

PITT MED WAS HERE

Throughout Western Pennsylvania, it seems you can hardly flip a chart without seeing a Pitt med student nearby. It's no secret that our emerging physicians are getting their feet wet all over this region and beyond. But did you know many of our students are also crossing oceans to make a splash?

Through senior electives, summer enrichment experiences, and scholarly research projects, our students are diving into clinical and research work in both urban and rural settings throughout Asia, Africa, the Americas, Europe, and Australia, often in underserved areas. In the last decade, students have brought medical supplies to hospitals and clinics; made house calls in Honduras; scrubbed for transplant surgery in Sicily (at the UPMC-affiliated ISMETT); and confronted such

global-health threats as HIV, malaria, TB, malnutrition, and chronic noncommunicable diseases, often amid the challenges of a resource-limited setting.

"I appreciated how much waste there is in the U.S. as I saw many patients diagnosed simply by clinical exam, basic labs, plain X-rays, and ultrasounds," says Corinne Rhodes (MD '10), who completed a rotation in the Southeastern African nation of Malawi in her fourth year.

"Often the complicated tests and procedures that we utilize to determine diagnoses are not necessary to bring the patients back to their former state of health," she says.

Last summer, second-year student Jeremy Kauffman traveled to China with funding from the Medical Alumni Association. In his eight weeks abroad, Kauffman brought care to people still living in tents more than a year after the devastating earthquake in Yushu;

to orphaned children with special needs in Kunming; and to villagers in rural Nang Qian—"Rural in the sense of a six-hour drive from Yushu along dirt roads over 15,000-foot mountains," he adds. He also assisted a surgeon in Xining for three weeks, an experience that inspired him to consider a future in pediatric surgery, as well as a relevant scholarly research project.

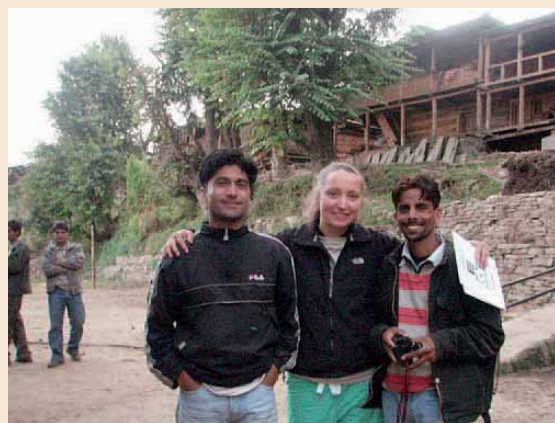
"I heard about the summer enrichment program," he says, "and I was really encouraged by the fact that part of the mission was to broaden the horizons of the medical students and give them opportunities to grow professionally and personally. Both of these were achieved in my case."

In the past decade, some 350 Pitt med students have traveled to 67 countries to learn about medicine from other perspectives. The map on the next page charts travels from 2002 to 2011. —*Elaine Vitone*



Jeremy Kauffman (Class of '14) worked with patients last summer in several settings across China. BOTTOM LEFT: Kauffman (second from the right) helps pull his mobile clinic out of the mud in Nang Qian, China. TOP LEFT: Teaching English to Tibetan children in Yushu.

In her Pitt med days, Anya Gushchin (MD '09) volunteered at eye clinics in Nepal and India. TOP MIDDLE: Visiting the Taj Mahal after a month-long medical trek in the mountains. BOTTOM MIDDLE: With the village chief and schoolteacher (holding an ophthalmoscope) of Dodra, India. ABOVE: At a seminar on antibiotic resistance Gushchin organized for Kathmandu Medical College and Shigan Health Center in Nepal.



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ILLUSTRATION BY STACY INNERST

COMPILED BY ELAINE VITONE

NATIONS WITHIN A NATION

Thirty-four students have worked with indigenous peoples in North America, including members of the Navajo, Yavapai-Apache, and Hopi nations. They've also served with native Alaskan and Hawaiian communities.

SAN JOSÉ DEL NEGRITO

Shoulder to Shoulder is a nonprofit cofounded by three Pittsburgh docs—two of them with Pitt ties: N. Randall Kolb (MD '82), family medicine residency director at UPMC Shadyside, and William Markle, family medicine residency director at UPMC McKeesport. The organization has brought some 150 students to San José del Negrito, Honduras, in the last decade to provide preventive, primary, and acute care and help with public health initiatives. On their most recent trip this fall, Pitt med students gave well-child exams to 600 kids in the area and provided many other services.

LILONGWE

Since 2001, more than 40 Pitt medical students have traveled to Malawi as part of clinical electives or to pursue required scholarly research projects. Most spent time at Kamuzu Central Hospital in Lilongwe, where Thuy Bui, Pitt associate professor of medicine, served as a Peace Corps volunteer physician in 1995. She continues to support training and patient care there through UPMC's Global Health Track Internal Medicine Residency Program. By the way, in 2000, Bui and Pitt assistant professor of biomedical informatics Gerry Douglas (PhD '09), her husband, cofounded Baobab Health, a nonprofit that uses technology to improve health care in developing countries. So far, Baobab has helped bring antiretroviral therapy, HIV testing and counseling sessions, imaging studies, and lab tests to thousands of Malawians.

STUDENT CLINICAL AND RESEARCH TRAVEL EXPERIENCES (2002–2011)

1–3 STUDENTS: Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Belize, Bolivia, Bosnia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Egypt, England, Gabon, Germany, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Mali, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Paraguay, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Scotland, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Taiwan, Tanzania, Thailand, the Virgin Islands, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Ukraine, and Vietnam

4–10: Australia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Ghana, Kenya, Mexico, Mozambique, Peru, Swaziland, the Philippines, and Zambia

11–20: China and the Himalayas

21–40: India and the United States

41–99: Italy and Malawi

100 PLUS: Honduras

SOURCE: OFFICE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

PALERMO AND DUBLIN

Italy has been super simpatico to Pitt meders. Since 2003, 57 have made the trip, most of whom based their clinical and research experiences at Palermo's UPMC-affiliated transplant hospital, ISMETT. A similar student program is in the works at UPMC Beacon Hospital in Dublin, Ireland.

SCHOLARS AT LARGE

Based on their experiences abroad, students have completed scholarly research projects ranging from mass drug administration for elephantiasis in the Philippines to predictors of infant malnutrition in Lesotho.

HOW DO THEY GET THERE?

Students often do their own fundraising to cover their travel expenses, many of them garnering support through Medical Alumni Association Summer Enrichment Scholarships and Travel Grants from the University of Pittsburgh Center for Global Health. ■