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International Program Associates
National Catholic School of Social Service

“There is so much need out there and not enough social workers to create relationships among systems to help bring about social justice at the international level.”
— Nevila Gremi, NCSSS IPA

“The experience in the Philippines provided me with an increased admiration for those serving in the social work profession.”
— Jennifer Green, NCSSS IPA

“This opportunity was empowering and educational.”
— Fatoumata Bathily, NCSSS IPA
The World is Waiting for You

The Catholic University of America’s National Catholic School of Social Service (NCSSS) is offering international social work experiences to NCSSS MSW and PhD students. All students who have completed the foundation year of field placement are eligible to apply.

The International Program Associates (IPA) aims to respond to the increasing need for international social work. In addition, the program serves as an educational and professional opportunity for NCSSS students to engage and partner with international agencies as well as learn about the various issues that are facing people all over the world today.

Benefits of IPA

- NCSSS’s International Program Associates initiative provides students with the opportunity to gain professional international social work experience.
- The program immerses students in a different culture, enabling them to utilize their skills to assist local communities, international agencies, and most importantly, the people themselves with their problems and solutions.
- IPA enables students to apply the knowledge they’ve gained in the classroom.
- In addition to working with individuals and communities, students practice a variety of skills and tasks: grant writing, program evaluation, strategic planning, needs assessments, operational planning, conceptual framework or programs, and capacity-building projects.

Placements

Philippines

IPA students will work with Community and Family Services International in Manila, an international nongovernmental organization focusing on issues of social development and conflict resolution, operating primarily in Asia and the Pacific. CFSI is committed to peace and social development, with a particular interest in the psychosocial dimension. The organization’s programs focus on humanitarian assistance, social development, child and family welfare, health promotion, and research. Placement opportunities in the Philippines include youth programs, group work, program administration and needs assessments.

Nicaragua

The Instituto Tecnico Especializado de Juan Pablo II serves high-school-age adolescents who come from the poorer areas of Managua, the capital of the country. The roles of IPAs may include clinical individual and group work with students, assistance and support for teachers, as well as grant writing and program assessment. Ability to speak Spanish is required.

Timeline

CUA students selected for the program will spend 10 weeks during the summer working in the international placement. The tentative dates of the placements are the end of May through the end of July.

Application Process

All interested students must submit a completed application by January 31, 2016. Interviews will be scheduled shortly after the application deadline. Applicants will be selected by a faculty committee. Applications are available online at ncsss.cua.edu.

Funding

Students selected to participate will be responsible for paying their travel, room and board. Expected expenses for the trips range from $1,500 to $3,000 for 10 weeks.

Limited scholarships to assist with airline tickets are available, but all students must raise funds to contribute to room and board.