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Lilly Summer Discernment Institute
Part I

My internship took place with The Cloud Forest School (CEC) in Monteverde Costa Rica – a privately funded, non-profit K-11th grade bilingual school. During the summer months the CEC runs a summer program, available to all ages, that includes activities such as environmental education, art, sports, cultural projects, as well as a leadership development class for the high school students.

My role at the CEC was that of a summer intern, where I became a teaching assistant and counselor helping to monitor and facilitate activities throughout the day. Days were filled with field trips to local farms and rainforests, soccer games, hiking, reforestation projects, and the painting of a new classroom mural. I worked alongside a mixture of Ticans and international teachers – individuals who quickly became a community of support, guidance, love, and laughter. While I sometimes found myself feeling like an “extra set of hands” or “another set of eyes,” this community of people and the fellowship created shed light on my purpose there and the need to be aware of what is presently needed and called for. The accumulation of relationship and experience from Costa Rica and the CEC have altered what I personally view as vocation – Barbara Brown Taylor puts it nicely by saying, “...[there is no] set experience. Instead [there is] a door that anyone may go through, to discover realities that meet each person where each person needs to be met...” For me, this includes an awareness that there are no boundaries to work grounded in love, time spent in service, or the slow and beautiful work of God.

The time in Costa Rica and with the CEC passed all too quickly, however moving forward I am confident that my relationships there will not fade but will continue to grow. I am hopeful that I will return (sooner rather than later), but in the meantime I know that I am capable of living with the intention, sense of self, and trust in God's timing just as I did during these past summer months.