Instituto Superior Tecnológico Bolivariano (ITB) 
And Clínica VIDHA: Understanding Healthcare in Ecuador

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ITB Open Door Box Clinic and Clínica VIDHA - Guayaquil, Ecuador
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Introduction
ITB Clinic: An educational primary-level care clinic. All services are given at no financial cost to the patient.
Clínica VIDHA: Provides free HIV testing and partners with local hospitals to provide education, treatment, and support for HIV-positive patients.

Objective of Internship
While assisting the physicians and the nurses in checking and recording vital signs, our objective was to learn more about healthcare in Ecuador, improve our Spanish-speaking skills, and specifically gain an understanding of the patient-doctor relationship in Latin America.

Work profile
Clínica VIDHA
- Worked alongside nurses to test blood samples for HIV.
ITB Clinic:
- Checked and recorded vital signs as well as gathered patient histories. Assisted doctors and nurses with various tasks.

Reflection
- In the HIV clinic, we helped expedite the screening process by assisting nurses in running HIV tests and gathering information on outcomes of HIV treatment methods in a local maternity hospital.
- Our contribution in the ITB clinic consisted of taking patients vital signs and information so that the doctors and nurses could use their time more effectively to see other patients and discuss their treatment plans.
- Personally, I learned a lot about doctor-patient interactions in a Latin American community. Gaining this essential perspective helped me reflect on how I can improve this type of relationship among latino patients in the US. More than anything, I learned to be open to making mistakes speaking Spanish with the clinical staff. The conversations that resulted were some of the most humbling and rewarding aspects of the internship. - Ali

- Shadowing in the ITB Clinic and Clínica VIDHA allowed me the chance to think critically about the U.S. medical system and ways in which it can be improved in comparison to Ecuador. Neither healthcare system is perfect but there are numerous ways in which we can learn from each other to improve access and outcomes especially for latino and immigrant populations in the United States. The welcoming learning environment the physicians and nurses created in the ITB and HIV Clinic is something that I hope to recreate in all my future endeavours in the medical field. - Marisela

Questions
- In what ways can we use our understanding of healthcare in Ecuador to improve health outcomes in the United States?

Looking ahead
As I look towards medical school, I plan to continue working with latino populations in the U.S. applying the skills and knowledge from this internship to provide better access and care. - Marisela

With one more free summer before graduating, I plan to do another internship in a Spanish speaking country, with a similar goal of community involvement and outreach. Furthermore, I wish to continue working with latino populations in a medical setting down the road.

Conclusion
Community health is a priority for primary care and for preventative medicine in the ITB Clinic and Clínica VIDHA.

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