash for most purchases. US dollars can be exchanged for bolivianos at the airport upon entering the country or at banks in the city. There are also ATMs at the Hipermaxi and in downtown Santa Cruz. Not all ATMs work with all banks and cards, however finding one with compatibility should not be a problem. Be aware that ATMs usually dispense US dollars in \$100 bills, which are difficult to change in most stores, so it is recommended to withdraw in bolivianos while you are there. Any extra bolivianos can be exchanged at the airport prior to returning to the US. If you decide you want \$20's from an ATM, ask for \$80 and not \$100.

Accommodations

Please see the section below entitled “Things to Do Before You Leave” for obtaining your ticket.

Upon arriving at Viru airport in Santa Cruz, the American clinic coordinators or clinic staff will pick you up. There are accommodations in the city at the Molitch-Hou volunteer house and in the countryside at the clinic’s volunteer residence.

Volunteers are asked to contribute \$125 per week to cover housing costs, certain food expenses and transportation to and from clinic. You will be asked to provide this when you arrive in Santa Cruz at the beginning of your rotation. The cost of running the Molitch-Hou volunteer house is about \$1500/month so that the amount you pay does not cover expenses completely.

Molitch-Hou Volunteer House

2140 Calle Arroyo, Santa Cruz, in Barrio Aeronautico

The volunteer house is large with all the comforts of home including air-conditioning, high-speed internet, washer/dryer, etc. In keeping with local cultural and financial considerations, the air conditioner should only be used when you are at home and must be turned off when you leave. The housekeeper, Niko, and her daughter Johanna live on the premises. Fresh linens and towels are provided for you. While Niko maintains the house, please make sure to clean up after yourself. Because the laundry room is close to Johanna’s bedroom, please avoid running the noisy washer or dryer after 7:30 pm.

Taxis

Taxis: Taxis are plentiful and a very affordable option. Locals recommend using taxis that are dispatched (which are distinguishable by phone number displayed on the cab.) Rates are very reasonable - a trip to the center of Santa Cruz from the Molitch-Hou volunteer house is about 10-20 bolivianos or \$1.00-\$3.00. Locals do not tip the driver unless service is exceptional.

You should use these dispatched taxi services particularly at night because some taxis have been borrowed for use in commission of crimes (robbing or assaulting people).

Uber is also available and popular in Santa Cruz. Many younger locals use these exclusively and consider them to be a safer option.

Centro Médico Susan Hou Volunteer Residence

The residence is little more “rugged” than the volunteer house in Santa Cruz, but a paradise compared to homes in the clinic area. The residence is next to the medical building and renovations and expansion have provided air conditioning. It has a gas stove, phone, refrigerator, and indoor plumbing (toilet/shower with hot water). The water at the clinic is drinkable because it comes from a clean well. However, if you know you are prone to stomach issues while travelling it may be best to buy bottles of water in Santa Cruz prior to leaving for clinic. We can boil water daily or buy bottled water at the supermarket for those who want to take extra precautions. Short-term volunteers (staying < 1 month) probably should drink only boiled or bottled water. Clean bedding is available, but you need to bring

your own towel. Bugs are rampant, as the clinic is at the edge of the Amazon rainforest, and it's advisable to wear bug spray all the time (reapplying frequently and after showers) and wear long sleeved shirts and light pants. The bug situation is worse at night since bugs are attracted to the lights in the clinic. To limit their attraction, utilize the darker lamp above the kitchen sink instead of the fluorescent lamps in the main area and sleeping areas and keep all doors closed. The clinic caretakers, Choco and Dardenia, care for the volunteer residence, medical building, and surrounding property. They live in a separate room on the premises and are available day or evening if you require assistance. Breakfast and dinner will be provided and coordinated by the clinic coordinators. You may be asked to help cook dinner a few times during your stay so begin thinking of ideas now! All food is bought in Santa Cruz before leaving. Please let the coordinators know if you have any dietary restrictions. Any snacks, bottled water, etc. will need to be purchased in advance on your own but often the group along with the coordinator will go to Hipermaxi to buy food for the following week

Special Note on the toilets in Bolivia: The plumbing in Bolivia is different than in the US. Paper products should not be flushed down any toilet in Bolivia. There are covered wastebaskets next to all toilets. It's expected that ALL paper be placed in wastebaskets rather than being flushed. Flushing toilet paper damages the septic system.

Staying Connected

There are multiple ways to stay connected while in Santa Cruz, some more expensive than others:

Skype/Internet Services: The house in Santa Cruz has high speed internet that can accommodate Skype and other similar services. There are also several cafes in the center of Santa Cruz which provide free Wi-Fi. Please take note that there is internet at the clinic in Palacios, but it is not guaranteed to always be fast enough to handle Facetime, Skype, or WhatsApp calls. You should, however, be able to reliably send text or audio messages over the clinic Wi-Fi.

US cell phones: Check with your cellular provider to see what roaming options are available to you. Reception and data availability is good in urban areas. Remember, the US roaming charges can be steep. You may wish to turn off roaming to avoid getting stuff that you don't want and might be costly.

Coordinator Cell Phones: The clinic coordinators always have cell phones with them which are used for clinic business and in cases of emergencies (flat tires, fender-bender, etc.). The number for the clinic cell phone is +591 7-630-4843.

Food and Drink

If you think you're going to lose weight on this trip, think again! There is an endless amount of good food that is also safe for you to eat.

While staying in Santa Cruz, breakfast and lunch are usually provided at the volunteer house. All meals prepared in these houses are "gringo safe" and prepared with filtered water, which you may also use to cook with or to drink. You must make your own dinner plans (which means purchasing groceries or

going to a local restaurant.) If you can prepare an American specialty for your Bolivian friends, it is always much appreciated...especially apple pie.

Lunches are provided at the clinic and are prepared by Mumi. The lunches usually consist of local cuisine, which include staples such as chicken, pasta, potatoes, yucca, and rice. As mentioned earlier, food for breakfast and dinner at clinic will be bought in advance and arranged by the clinic coordinators. Hipermaxi, a large supermarket located half a mile from the volunteer house in Santa Cruz, sells most groceries found in the states. Perishable groceries left behind at the clinic from the previous week may not be there since we encourage the staff to eat food rather than let it spoil, so make sure to bring everything you'll need each time you return to the clinic.

Mumi and Nico can make their lunches to accommodate dietary restrictions. Please make sure these are conveyed to both the North American coordinator and American coordinators in Bolivia to ensure that proper warning is given.

When you visit villages to give on site medical care, the villagers may cook lunch for you. In this case the things that are thoroughly cooked are generally safe. But be careful about what to drink. Bottled water/soda is best. Tap water there is not safe.

Eating out in Santa Cruz is a fun experience and, like most things in Bolivia, is very affordable. When exploring typical Bolivian cuisine, a must-have is the *saltena*, which is a meat or vegetable pastry that is usually served hot and fresh in the morning. Also try *chicha*, a corn or peanut based drink that contains alcohol in some areas (usually the Sierras) but is typically non-alcoholic in Santa Cruz. La Casa del Camba in Santa Cruz is considered to be a top restaurant for authentic Bolivian cuisine and is best known for its grilled meats. The average meal at an ordinary restaurant costs about 20-30Bs. You will be hard pressed to find a meal that is more than \$20 US anywhere in the country. Tipping is less in Bolivia than in the US. Even at high caliber restaurants locals typically leave spare bolivianos or only a small amount of change from the bill. (20% tip is VERY high and not customary, so use your discretion).

Patient Care at the Clinic

The typical clinic day is as follows:

- **8am - 9am** – Patients arrive by minibus (aka “micro”) or local transportation. Old charts are located, or new ones are filled out. The clinic records vital signs.
- **9am - Noonish** – Patients remain in the waiting area until seen by a doctor. If medications are to be dispensed or labs obtained, inform the nurse who will carry out the necessary arrangements.
- **Noon ~ 1pm** - Lunch is prepared in the volunteer residence kitchen; they will let you know when it's ready. Work resumes when lunch is finished.
- **Afternoon** – Continue seeing the remainder of patients until everyone is seen. When the last patient is seen, the minibus is called to take them home; all patients must wait until everyone with whom they came has been seen. When lab results are ready, you find the patients (or more likely they find you) to discuss their results and the necessary follow-up. Do not be surprised if a patient appears at the clinic after closing asking to be seen since they couldn't make it during regular hours. Please, try your best to accommodate these occasional requests as it is quite difficult for patients to get to the clinic.

At clinic close, all notes should be completed in the EMR, printed off, and placed in the paper charts. Charting in Spanish is required as the primary caregivers throughout the year are Bolivian physicians.

For routine follow-up, please keep the clinic schedule in mind. Each community is scheduled to go to the clinic every 2-3 weeks. It is very difficult for patients to return on their own since transportation to the clinic is only provided on the scheduled day for their community group. Provide a one-month supply of HTN, DM and other regular medications as available (some are more available than others, so switching brands of ACE inhibitors, ARBs, etc. is common from visit to visit) to ensure that patients have an adequate supply until their next visit. If medications are necessary and not available at the clinic, you can write a prescription to be filled at the patient's expense at a local pharmacy. Talk to the pharmacist or the clinic coordinators if you have any questions.

The concept of doctors is a relatively new one to many patients seen at the clinic. The local impression of the clinic and its staff is very favorable, and locals are very happy to receive any treatment and attention. When seeing patients, local customs and perceptions can play a big role and knowledge of local beliefs and conventions can be very helpful in understanding some common complaints

Frequent concerns you may encounter include:

- "Sangre caliente" – A prevalent belief in the relationship between hot and cold in terms of health. Patients will report that they have "hot blood," which they perceive to be an infection even if there are no localizing signs. Cold substances such as drinking fluids with ice are felt to prompt these "infections." Treatment is considered to occur with defecation and many patients will request milk of magnesia or other laxatives as a cure.
- "Peeling skin of palms" – This symptom is associated with liver disease for unclear reasons, even to local doctors. Despite reassurance, don't be surprised if you find yourself checking LFTs on your patients to calm their fears. The lab can do LFTs.
- Itchy nose – When local mothers see children scratching their nose, they take it to be a sign of "bichos" or intestinal parasites. Intestinal parasites are rampant among local children. Through the clinic's efforts or other local efforts, the children are treated empirically with albendazole on a routine basis at their school. If the child has not been treated recently, it's probably not a bad idea to treat again, itchy nose or not.
- Poor appetite in children - Local mothers often feel that their children have "bichos" or a vitamin deficiency when they do not eat as much as their parents would like. Err on the side of treatment, if supplies allow, as it is very difficult for locals to meet their nutritional needs

Laboratory

Tests available in the clinic laboratory include CBC, UA, chemistry panel (creatinine, LFT's) lipid panel, hemoglobin A1c, and urine microalbumin/creatinine, among others. There are also ECG and portable ultrasound machines. It is possible to get almost any diagnostic test in Bolivia that you can get in the United States, but we must pay for them. There is no insurance. Diagnostic tests that must be done outside the clinic must be discussed with the clinic coordinators. Try to rely upon your physical diagnosis skills and the limited lab work available at the clinic. Routine cardiac echos to check an ejection fraction are not the kind of thing that should be done. Clearly some diagnostic tests may need to be done but be very judicious and anything ordered outside (e.g., endoscopies) must be cleared by the clinic

coordinators. Similarly, surgery and other costly treatments must be cleared by the directors of the foundation.

Who's Who

- Dr. Douglas – Clinic Co-Founder and Clinic Director – Bolivian Endocrinologist and a resource for any problems you may encounter in Bolivia
- Dr. Mark Molitch – Clinic Co-Founder and Director of Daniels Hamant Foundation – American Endocrinologist, Professor at Northwestern
- Dr. Ethan Molitch-Hou, Assistant Professor, Hospitalist at University of Chicago
- Dr. Carlos Vargas – Medical Director, On-Site Preceptor, and Bolivian doctor who works at clinic Wednesday - Friday
- Dr. Alejandro Guerrero – Bolivian doctor who comes every Saturday
- Dr. Rudy Fuentes – Bolivian dentist that comes every Saturday
- Steven Scott - North American Coordinator - part-time paid staff person in the US in charge of coordinating volunteers and the US aspects of the clinic/foundation
- Gabriela Justiniano Abella – Bolivian Coordinator, helps with many operations of the clinic
- Jacqui – Bolivian Nurse
- Francisca – Bolivian Pharmacist
- Juan Carlos – Bolivian Head of the Laboratory
- Ana Loza – Bolivian Social Worker, helps with obtaining labs and procedures outside of the clinic
- Mumi – cooks lunch and cleans the house and clinic
- Hormando “Choco” Oliva – caretaker of the clinic
- Dardenia Rodriguez – caretaker of the clinic
- Nico - “House Mom” in Santa Cruz - She lives in the volunteer house with daughter Johanna
- Oswaldo - Oswaldo drives a taxi that we often use

Safety in Bolivia

Bolivians are warm and gracious people. They will welcome you with open arms. Problems with personal safety among clinic volunteers have not yet been an issue, but crime does occur in Bolivia, especially in downtown Santa Cruz. It's important to be cautious and listen to the safety suggestions offered by Douglas and the clinic coordinators. The volunteer house is gated and has nearby security guards that watch the neighborhood. Travel belts with spare money and a copy of your passport hidden under your cloths are recommended when you venture into downtown Santa Cruz. For day trips, it's best to keep a limited amount of cash on you. Leave most of your money at the volunteer house in the safe. There are special tourist police in the downtown area that help with safety issues. However, be careful of people looking to steal passports or money by posing as the special tourist police. Never hand over your passport or go with a police officer to the station without a warrant with your name on it. If you do run into trouble, immediately contact Douglas for assistance as he is well connected within the city and nationally. Overall, while recent volunteers have felt extremely safe in Bolivia, you should always exercise caution to ensure that your experience is safe and enjoyable

There is sometimes political unrest in Bolivia. It is usually orchestrated and predictable. Douglas has enough contacts that we usually have good information about what is going on. Volunteers can avoid

problems if they don't decide to see history in the making. There is a remote chance that your rotation would be cancelled if Bolivia were to become dangerous.

Things to Do Before You Leave for Bolivia

At least 4 months prior:

- Confirm your passport is current and will not expire during your trip. Information on US passports can be found at <http://travel.state.gov/passport/index.html>.
- Book your flight to Santa Cruz (Viru Viru airport):
 1. Airlines that service Bolivia from the United States can be limited, and tickets can cost upwards of \$1200 round trip. **Flights that do not arrive in the middle of the night are preferred** as we hire a local lawyer to help expedite the customs process and ensure medications are brought in without hassle. She does understand that expenses and schedule can limit your options.
 2. **Please plan on arriving and leaving on Sunday, Monday, or Tuesday** as these are the days when the clinic coordinators are in Santa Cruz, and it is much easier to pick you up and take you to the airport during these times. If you are unable to do so transportation can be arranged, but please try and schedule your flights to ARRIVE AND LEAVE on Sunday, Monday, or Tuesday.
- **Email your itinerary and scanned copies of your passport and medical license to Steven Scott the clinic's North American coordinator (na.coordinator@hamantfoundation.org). He will then send you a formal letter of invitation / hotel reservation to be used in obtaining your visa.**
- Call your local travel clinic to arrange an appointment. You will need immunizations for Hep A, yellow fever, typhoid, DPT and documentation to confirm that you've gotten them. You can consider the series of rabies vaccinations, but it is not required and may require more advanced planning. You may also wish to take malaria prophylaxis with malarone or mefloquine (depending on the month you come. If you come during rainy season (December-March) prophylaxis may be warranted.

About 3 months prior:

- Attend your travel clinic appointment for necessary vaccinations and to obtain your yellow fever immunization documentation (Don't lose this!!).
- Complete the online form for your tourist visa and mail the necessary paperwork and your passport to the Bolivian Consulate (<https://www.boliviawdc.org/en-us/consular-affairs/visas/tourist-visa>)

At least one-week prior:

- Start taking your malarone or mefloquine as directed.
- Go to ATM to pick up travel money (\$200-300 US in \$20 denominations should be adequate).
- Make photocopies of your passport and immunization documents. Give 1 copy to someone back home and take the other set with you in case you lose the originals.
- Contact the coordinators to confirm how you will be picked up from the airport upon arrival.
- Doctors need to fax a copy of their medical license at least 2 weeks ahead (the earlier the better).

- There may also be medications or supplies for the clinic that you may be asked to bring down with you. Discuss with Drs. Molitch or Molitch-Hou prior to your departure. The ministry of health wants a list of supplies and meds 2 weeks before the volunteer's arrival, so if you have your own that you are bringing let us know at a minimum 2 weeks ahead.

Things to Bring with You

- Up to 2 suitcases and a small backpack – airlines allow up to 2 checked bags (weighing max 50lb each,) 1 overhead carry-on and 1 personal item (backpack or purse). You may well be asked to bring a large bag with medications or supplies down with you and that will count as one of the checked bags (which will incur a check-bag fee...Thanks in advance for bringing these medications down for the clinic. Often your bag will be filled with over \$20,000 worth of donated medicine).
- Passport (and copies placed in separate pieces of luggage)
- Money - ~\$200 in small bills (\$10, \$20s)
- Outlet adaptor (B type which looks like 2 round pegs)- though most outlets can take the two prong US plug
- Voltage converter (Bolivia runs on 220v so you will need to use converters for laptop, etc.; most US chargers for phones, laptops and cameras have built in converters)
- Stethoscope
- Otoscope with covers
- Penlight
- Hand sanitizer
- Small medical reference books for drugs, etc. or Smartphone/iPod with apps
- Spanish medical reference book
- White coat (for days at Hospital)
- Pens
- Bug spray (with DEET content 25% or greater)
- Sunscreen
- Medication – personal, anti-malarials, Pepto, Imodium and cipro/azithro
- Personal toiletries – remember all liquids should be packed in checked baggage or carried in 3 oz (maximum) bottles if carrying in the passenger compartment)
- Soap
- Bath towels (for clinic)
- Sunhat/sunglasses
- Backpack if hiking or smaller bag to bring with you for stays at clinic
- Travel belt
- Camera/phone
- Swiss army knife – if you have one great, if not, no worries – pack in checked baggage
- Water bottle – Nalgene, etc.
- Light raincoat
- Hiking boots – for planned trips
- Gym shoes
- Flip flops (for shower) - not to wear in the clinic
- Nicer pair of casual shoes and clothes for hospital days or evenings out
- Zip lock baggies (1 quart and 1 gallon size)
- Sleep wear

- Clothes for clinic – thin pants (scrubs), t-shirts (enough for 4 days' worth)
- Clothes for hospital – pant/skirt, dress shirt (no tie)
- Clothes for city nights/hiking/weekends

If you forget something it probably can be purchased in Santa Cruz but may cost more than you would expect to pay back at home.

Bolivian Customs Information

As you read the instructions below, please keep in mind that Bolivia is plagued by bureaucracy and some corruption. While some things may sound strange or secretive, it is simply to attract the least attention and invite the fewest chances for opportunism.

If you are coming from Chicago, you may be asked to bring a bag of medications and/or medical supplies from the Molitch-Hou's. If you have medications, you will be met within the customs area by a clinic coordinator and our lawyer, Dra. Maria Vaca Diez, who will help you through. If, for some reason, Dra. Vaca Diez is not there, you should proceed through customs and a coordinator or other staff member will be waiting in the reception area.

On the plane, you'll get two forms to fill out. DECLARE NOTHING (even if you have a bag of medications/supplies). You will need to mark "NO" to EVERY response on the form, even the first response. Your local address is Calle Arroyo 2140, Santa Cruz. If you need to list a contact number, put 75687760.

When you get to the airport, all queues/lines can be used for obtaining a visa. Once you have your visa (make sure not to lose the green sheet they give you!), proceed to get your luggage. Dra. Vaca Diez and a coordinator will meet you with a cart. Place the bag of medication on the **bottom** and all your other bags on top, including carry-ons. Make sure your luggage tags (the ones they put on your boarding pass envelope) are accessible. You will then get in line with all of this to clear customs.

You may have to fill out another form if they didn't have it on the plane. Again, **declare nothing**. Show your luggage tickets to the first person in line, then, when you get to the second person, give them the paper that you just filled out, and they will tell you to press a button. Press the button **slowly**. It will randomly light up green or red. If it turns green, you pass through. If it turns red, they will search your luggage. **Only place the top-most bag on the bench** to be searched unless they tell you to open all of them. You may get a mild hassle - show them the letter you have accompanying medications only if asked for it. Dra. Vaca Diez is at the airport to help make sure that the medication bags make it through customs without being confiscated, as Bolivia's bureaucracy can be frustrating. Worst-case scenario is that you will have to leave the medications at the airport. If this happens, we'll go get them later. It is better to leave the medications there for later pick-up rather than putting up too much of a fight. If there is a hassle, Douglas/coordinators will help.

Weather

Bolivia lies on the equator and Santa Cruz is at an elevation of 1300 feet and has near-tropical weather. The main rainy season is during December and January with a second and lesser one in February and

March. Relative humidity is 85-90%. Although the below are averages, temperatures often go into the 90's in Nov – March.

Average Santa Cruz Maximum and Minimum Temperatures in Fahrenheit:

| January | February | March | April | May | June | July |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| 85-73 | 86-72 | 85-72 | 82-69 | 77-65 | 74-62 | 76-62 |
| September | October | November | December | | | |
| 82-66 | 86-70 | 86-71 | 86-72 | | | |

If you travel to the Altiplano (La Paz, Sucre, Uyuni) it can be cold all year round.

How to Apply

- 1) Applicants should complete all required International Elective Forms (Emergency information form, Conditions of participation in International Clinical Electives form, Acknowledgement of Risks and Release of Responsibility form). The application should be completed online and supporting forms should be submitted to Jennifer Rogers in the CCGH office.
- 2) Please enter at least two preferences of date one month in length. Up to four students typically can be accommodated each month, but numbers will be firmed up in advance to insure they can support the number of students seeking any month.
- 3) Include any comments or questions about your dates or participation that you wish us to be aware of when reviewing your application.

Deadlines

We ask that you apply as soon as possible, preferably before **July 1, 2022**. After those applications will be considered based on remaining space and available funding. All additional documentation must be submitted by **January 4, 2023** for spring 2023 rotations.

Questions?

If you wish to discuss this option further before applying, do not hesitate to make an appointment to see Dr. Amy Blair or Jennifer Rogers in the CCGH. We hope that you will consider adding this unique elective opportunity to the end of your program this year!



**LOYOLA
MEDICINE**

Loyola University Chicago
Stritch School of Medicine

Student Name

Loyola International/U.S. Service Elective

BOLIVIA

Students applying for the Bolivia elective must complete the following paperwork to receive academic credit and partial financial underwriting for the rotation.

- Application for International Elective (found online in student portal)
- Emergency Information Form (CCGH)
- Conditions of Participation in International Clinical Electives Form (CCGH)
- Acknowledgement of risks and Release of Responsibility Form (CCGH)
- Submit proof of health/hospitalization insurance coverage (copy of insurance card) (CCGH)
- Submit proof of medical evacuation and repatriation insurance coverage (copy of insurance card) (CCGH)
- Proof of immunizations that are required for all externships (CCGH)
- Evaluation: If selected to participate in the elective the student will be responsible for picking up elective from Jennifer Rogers in the Center for Community and Global health Office, Room 276 before leaving for the rotation. The student will hand deliver the evaluation to site director for grading.

A limited number of positions and funding are available and will be considered on an “as available” basis. Loyola University Stritch School of Medicine will offset up to \$700 to cover airfare expense for the students selected to participate.

Please apply online through the student elective registration system. Paperwork should be turned in to the CCGH. Students are encouraged to meet with Dr. Amy Blair (ablair1@lumc.edu) for questions about electives and Dean James Mendez (jamendez@lumc.edu) with questions about final graduation requirements.