

## The BCA/FESAC Internship Program The Arizona/Mexico border

The Internship Program sponsored by the Border Community Alliance (BCA) and Fundación del Empresariado Sonorense, A.C. (FESAC) serves young scholars and faculty seeking a bi-national immersion experience that combines political, economic, humanitarian, environmental and social science research with unparalleled opportunities for service and exploration in the US/Mexico borderlands.

### The Context:

The US/Mexican border is a dynamic and rapidly evolving region whose economic, social, political and cultural future is of critical concern to the entire hemisphere. The negative impact of NAFTA on small farms in Mexico, US gun laws, the US demand for illegal drugs, the fear of cartel violence, public policy on immigration and border security, the suspension of environmental laws, cross border business, educational and cultural exchanges with Mexico—all these issues offer unprecedented opportunities for study and service. BCA and FESAC, as one of the few US/Mexico NGO cross border partnerships, bridge the border for interns, enabling them to explore its reality - past, present, and future.

### History:

The Internship Program began in spring 2011. It has hosted undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate students and faculty from Stanford University, University of San Francisco, Sciences PO (Paris), Loyola University (Chicago), University of Wisconsin, and Muskingum University (Ohio). The program is in its 8th year. It offers a 6 week summer program (June, July). Schedules for interns are flexible, depending on when participants are available.

#### **Provisions for interns:**

- Summer housing provided.
- It is recommended that participating interns have a car.
- Opportunities for individual collaboration with nonprofit agencies, universities and businesses in both the US and Mexico.
- Part time administrative work and community service projects with the Border Community Alliance and/or FESAC.
- The opportunity to improve the ability to converse in Spanish.

## Intern Activities - Samples:

(focus of activities may be determined by individual academic research and thesis requirements)

- Opportunities to teach English classes in Mexico.
- Provide humanitarian aid to recently deported migrants at el comedor, an aid station in Nogales, Sonora. Interns will serve meals, pass out needed clothing and medical supplies, and most importantly, listen to the stories of migrants who have been deported and traumatized during their journey to el norte.
- Cultural immersion and a chance to improve Spanish language skills.
- Interview key political figures and stakeholders in the border region.
- Participate in ARSOBO, a binational maquiladora (factory), which produces prostheses, wheelchairs, and hearing aids. Many migrants in Latin America have lost limbs and sustained severe injuries on their journey to the north. Several are the employees of ARSOBO.
- Participate in desert searches and water drops with the Green Valley Samaritans and No More Deaths.
- Field trips to communities in Arizona and Mexico to attend conferences and workshops and to explore how different agencies are handling the humanitarian crisis of migration and other border related issues.
- Opportunities to attend Border Community Alliance (BCA) Board meetings and contribute to the development of a nonprofit organization focused on the dynamic issues of the borderlands.
- Work with two agencies (BCA and FESAC), located in both the US and Mexico, and learn how these two groups work together to strengthen programs of border community development and philanthropy.

## Border Community Alliance History:

The Border Community Alliance is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization with offices in Tubac, Arizona, and Nogales, Sonora Mexico with FESAC. BCA, together with its Mexican partner FESAC ([www.fesac.org](http://www.fesac.org)), supports the educational, social public policy, humanitarian, cultural and economic development of the US/Mexico border region to improve the quality of life for border communities.

For more information about BCA and the Internship Program, visit our website at:

[www.bordercommunityalliance.com](http://www.bordercommunityalliance.com)

Email: [Interns@bordercommunityalliance.org](mailto:Interns@bordercommunityalliance.org)

Telephone: (520) 419-1960

**Note:** Interns should be mature individuals with a clear idea of what they hope to achieve, a faculty sponsor if they are pursuing an academic project, some ability to converse in Spanish, and the ability to work independently without extensive supervision. Prior international travel, service and study experience is a plus. Interns must possess a current valid passport.