



Mission T.E.A.M. Summer Intern Details

Mexico Fast Facts... Mexico is a country of over 110 million people, more than 90% of which identify, at least culturally with the Catholic Church. Currently, the daily minimum wage is about \$4.50. Oil and gas, tourism, and mining are some of the biggest industries in Mexico, along with the maquiladoras of the border region.

An average weekly salary is about \$125.00, for six days work. There is no income tax, but there is a value added tax [IVA] of 15% on almost everything you buy, except food.

Mexico is also a country with another country hidden inside. A significant part of the population, between 10 – 15%, can best be classified as indigenous. In this population, the minimum wage is significantly lower as is the average wage.

The infant mortality rate in the indigenous areas is also believed to be almost five times higher than the rest of the country, giving these population groups one of the highest rates in the world.

General Mission Details... In Oaxaca, our ministry is with indigenous people groups. Serving within the 16 distinct peoples of the state of Oaxaca, we face issues of extreme poverty, lack of education, and few, if any churches sharing the Gospel in the native heart languages of the people. Many of the people we serve do not speak much Spanish. Oaxaca is the heart of the indigenous area of Mexico. In this area we facilitate both groups and individuals serving in construction, outreach, leadership training, medical and agricultural mission.

Guadalajara is the heart and soul of the Mexican culture. In this cosmopolitan area, AIL Ministry is working to develop effective partner relationships between both US and Mexican churches. Currently we are working alongside a circle of small churches on the outskirts of this city of over 6 million people.

Our Ensenada ministry has been about groups taking their first steps into mission participation. Over the last 20 years, we have made a significant difference in this area for many churches. While we are still serving here, our time is now limited to returning ministry partners as we have shifted our focus to other areas of the country.

Your Job... In short, your job is to help those serving with us be better missionaries. In Ensenada you are almost full time facilitating our short-term teams. In Guadalajara and Oaxaca, you become part of our ministry teams working alongside other short-term missionaries helping AIL Ministry serve the local church.

Frequently Asked Questions

[page 1]

Do I need a passport and shots? Yes you need a valid passport. The only required shot is a tetanus shot. This is usually not a problem for college students, as they need this shot to register for school. Please check with your regular physician on any additional shots or pills that may be recommended.

Is medical care available? There is excellent medical care available in Mexico. If the need arises, we will get you whatever medical care necessary to ensure your health and safety. Any costs associated with getting you medical care are your responsibility. Some US health plans cover people traveling in Mexico, others do not. Please check ahead of time and bring your health care card with you. The health and accident insurance provided by Adventures in Life Ministry is a secondary policy meant to be used in conjunction with your US policy.

I am currently taking medicines, how should I handle this? You should bring enough medicine to last the length of your stay in Mexico as well as another written prescription in the event you lose your medicine.

How much spending money will I need? This depends on you. A good rule of thumb is about \$30.00 for each week in Mexico. If you tend to buy a soda and lots of snacks each day, you will need more money. Since the majority of your meals are included in your program costs, your food costs should be minimal, but you are expected to take care of your own laundry costs. You will want to bring money to buy gifts for friends and supporters back home. AIL staff will help you access an ATM or exchange your dollars for pesos.

Where will we be staying? We stay in local churches in Ensenada, and local homes in both Oaxaca, and Guadalajara.

What kind of facilities can we expect? In Ensenada, you get a cot in a local church. In Guadalajara and Oaxaca, you will generally have a bed, but you should bring a sheet and maybe a small pillow. Expect cold running water, electricity, and great hospitality. Electricity in Mexico uses a standard plug, just like the US.

What kind of food will we be eating, and, is the water safe? All of the food and water served by Adventures in Life Ministry and our ministry host will be safe. **In accordance with the biblical principles expressed in Luke 10:7-8, we will expect you to eat what you are served with a gracious heart and joyful countenance.** This is especially important for our summer interns as other participants will be looking to you for guidance and leadership. Here is a great web site that has some examples of traditional Oaxacan food. [<http://www.guelaguetzarestante.com>]

Is there a lot of crime? Cities in Mexico are no different than cities in the United States. Yes, there is crime. If you take reasonable precautions, you should not be bothered. The areas where we are staying and working are generally safe and secure.

What if I don't speak Spanish? No hay problema! Adventures in Life Ministry always has Spanish speakers alongside those serving with us.

FAQ'S

[page 2]

What will we (I) be doing? The short answer is serving. You are generally expected to be one of the first people up, and the last to go to bed. Your time serving will take on many forms but may include construction, leading a bible study or devotion, helping in an Outreach Club, or even serving as part of our agricultural team. The bottom line is this: your time in Mexico will be about giving away as much of yourself as you can to as many as you can.

***Quick note...** all of our ministry is developed in partnership with local church leaders in Mexico. For this reason, we will be unable to give you specifics of your ministry until we are closer to your arrival date. You can be assured that during your time with us in Mexico, you will be stretched physically, emotionally, and spiritually as seek to serve Him.*

What can I bring to make our mission easier? A bi-lingual bible will be a great asset. But the number one item you can bring is a willing, servant's heart. As will an ability to be flexible, think creatively, and change direction quickly if necessary. The bottom line is for you to bring an attitude that is prepared to "be whatever, do whatever, whenever, in the name of Jesus."

What can I bring to give away? Love...the love of Christ, the love of your church, and love from your heart. This is best expressed through gracious attitudes, engaging smiles, a willingness to learn, hugs, and a genuine appreciation of the local culture, customs, and traditions. We encourage you to bring a gift for your host families from your local home community.

Will I have free time during my stay? Yes. Since AIL Ministry believes in learning about the local area, in addition to your ministry time, you will have opportunities to see the city where you are serving, some of the historic ruins of the area, and purchase some cool Mexican souvenirs for your supporters back home.

How can I communicate back home? It is very easy to call from Mexico. You can purchase a local pay telephone card for about \$10.00. As you are there to serve others, we do not permit the use of US cell phones during ministry times while on mission with Adventures in Life. If an actual emergency arises, you can be sure the AIL Staff will get you in touch with whomever you need.

Is there E-mail in Mexico? Yes! But you have to go to an internet café to use it. During the week, your ability to access e-mail may be extremely limited depending on both your ministry schedule and location.

Quick note... since we do not permit the use of US cell phones during ministry time, your ability to communicate back home will be limited. Please let your family and friends know this to avoid any potential problems.

What do you do with the fees that I have to pay to participate? All costs associated with serving with Adventures in Life Ministry come out of your fees. This includes money for food and water, training, participant insurance, AIL transportation, salaries for our Mexican staff, and utility expenses at our ministry sites and host churches. A portion of your fees also go directly to Adventures in Life Ministry to enable us to maintain quality leadership and relationships with our partner churches throughout the year.

How many churches and people serve with AIL annually? You are part of an annual network of over 125 short-term missionaries and more than 20 partner churches serving throughout Mexico with Adventures in Life Ministry. This includes people and churches from Canada, the United States and Mexico.

What to Bring

Please understand that this is a very general list, and is not meant to be all-inclusive. Think of it as a guideline. There are some principles we believe you should follow when choosing what to bring, and how to pack and prepare. Once you are accepted as part of Mission T.E.A.M., we will send you a detailed packing list.

Less is usually better. Resist the urge to believe you need clean clothes every day. You will be working hard, but there is no need to bring a different pair of pants for each day.

***Quick note...** with increased fees from airlines and other luggage restrictions when traveling throughout Mexico, you are allowed **one suitcase** that meets standard airline carry on requirements [14' x 8' x 21'] and one small back pack for the summer. Everything you will travel with must fit into those two bags.*

Pants/Skirts – Plan to arrive in long pants and for that to be your primary clothing option during your time in Mexico. On Sundays or other times when we go to church guys will need a pair of “Docker” type pants and women will need to wear a skirt or slacks.

Shorts – Shorts are generally not permitted on ministry sites when serving with Adventures in Life in Mexico. We do sometimes permit shorts on a case by case basis for guys, and women can wear capris. In Ensenada you can wear shorts on your free day, as long as they cover your knees. In Oaxaca and Guadalajara, since the majority of the population does not wear shorts publicly, neither will we. You can wear shorts for your flight home and in the evenings around your host home or location.

Shirts – T-shirts are good for work days and sightseeing. Please bring a collared shirt for church.

Hat – The sun can and will be intense. Avoid sunburn with a hat.

Shoes – Tennis shoes are fine for church, so if you want to use them everyday and just bring one pair, you'll be fine and save some room in your suitcase. Just understand you will have a lot of time on your feet. Flip flops are not suitable footwear for day use, work crew, or your free days in the city. However, make sure you bring a pair for the shower or your host home or location in the middle of the night.

Jacket – The weather in Mexico can change radically in a few hours, and the nights can sometimes be cool. A light jacket or sweatshirt is recommended. It is likely for us to have rain in the afternoons in the southern part of the country.

Towel – Bring a light weight towel. The quick drying towels from REI are excellent and easy to pack.

Personal Hygiene Items – This covers things like medicines you are taking, toiletries [shampoo, tooth paste, etc.], sunblock, bug repellent, etc.

Personal Travel Items – Bible [bi-lingual], journal, pens, flashlight, camera, extra batteries or memory sticks, and any electronic chargers you may need.

Sleeping Items – We will provide you with a clean sleeping bag for the Ensenada portion of our summer. For the rest of your time with us, plan to bring a sheet and possibly a pillow.

Ladies, we are serving in a very conservative culture. As you choose your clothing, do this... stand up straight and reach for the ceiling. If someone can see your belly, your shirt is not long enough. Then, bend over and touch your toes. If someone can see your back, again, your shirt is not long enough. Please take this into consideration when you pack.

Save room in your suitcase to take things home. You will want to purchase some items to take home to your family, or supporters. With new luggage and carry-on restrictions in place on many airlines, you will need to fit those in your luggage on the return flight.

What You Need To Know

Dates: You must be in Ensenada for Mission T.E.A.M. 2011 on Wednesday, June 29. Your last day in Mexico is Monday, August 15.

Cost: The cost is \$2250.00. This includes all of your lodging, most meals, insurance, and travel within Mexico. You are responsible for all travel costs to and from Mexico.

Application Details: Download our Summer Intern Application from our web site. Fill it out, get a pastoral reference and another reference from one of your teachers or professors, attach a copy of your passport [passport application if in process], and a \$25.00 processing fee and get everything sent in to us before February 1.

This will allow you plenty of time to build your support team, raise the necessary funds, and get prepared.

Application Deadlines: February 1 – Last day to apply to be part of Mission T.E.A.M.

April 15 – First deposit of \$500.00 due

May 15 – Second payment of \$500.00 due

June 15 – Final payment of all monies due

Tentative Ministry Schedule: June 29 – July 2 – Arrival, orientation, training, and group prep

July 3 – July 9 – Ensenada Short-term team

July 9 – July 16 – Ensenada Short-term team

July 10 – July 16 – Ensenada Short-term team

July 16 – Fly to Oaxaca

July 17 – July 23 – Oaxaca Short-term team

July 23 – July 30 – Oaxaca Open Enrollment week

July 31 – August 5 – In country debriefing

August 6 – August 13 – Guadalajara Short-term team

August 15 – Leave Mexico – Return home!

On your departure day, plan to leave Mexico earlier than 10:00am. That will allow us sufficient time to get you safely to the airport in time for your flight.

[Adventures in Life](#) can connect you with a few organizations that specialize in missionary travel who can help you make travel arrangements if you so desire.