**Research Project Title:** Impacts of Migration from Rural Communities in Nicaragua

**Location:** Tola, Nicaragua

**Research Topic:** Human Rights, Economic Sustainability

**Partner Organization:** Foundation for Sustainable Development and AMNLAE Casa de la Mujer, “Sonia Bello”

**Description of FSD:** Foundation for Sustainable Development is an international development organization that seeks to support communities in achieving their goals through asset-based development and international exchange in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. FSD provides opportunities for students and professionals to engage in real community development work—instead of a typical study abroad or drop-in service project program. FSD works in six countries, and for more than two decades has supported more than 250 community partner organizations and trained more than 3,000 volunteers. Its community development efforts have maintained an ongoing project sustainability rate of nearly 80 percent, addressing health, social, environmental, and economic issues by responding to community priorities and offering training, grants, and volunteer support to community partners.

**Description of Community Partner:** The Association of Nicaraguan Women "Luisa Amanda Espinoza" (AMNLAE) was formed in Rivas in 1977 as an answer to the demands of women participating in bringing down the Somoza dictatorship. They obtained legal status as an NGO in 1990. Besides the main "Sonia Bello" county House, they have 6 other municipal Houses in an equal number of municipalities. These provide spaces for meetings, trainings, and education of the women and adolescents of Rivas. They are places where women come seeking medical care, legal advice, and therapeutic support. They are also places for learning technical skills in order to contribute to economic empowerment and development. The mission of AMNLAE Casa de la Mujer, “Sonia Bello” is to promote and defend the economic, political, and social rights of women with attention to gender equality. Specifically, AMNLAE works in outreach, promotion, and defense of women’s rights; promotion of equality in political management and decision-making; and promotion of women’s participation in economic decision-making.

**Social Issue:** Due to a lack of economic opportunities in many parts of Nicaragua, community members decide to emigrate to other countries, primarily the United States and Costa Rica, for more economic opportunities. This can oftentimes put a strain on families, especially when mothers choose to emigrate and leave their children behind in the care of extended family.

**Research Project Description:** The AMNLAE Casa de la Mujer "Sonia Bello" is seeking to address the social issue of Nicaraguan emigration among women in search of better economic opportunities. The organization would like to understand better the impact (both positive and negative) among women whose families remain in Nicaragua after they have emigrated. Community involvement in this project would involve working with the organization’s network of beneficiaries to undertake the research, conducting interviews, and studying impacts of emigration as a whole.
Methodology: The research would combine quantitative and qualitative methods. Data collection methods will include interviews with family members, surveys with AMNLAE clients, and focus groups. However, research interns will work with their on-site mentor to develop the most appropriate tools to conduct effective research with AMNLAE.

Community Impact: This research would serve the community by promoting awareness about migration issues, research would inform corresponding institutions, and buttress proposal writing for the organization.

Student profile: The student should have an intermediate level of Spanish. The student should have a background in research methodologies. Students studying gender issues, Latin American studies, or other relevant topics are encouraged to apply.