

## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The ECHO Internship Program provides an opportunity for capacity development for individuals considering a career in international development. The Internship Program is designed to equip future development workers with basic skills in smallholder tropical agriculture and community development. This hands-on training program allows interns to learn through participating in ECHO's ministry. Interns engage in distance, and in-person coursework and field trips designed to enhance these skills and provide exposure to a broad range of relevant topics important to smallholder farmers. In addition to hands-on learning, upon completion of ECHO's Internship Program, each intern will receive a 13-credit graduate-level Certificate in Tropical Agricultural Development, offered in partnership with Dallas International University, 7500 W Camp Wisdom Rd, Dallas, TX 75236.

The purpose of the C-TAD program is to prepare students to:

- Integrate into agricultural communities around the globe with deep cultural awareness, sensitivity, and appreciation for local initiatives, local knowledge, and appropriate solutions.
- Work alongside under-resourced communities to help identify, utilize, and maximize locally-available resources to address quality of life issues within communities.
- Train smallholder farmers in appropriate agricultural systems & techniques as well as the selection and utilization of crops that increase quality and/or quantity of local food production.
- Creatively problem-solve as they help the undernourished navigate the challenges of sustainable food production.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

ECHO has a Global Farm exemplifying agricultural principles and techniques that are important to smallholder farmers and gardeners in developing countries. The Internship Program provides instruction in tropical agriculture, guiding participants through courses in "Fundamentals of Tropical Agriculture," "Tropical Crops in Small-Scale Agriculture," and "Agriculture Systems." In addition, participants will learn how to apply this knowledge within communities through distance learning courses taught by Dallas International University Faculty in "Cultural Anthropology" & "Training Across Cultures," and "Community Development" & "Small-scale Agricultural Experimentation" taught by ECHO Staff. The program's Independent Study requirement is a comprehensive capstone project where the student will demonstrate their understanding and ability to apply agricultural knowledge to a key area of personal interest in the agricultural development field. While there are integral trainings, learning primarily occurs through hands-on experience.

The ECHO Internship Program is a full-time commitment (40 hours a week). In addition to the main intern priorities and course work, ECHO interns assist with missional aspects of ECHO, such as farm maintenance, seed bank operation and nursery production, as well as ECHO events.

### **Intern activities include:**

- Engaging in in-person and distance instruction
- Participating in the production of tropical foods, underutilized plants, fruit, and multipurpose trees
- Creating formal and informal trainings in agriculture or community development
- Harvesting, cleaning, and processing seeds
- Propagate tropical and sub-tropical plants
- Learning to care for and integrate livestock into agricultural systems
- Managing demonstration areas

Interns gain experience with the various demonstration areas on the farm. Each of these areas highlights plants, techniques, and technologies which can be useful under challenging conditions. Interns work together with staff to plan what will be demonstrated in each of these areas. Once the plan is determined, the interns are responsible to establish and maintain area demonstrations.

Each intern will work alongside staff who run ECHO's seed bank or nursery. In so doing, they will gain vital skills in propagation and seed saving. Interns in the seed bank are involved in the operation of ECHO's global seed bank, which supplies trial packets of hard-to-find seeds to our network of missionaries and development workers. Interns in the nursery work with the propagation and maintenance of tropical and subtropical plants for ECHO's farm, campus, and Retail Nursery.

### **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:**

The ECHO Internship Program is 12 months long. Interns must have a Bachelor's Degree, US citizenship, and be able to fulfill the duties required. We do not require applicants to have a degree in a specific major nor to have previous agricultural or cross-cultural experience. However, the purpose of the internship program is to prepare Christian development workers for agricultural ministry, so we look for candidates who are most likely to pursue this type of career: relevant classes, agricultural skills, international experience, work history, good grades, and so on.

Interns will be expected to actively communicate with ECHO Faculty/Staff via in person and email and Dallas International University Staff/Faculty via email.

### **WORK ENVIRONMENT:**

Interns work outside with gardens, animals, and appropriate technologies, as well as inside with computers and in the classroom and library. The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this internship. Work involves outdoor activities under varying conditions as well as indoors with research, writing, and training activities. The noise level in the work environment is usually low to moderate unless notified that loud equipment is being utilized nearby.

### **PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to do sustained, moderate physical activity and occasional vigorous physical activity under both high humidity and tropical temperature conditions.

The employee must regularly work outdoors and may, at times, assist with entering data and other tasks that involve writing or work on the computer. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to stand (for at least two consecutive hours), walk, use hands, talk, and hear. Fine motor skills such as typing, the use of a computer mouse and telephone handset are required. The employee is frequently required to reach with hands and arms and perform tree trimming from ladders. The employee is required to walk, bend, sit, stoop, kneel, and crouch. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move to 30-50 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and ability to adjust focus.