**International Clinical Internships in Trinidad**

# General Information about the ICDR-Trinidad Group

Occupational therapy internships have been running at the Immortelle Children’s Centre and Prevocational Centre since 2001. To date, there have been over 150 occupational therapy students who have participated in this internship. In the past few years, many speech language pathology and physical therapy students have also completed internships at the Immortelle Children’s Centre.

# Partners

Immortelle Children’s Centre and Prevocational Centre is the main partner involved in this internship. Immortelle is a privately run school for children and adults with special needs. (For OT, PT, and SLP students)

# Disclaimers/Precautions (If any)

* Not mandatory to have specific vaccinations prior to travelling to Trinidad, though students should ensure their routine vaccinations are up to date
* Students with allergies or dietary restrictions should ensure they will have appropriate food choices while in Trinidad
* Certain areas of Trinidad can be unsafe to enter. It is strongly advised that these areas be avoided at all times. Please refer to the student handbook for more information.

# Immortelle Children's Centre and Prevocational Centre – Occupational Therapy

**General Info about the Internship**

A 6-7 week international clinical internship opportunity for occupational therapy students from the University of Toronto is offered twice a year (in November and April). The internship takes place at the Immortelle Children’s Centre and Prevocational Centre in the city of Port of Spain.

# Population

The population at the Immortelle Children’s Centre consists of young preschool and school aged children with a range of developmental delays including cognitive, physical and sensory motor delays. The age range of students at the Prevocational Centre is pre-teen up to adult ages. These students have a range of disabilities as well including psychosocial, cognitive and physical delays.

# Costs

Students are typically responsible for all costs. Students and supervisors typically share accommodations close to the school. Students are required to split the cost of accommodation, which can range from $700 to $1000 each. The average cost of airfare to travel to Trinidad is in the CAN$600-$700 range. Students are responsible for paying for their food and the average grocery prices are similar to what you would find in Canadian grocery stores. Prospective supervisors should note that they do not get paid while supervising students in Trinidad; however the cost of their flight, their portion of the accommodation, and their food is covered by a generous donor.

# Supervision

Four occupational therapy students and one Canadian occupational therapy supervisor are selected to take part in this internship. The Canadian supervisor is generally present for the first 3 weeks of the internship and the students complete the remainder of the internship under remote supervision from the Canadian supervisor and some direct supervision from a Trinidadian supervisor. As a result, prospective students are required to demonstrate strong motivation and self-initiation skills.

# Type of Practice/Typical Day

Students will be expected at the school at 8:30 each morning. The classes usually run until about 1:30pm. Students will likely spend time in particular classrooms, working to support specific teachers as well as work one on one with individual students. They will have the opportunity to complete assessment and treatment plans for individual students and they will provide consultation services for teachers. Students will work together to offer workshops to students, teachers and parents, that include topics such as sensory motor functioning, building handwriting/computer skills, social skills and personal hygiene functioning, as well as preparation for on the job training and assertiveness building.

# Immortelle Children's Centre and Prevocational Centre – Physical Therapy

In the fall of 2014, a physical therapy internship took place at the Immortelle Centre for the first time.  Under the clinical supervision of a Toronto-based physiotherapist, two physical therapy students from the University of Toronto assessed and addressed the physiotherapy needs of the Immortelle students, their families, and the school.  In addition to providing one-to-one physiotherapy sessions, the students designed and piloted a ‘daily physical activity’ (DPA) program at the Christmas day camp, and worked with Immortelle staff and caregivers to implement recommendations related to mobility, exercise, gross motor skill development and participation in physical activities.  During the internship, the students worked with the occupational therapy students to accomplish interprofessional therapy goals.  The physical therapy team also visited local rehabilitation professionals to learn more about community resources and service delivery in Trinidad.

# Immortelle Children's Centre and Prevocational Centre – Speech Language Pathology (SLP)

In 2010, the first group of 4 SLP students and an SLP travelled to Trinidad to complete an 8 week placement at Immortelle Children’s Centre. Now, 3-4 SLP students participate annually. Following one week of Toronto-based clinical learning, the student clinicians are co-supervised for 7 weeks by an Ontario-based SLP (on site full time for the first three weeks and then by distance part time from Ontario) and local SLPs (on site part time for the last four weeks). The SLP students provide assessments as well as individual and group intervention to students with a wide range of developmental disabilities, the most common being Down Syndrome and Autism. In addition, students may hold a two-week SLP camp over the Easter Holidays, offer a parent information session in collaboration with SLP students from the University of West Indies, and participate in an interprofessional assessment with occupational therapy Students.

# For more information

For more information about the internship opportunities at the Immortelle Children's Centre and Prevocational Centre, please contact Lauren Marcus at [laurenmarcus222@gmail.com](mailto:laurenmarcus222@gmail.com) or Sandy Steinwender at [sandsmilett@gmail.com](mailto:sandsmilett@gmail.com)

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