Research Project Title: What is the Current State of Water Quality in Rural Nicaragua?
Location: Nancimi, Nicaragua
Research Topic: Water & Sanitation
Partner Organization: Foundation for Sustainable Development and Puesto de Salud, Nancimi

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: Founded in 1988, the Health Post in Nancimi is a public institution within the network of the Ministry of Health (MINSA) in Nicaragua, and reports to the Health Center in the Tola, Rivas. The post provides free and universal health care without discrimination to all citizens and non-nationals. Since it is a publically funded institution, resources are in short supply. The services include primary care, prevention, and free medication (when available). Laboratory testing, medical emergencies, and in-patient care is referred to the Health Center in Tola or beyond to the Regional Hospital in Rivas city. The key target populations are children, adolescents, and pregnant women.

Social Issue: Nancimi is a self-governing indigenous community with limited access to many resources offered in urban areas. Due to the rurality of Nancimi, access to clean, drinkable water is oftentimes limited, causing community members to drink from contaminated wells. A lack of understanding regarding water contaminants, germs, and bacteria compounds the issue since most families do not boil or purify unsafe water before drinking, bathing, or cooking.

Research Project Description: The health post is concerned about the quality of water for human consumption and would like a passionate researcher to work within the health center to undertake an analysis of water quality and carry out informed interventions in the community. Commonly reported health problems at the post include urinary tract infections and gastrointestinal illnesses. A potential cause of such health problems is the quality of water the community is consuming, which primarily comes from local well water resources. The researcher will work within the community to interview families regarding knowledge, behavior, and awareness of water quality within the region.

Methodology: The research would be a hybrid of clinical work and community-based research. Data collection methods will include interviews, surveys, focus groups, and online research and any other methods deemed appropriate.
**Community Impact:** This project would impact the community by improving health outcomes related to the consumption of contaminated water. Raised knowledge on water quality in the community and support the health post in making informed interventions.

**Student profile:** The researcher should have an intermediate level of Spanish. Additionally, the researcher should have a background in research methodologies and be studying public health, or similar field.