

Lauren Moy, '11

## Cusco, Peru

In the summer of May 2010, I was lucky enough to spend six weeks living and working in an underserved medical clinic in rural Cusco, Peru. Cusco can be a tourist city, but there is a whole population of locals that live in the country-side. Cusco is a city in southeastern Peru, and used to be the Incan capital. The weather in Cusco is generally dry and temperate. We were in Cusco during the dry season, which was beautiful and sunny during the day, but chilly at night. Cusco is also one of the highest cities in the world since its altitude is around 3,300 m (10,800 feet)! During our time there, I was not only amazed at how beautiful Peru was, but the people we met during our stay were amazing.

*This is one of the most visible mountains in Cusco and displays the country's pride and creativity.*



*Our group after dinner with the daughters of our host family. Names are as follows: starting from the left front row: Lisa, Ciobelle ,and Sally. Back row: Marissa, me, Paul, and JT. Lisa had a school performance that night that we attended!*



I traveled and worked with my classmates, Marissa Potenza, Paul Cristofano, and JT Anderson during my summer of service. Five days a week we worked in a local medical clinic that served the local people of Cusco in an area called Manco Ccapac. We provided the people of Manco Ccapac, with a wide variety of health care needs ranging from lab services to prenatal care. Marissa and I mainly worked weighing babies, giving immunizations, measuring mother's bellies, updating patient records and helping in administrative duties. The clinic functioned as a basic care facility for families in the area.

*Marissa and I with the doctor we shadowed in obstetrics and gynecology.*



On alternating days of the week, we would travel farther uphill to visit schools where we would the clinic do health tests for the students. These were my favorite days because after the general health tests, we would play with the students in the yard when they had breaks from class. Volunteering in the clinic was truly an eye opening experience and allowed us to see the surrounding community near the clinic. The local people of Cusco are truly people in need of assistance and I hope the clinic continues to provide for them as wonderfully as they have been.

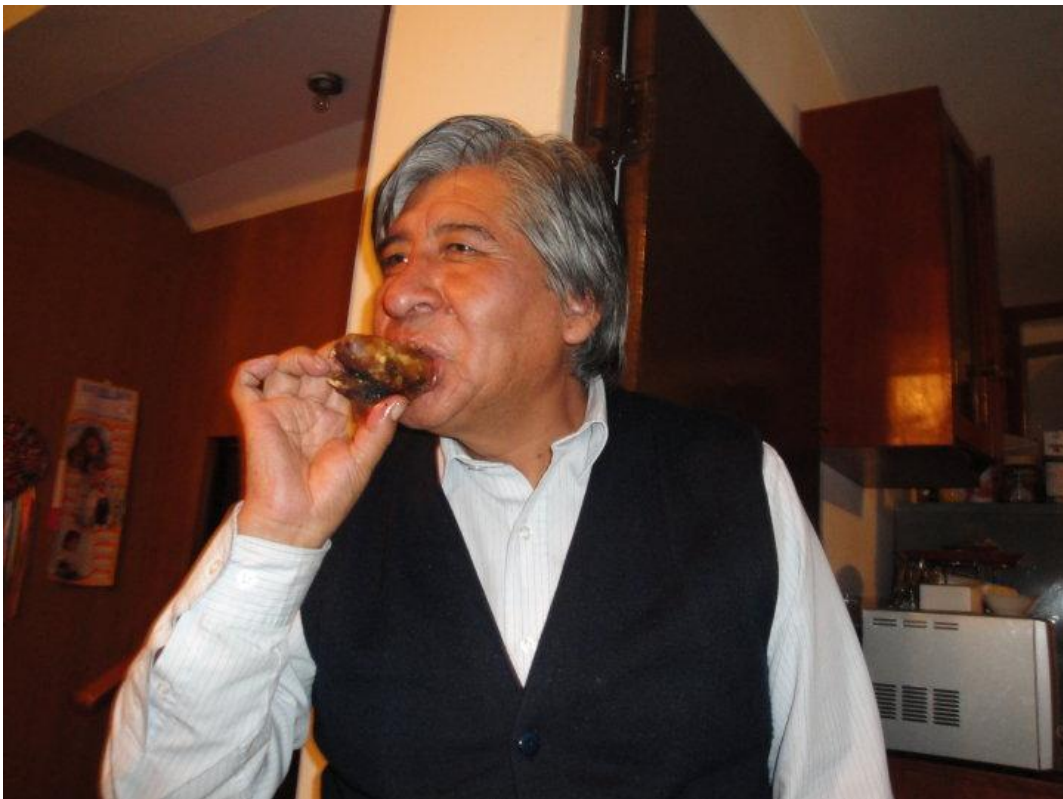
*This is the neighborhood around the clinic. The clinic was up in the hills where the local people were off the electricity and water grids, so houses there were pretty rural.*



Below is an example of a typical day in the clinic. The line was usually out the door and people would wait for hours to see a doctor. Paul would pass out candy to the kids as he walked by and they would call him “Doctor Dulce”! The second picture shows JT giving a little girl a checkup.



A few nights before our departure, our host mother made us a Cusco delicacy-cuy! Cuy is guinea pig and is usually roasted. We were a little nervous to try it, but it ended up being pretty good! Our host father liked giving us the show of eating its head!



Before we knew it, our six weeks were over. I will never forget my experience in Peru and will always value what I learned from the people we met

