



Princeton  
Internships in  
Civic  
Service

## **PICS 2010 Internship Description**

**Organization Name:** CATA – Farmworker Support Committee

**Internship Location:** 4 South Delsea Dr., P.O. Box 510, Glassboro, NJ 08028

**Required Dates:** Yes  No  If yes, internship must start on: \_\_\_\_\_ and end on \_\_\_\_\_ or  
must include the period:

**Housing Will Be Available to Intern:** Yes  No  If yes, housing will be free:  or  
housing will cost the student:

### **Expected working schedule for this internship:**

Start Time: 9:00 am                      End Time: 5:00 pm  
Lunch break: 30 min to 1 hr (duration)                      (specific time, if applicable)

**Additional Information**, if necessary: Office hours are from 9 to 5 but if the intern is going out to the farm labor camps in the evening, then the hours would be from 1:00 PM to 9:00 PM.

(Please indicate if any of the preparation work will take place outside of the regular work schedule)

### **Organization Description**

*Please describe your organization briefly, including mission statement, activities, size etc. Please also explain the benefit that will be derived by your organization by sponsoring a Princeton intern.*

El Comité de Apoyo a los Trabajadores Agrícolas (CATA – Farmworker Support Committee) is a non-profit, migrant farmworker organization governed by and comprised of farmworkers who are actively engaged in the struggle for better working and living conditions. CATA's mission is to empower and educate farmworkers through leadership development and capacity building so that they are able to make informed decision on the best course of action to promote and defend their civil and human rights. For the past thirty years, CATA has committed itself to facilitating the organizing of farmworkers, based upon the belief that only through organizing and collective action will farmworkers be able to achieve justice. CATA implements its program in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and the Delmarva Peninsula.

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12 Stockton Street  
Princeton, NJ 08540  
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CATA's work is based on the Popular Education Methodology, which develops migrant and immigrant workers' ability to analyze their reality in order to make collective decisions. As such, CATA seeks to develop the leadership capacity of farmworkers through education and trainings on issues pertinent to their lives (human rights, immigration rights, labor rights, health and safety such as pesticide issues, strategic planning, and coalition building). Throughout this process, workers identify and initiate necessary workplace campaigns or community projects. As leaders develop at the local level, they can become involved in regional Councils, the Annual Assembly, and CATA's Board of Directors, and through these bodies participate in the national and international arenas.

CATA's work has resulted in several significant advancements for farmworkers. Mushroom workers organized and won three historic union elections. Workers also formed a tenants' committee which achieved a conciliation agreement by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development to address housing discrimination. CATA has successfully fought unjust H-2A guestworker legislation and has through its coalitions built broad opposition to this immigration program, which has been widely denounced as a violation of workers' fundamental rights. Workers' efforts have also resulted in the adoption of a Right-to-Know Law so workers can know what pesticides and other hazardous materials they are exposed to on the work site. More recently, workers and their families have been actively engaged in the labor rights struggle which resulted in the increase of the minimum wage in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Workers have also joined the hundreds of thousands of immigrants in planning activities at the local level in calling for fair immigration standards and have participated in creating the space at the United Nations for migrant voices to have a forum.

CATA is committed to providing opportunities for young people to be exposed to social justice issues. There has been a mutual benefit for both the organization and a Princeton intern as we support the farmworkers' struggle for justice. CATA tries to match up the interests and abilities of the person with the needs of the organization so that both can benefit from the experience. By placing a Princeton intern at CATA it provides us with focused projects that we have identified as something beneficial and complementary to our work but are otherwise unable to accomplish due to time constraints on the staff.

### **Internship Description**

*Describe in detail the work or project will do; please be as specific as possible. Please also explain the benefit that a student will obtain by interning with your organization.*

The activities of the organization provide many learning opportunities for interns or volunteers. CATA has also been a place where young people can offer the skills and expertise they have already developed. CATA makes every effort to match the interests and abilities of the person with the needs of the organization.

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## Princeton Internships in Civic Service

In the past, Princeton Internships in Civic Service (formally Princeton University Class of 1969) interns assisted CATA in multiple aspects of the organization. Depending on their interest and abilities, interns will be actively involved in research projects, hands-on interaction with farmworkers, and audio/visual projects. The various projects CATA realized through the Princeton University internship program include; the creation of a Documentation Center, development of Pesticide Crop Sheets and a how-to manual for future staff/volunteers to use, development of a farmworker youth program using English as a Second Language classes and soccer activities around international trade laws, filming farmworker labor struggle activities to incorporate into a documentary, an analysis of the health care system available to migrant farmworkers, research on the future of migrant farm labor work force in the US, and the development, implementation of an immigrant survey showing the economic contributions of undocumented immigrants, documenting the memory of the struggles of the Zapoteco community in Oaxaca, Mexico, a project looking at second generation immigrants, and last year's project of updating the Documentation Center for increased utility and efficiency.

An internship with CATA would also provide the opportunity to interact with the migrant farmworker community. The intern will be able to go with CATA staff to farm labor camps in New Jersey and discuss with farmworkers the working and living conditions, observe trainings, and participate/assist in any event or activity scheduled. There will also be an opportunity to assist with CATA activities in Pennsylvania with mushroom workers.

A Princeton intern would benefit from their experience at CATA by broadening their perspectives on complex societal issues. CATA shares with the intern the farmworker situation and provides a broad analysis of the problems they face. This helps the volunteer see the specifics of our work in the context of the bigger picture. At regular meetings with staff and farmworkers, the intern participates in discussions of social, economic and political analysis. Through this on-going discussion, the intern further develops his/her understanding of this reality and develops his/her own analytical skills. CATA works on local, regional, national, and international levels and involves the intern in many of these activities. Making an analysis of the social, political, and economic structures which impact farmworkers is essential in order to adequately address the issues.

### **Intern Qualifications**

*Describe any particular skills, background, or qualities you are seeking in an intern.*

It is important for an intern to have a desire to work on social, environmental, and economic justice issues. We seek someone who possesses interpersonal skills who can work collectively as well as independently. The intern should be culturally sensitive to the Latino community and/or have a strong desire to learn about the community. We look for someone who can be flexible in their work given that they may need to work some nights and weekends.

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We recommend that the intern be bilingual in English and Spanish and have a working knowledge of the various Latino cultures. It is also recommended that the intern possess computer skills, audio/video skills, and knowledge of research techniques. Due to the limited public transportation system in southern New Jersey, it is extremely helpful for the intern to have a vehicle in order to be more mobile.

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