

Global Cats

Global Health Updates from the University of Arizona College of
Medicine - Tucson and Office of Global and Border Health

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Traumatic IVC Repair at Kapsowar Mission Hospital

by Nick Barber, Anthony Rossi, and Marc Triska

When asked to describe their global health experience, medical students Anthony Rossi, Nicholas Barber, and Marc Triska were grateful for the opportunity to learn at Kapsowar Mission Hospital and incredibly grateful for each precious moments they spent helping care for the population in Kapsowar. While every day was special and filled with amazing moments, one experience in particular stood out to them.

One day as it was getting late, Anthony headed back from the hospital to the hospital-sponsored house where all three men were staying. He was getting ready to unwind from the day when Nick called him and asked if Dr. Hall, a transplant surgeon from Houston who had just arrived that day and was also volunteering in Kapsowar, was available. A young female had fallen from an avocado tree and was impaled in the left abdomen by a fencepost. She presented to the casualty department of Kapsowar Mission Hospital approximately 20 minutes following the accident. Anthony ran next door, and informed Dr. Hall that he was urgently needed at the hospital. Anthony and Dr. Hall headed over to the hospital and scrubbed into surgery, along with Marc and Nick.

The three medical students helped in any way possible, including gathering medical supplies for the health care team. Her initial X-ray showed no significant findings, however, a positive FAST exam prompted an exploratory laparotomy. There appeared to be bleeding from the liver region and a 3 cm laceration of the



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intrahepatic IVC was discovered, extending from the caudate lobe to the left renal vein insertion. Prompt surgical repair using sutures was performed by the visiting transplant surgeon, Dr. Hall. Estimated blood loss was 3 liters, but sufficient hemodynamic support was accomplished with fluid and 2 units of our patient's blood type (O+), the only 2 units available within a 3-hour radius. Despite the limited access to care and resources characteristic of this rural region in Kenya, the patient made a full recovery thanks to prompt action taken by the healthcare team.

As the medical students watched the patient recover over the following days, they discussed the surgery with Dr. Hall and better understood the severity of the situation and the life-saving treatment that the team accomplished.



Current News in Global Health

WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus declared an international public health emergency on August 14th after a surge in Monkey Pox cases in the Democratic Republic of Congo based on the advice of the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee. The new outbreak of Monkey Pox is occurring in the Eastern region of the DRC and several new countries: Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda. The World Health Organization reports the number of cases this year already exceeds the total cases from last year, “with more than 15,600 cases and 537 deaths”. WHO experts believe the total number of cases to be higher as a “large portion of clinically compatible cases have not been tested”.

Monkey Pox cases have been increasing in the DRC for over 10 years but in July of 2022 a surge in outbreaks resulted in the declaration of a public health emergency of international concern. The outbreak was declared over the following year. Dr. Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa, said international coordination is needed to manage this outbreak and keep the virus from spreading further. Two vaccines have been developed for Monkey Pox which have now been listed for Emergency Use allowing expedited vaccine access to lower-income countries. Additionally, WHO has released USD 1.45 million to help fund the response. *To learn more about the outbreak, click [here](#).*



Awards & Scholarships

Ron & Karen Pust Faculty Global Health Award

J. Daniel Twelker,
OD, PhD



J. Daniel Twelker, OD, PhD graduated from the University of California, Berkeley School of Optometry and Vision Science with a Doctor of Optometry degree in 1992 and went to work at a clinic in the Mission District of San Francisco. Being fluent in Spanish was very helpful in caring for the ophthalmic and visual needs of patients in this immigrant neighborhood. Some years later he was drawn to pediatric vision research and completed a Ph.D. in Vision Science at UC Berkeley in their Graduate Program. In 2002, Dr. Twelker joined the faculty at the University of Arizona, Department of Ophthalmology and Vision Science, and worked for a decade with the Tohono O'odham Nation looking at the need for vision correction in children and developed a vision screening project in the schools. During this time he visited La Guacamaya, Honduras for several years working in a small clinic and training promotoras de salud visual. Dr. Twelker designed a vision screening program in Kino Bay, Sonora, and trained UA ophthalmology residents in an annual 4-day clinic, which after the pandemic has been reinitiated in Agua Prieta, Sonora. For two years (2019-2021) Dr. Twelker was the President of Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity, International which develops educational enhancement programs to improve ophthalmic and vision care all over the world, including Haiti, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Kenya, Ghana, and Vietnam.



MedGlobal Humanitarian Award

Sommer Aldulaimi, MD, FAAFP

Sommer Aldulaimi, MD, FAAFP, associate professor, and co-director of the Global Health Programs, was awarded the MedGlobal Humanitarian Award for her work in starting the AAFP (American Academy of Family Physicians) Basic Life Support in Obstetrics (BLSO) Program in Bangladesh, for the doctors and midwives working in the Rohingya refugee camp.

Dr. Aldulaimi was also selected for the 2024 COM-T Clinical Excellence Award for her impressive accomplishments and impact. The annual College of Medicine-Tucson Clinical Excellence Award recognizes physician faculty members at the assistant or associate professor level for outstanding clinical care. *To view more awards presented by UA, click [here](#).*

Awards & Scholarships

Mulcahy Scholarship

The Office of Global and Border Health awards funds from the Mulcahy Scholarship for international student rotations each year. The recipients for 2023-2024 were:

Andria Albert, MS4 – Costa Rica

During this rotation, I had the opportunity to immerse myself in the Costa Rican healthcare system and significantly improve my medical Spanish proficiency. The knowledge and skills acquired during this experience will undoubtedly be very useful throughout my upcoming residency, particularly in serving the Spanish speaking populations here in southern Arizona.

Karol Kamel, MS4 – Egypt

I was able to immerse myself in a unique learning environment, gaining invaluable insights into pediatric surgical practices and healthcare systems different from those I am familiar with. This experience has not only expanded my medical knowledge but has also broadened my perspective on healthcare delivery and cultural diversity.

Kristi Poling, MS4 – Ghana`

The experience I had in Ghana was an unforgettable, formidable experience that I will carry with me in my career and future global health work.

Hanan Alsakka, MS4 – Kenya

This opportunity not only enriched my educational journey but also significantly contributed to my professional development in the field of global health.

Awards & Scholarships

GME Resident Global Health Travel Scholarship

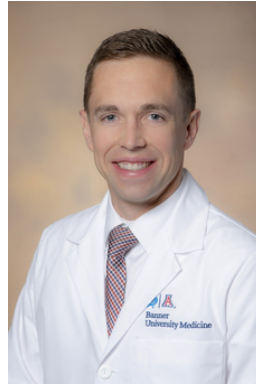
Awarded annually to residents who have shown dedication to global health over the course of their education. The 2024 recipients are:



Kayla Bird, DO
Pediatrics



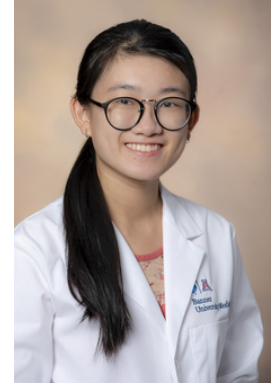
Alana Behrens, MD
Emergency Medicine



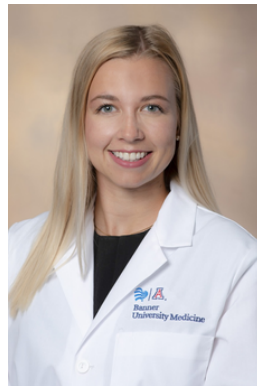
Daniel Anderson, MD
Family Medicine



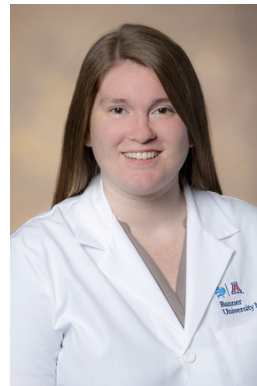
Nasrin Akter, MD
Family Medicine



Georgiana Yang, MD
Family Medicine



Amanda McKeith, MD
Family Medicine



Megan Garrett, MD
Family Medicine

Nehal Shah Memorial Global Health Award

Malak Akl

Presented to a 4th year medical student in the Global Health Distinction Track for outstanding dedication to and leadership in global health. This is awarded each year on October 16, which was Nehal's birthday. *Learn more about this year's recipient [here](#).*



Scholarships & Awards

Kaimas Foundation Grant

Global Health Programs at the University of Arizona College of Medicine (UACOM) is privileged to announce that the Kaimas Foundation has generously awarded a grant of \$25,000 for the purpose of student and resident travel to the Office of Global and Border Health. This is the second gift they have given in the past few years. The Kaimas Foundation was founded in 2008, with a mission to benefit underserved populations, both internationally and domestically, through innovative and pragmatic philanthropic investment. The principles behind the foundation are that in order to affect lasting and effective change throughout the world, it is vital to invest in projects that have either a long-term educational impact or apply pragmatic or innovative solutions to long-standing problems. In other words, "small solutions to big problems."; (Kaimas.org) The award is divided into two portions: the first is \$20,000 to assist medical students in the Global Health Distinction Track in travel for their studies. The Kaimas Foundation also generously donated \$5,000 (which will be divided into 5 \$1000 dollars scholarships) to assist residents with their travel and living expenses in international locations. We are excited that UArizona Global Programs will be able to continue to assist resident physicians in their pursuit of Global Health training. The Kaimas Foundation funds will allow medical students to see the similarities and differences in health care between low- or middle-income countries (LMICs) and the United States, and between medically underserved and medically well (adequately) served areas within Arizona and the United States. The resident physicians work and bring their training to the host institution, while learning different methods of diagnosing and treating conditions that they encounter and bring back new knowledge and ways of thinking to their programs at UACOM. The intention is for a mutually beneficial relationship as UACOM extends its footprint throughout the world. The Office of Global and Border Health at the University of Arizona College of Medicine extends their sincere gratitude to the Kaimas Foundation for their generous grant and ongoing support of University of Arizona's Global Health Programs.

Scholarships & Awards

Leverant Scholarship

The Office of Global and Border Health awards funds from the Leverant Scholarship for international student rotations each year. The recipients for 2023-2024 were:

Kinza Ahmed, MS4 – Costa Rica

This rotation provided me with invaluable insights into practicing medicine in a resource-limited setting and exposed me to a healthcare system very different than the one I am used to. It also allowed me to practice my medical Spanish which is crucial for being able to communicate with a large diverse portion of my future patient population.

Tatum Bardsley, MS4 – Peru

During my time with Vive Perú, I rotated through various areas in both a public hospital and a private emergency and surgery center. I enjoyed the opportunity to work at these two unique locations and see patients from diverse locations while learning about the Peruvian healthcare system.

Monica Diaz, MS4 – Peru

In Peru, I was able to engage with healthcare professionals, gain valuable insights, and contribute to initiatives in a unique cultural setting.

Yash Suri, MS4 – India

During my time in Jaipur, I had the privilege of immersing myself in diverse healthcare settings, engaging with local communities, and collaborating with healthcare professionals from around the world. These experiences have not only deepened my understanding of the complex challenges facing global health but have also cultivated empathy, cultural competence, and a heightened sense of social responsibility within me.

Isabella Blum, MS4 – Costa Rica

In Costa Rica where I worked in a primary care clinic, I was able to practice my medical Spanish because I had full Spanish immersion with my colleagues at the clinic and with my host family.

Buenas Dias

by Troy Weinstein

When reflecting on my travels to South America in 2023, the first thing that stands out is the remarkable hospitality that was shown to me countless times. When my roommate and I arrived in Lima, Peru, I recall this sense of unease as I stepped out of the airport and into an impoverished community. We had decided to stay on the beach in Mira Flores with a local, a friend of a friend of a friend, who I had simply called one time over What's App. Upon arrival, we immediately knew we were in good hands. The following two days, Erik took work off to share his country with us. He took us to local bars, restaurants, and beaches. Yet he did so in a manner where it was almost a given that he would do this. It was a notion of "of course I'd show you my city, you are my guest and this is what hosts do." I saw this unreasonable hospitality countless times. One weekend in Quito, Ecuador, my friend and I were hiking the Teleferico at 12,000 feet. On our way up Pinchincha mountain, we were paired with a family of four. The 10-year-old son spoke notably excellent English and we learned that the family had distant plans to move to Canada so they could provide their son a better opportunity to become a Cardiothoracic surgeon. We spent time chatting in Spanish and English and shared a beautiful hike. The family insisted on taking us to el Mitad del Mundo and their favorite empanada restaurant, nearly 45 minutes away, then insisted on driving us back to our hostel, another 45 minutes away. I must note that it was nearly 10pm and both kids were asleep in the backseat with us. These are just two examples of the unreasonable hospitality I was shown in South America. It felt like a shared family.

Lastly, I wanted to touch on what I have coined the "buenos dias" culture. When you enter a living room, kitchen, restaurant, doctor's office, literally anywhere, it is expected to greet everyone in a charismatic manner. Nothing made me happier than getting home from a long day and entering the house with a big ol "buenos noches" followed by hugs from everyone around. One day, the team and I were doing rural house visits in Cacha. Upon arrival to the final community, we were greeted by over twenty indigenous locals



averaging well over seventy-five years old. After we greeted them, every single one of them welcomed us with an emphatic “buenos dias” and greeted us with a firm handshake or a welcoming hug. This differed drastically from the US and made for a culture of friendship, joy, and ashtonishing hospitality. Throughout all the beauty and culture in South America, I will never forget the people. The people made this a trip of a lifetime, and I am truly blessed to have had this experience.

Medicine for Migrants

by Nicole Bratsch

Before coming to UA-COM-T for medical school, I was a long-term volunteer at Kino Border Initiative (KBI), a non-profit humanitarian aid organization on the Mexico/Arizona border in Nogales. When the opportunity arose for me to return for a rotation at KBI as a part of the Global Health track in 2023, I jumped at the chance. KBI is an established binational organization that works to provide resources to migrants who arrive to the Mexico/U.S. border, including those arriving from many countries of Central and South America or those who have recently been deported from the U.S. Services provided include shelter, food, access to therapy, legal aid, and a medical clinic.

I worked alongside a physician to provide medical services to the KBI community. Much of the care we provided was simple services like providing antibiotics for a bacterial URI or helping remove IUDs that had expired. We also served as a triage to connect those who had more serious issues (cardiac arrhythmias, broken bones), to the hospitals in the city and acted as advocates to ensure they received proper medical care.



The largest impact this rotation had on me was hearing the stories that people shared about their journey. Many of their stories were centered around keeping their family safe, and it broke my heart to hear the many accounts of tragic family death at the hands of the cartel or of leaving behind the only home they had ever known due to fear. Their stories and friendships are things that I value and carry with me to this day. This experience inspired me to get involved in work with the mobile health clinic to provide healthcare to those who are uninsured, which includes many who are undocumented or in the immigration/asylum process. This opportunity through the Global Health program reinforced my hope to continue collaborating with organizations like KBI in my future career as a physician and advocating for health equity in communities that are often underserved or overlooked.

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first year students traveled through the Global Health Distinction Track in 2023



Global Interprofessional Event

On November 17, 2023, our third Global Health Interprofessional Event was held with students participating from the Colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Public Health, and Pharmacy. This event involved students working in teams in a clinical and public health simulation to develop vital team skills such as communication, constructive intervention, knowledge sharing, and mutual respect. The simulation had students determining their roles and responsibilities specifically to treating patients in low-resource settings abroad and when addressing a public health issue. It also involved identifying social, psychological, and ethical challenges that may arise when treating an acutely ill patient in these circumstances when the tools needed may not be available. They set about identifying potential obstacles to teamwork during an emergency and understanding how collaboration and teamwork improve the effectiveness of emergency response, especially as it relates to low resource areas.

We look forward to future global health events to provide even more experiences for the students.

How You Can Help

Donate [here](#) to Global Health.

In the *Your Gift* section, for *I would like to support* choose *International Health Teaching Program* from the pull-down menu.

This issue was compiled by McKenna Dellinger, Anthony Rossi, Marc Triska, and Nick Barber

Global Health Intensive Course

In the academic year 2023-2024, there were a total of 35 students enrolled in our course (classroom and online formats). This global health/public health course aims to prepare health professionals to work in low-and-middle income countries (LMICs) by giving them the basis to analyze issues which affect health in those settings. The in-person course uses a small-group, interactive, problem-based format to prepare participants to work in resource-limited settings internationally and domestically. The online course is asynchronous and is made up of individual learning modules based on the in-person materials. Interdisciplinary course faculty from all over the world are drawn from a variety of fields, and they bring to the course their experiences and expertise.

