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International Medicine Club Presents

# International Experience Resource

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*A guide to selecting and preparing for  
international electives and  
preceptorships for Texas Tech medical  
students.*

*Edited by  
Katie Chung*

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# I Want to Go Abroad!

*Delineating the process of selecting an international health experience.*

## 1. Identify your availability.

[www.ttuhsct.edu/som/curriculum/calendar.aspx](http://www.ttuhsct.edu/som/curriculum/calendar.aspx)

## 2. Identify the type of program that you would like to participate in:

### Preclinical Preceptorship

Students completing their first year of medical school may participate in preclinical preceptorships. In order to receive credit the student must participate in his or her project for at least four weeks under the supervision of a host physician who is willing to take on the responsibilities outlined in the International Health Elective Application available at

[www.ttuhsct.edu/som/curriculum/international\\_health\\_elective.aspx](http://www.ttuhsct.edu/som/curriculum/international_health_elective.aspx)

### Research Experiences

#### Third or Fourth Year Electives

The criteria for receiving credit for international electives are outlined in the International Health Elective Application.

\*It is also very important that you honestly assess your skills and abilities as a medical professional. Be aware of your strengths and weaknesses.

## 3. Identify your goals for traveling abroad.

- Language acquisition
- Participate in a research project
- Shadow a health care professional
- Hands-on experience

## 4. Begin your search.

This is the most time consuming part of the process, and should begin at least 6 to 9 months before the expected departure date. It is helpful to have a geographical site or region in mind, but is not necessary.

## 5. Investigate travel arrangements.

After choosing a work site, begin to investigate travel arrangements.

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# All Things Considered

*There are several factors to consider in selecting an international experience. The following list is designed to help you evaluate each program individually. At the end of the guide you will find a “Program Comparison Worksheet” created by AMSA to assist you in this process. It is also available on the web ([www.amsa.org/global/ih](http://www.amsa.org/global/ih)).*

## • Safety

Consider the political situation in the country of interest by checking the State Department’s Warning List before traveling ([www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)). Others points of safety to consider:

- How are foreigners viewed in this country?
- Is there much crime where I will be living? working?
- How will I communicate with my family and friends in the US?

NOTE: Internet access is not always available!

## • Housing

- Is housing included in the program fee?
- Will I be living with a host-family or in an apartment or dormitory?
- Will I be living with other students, volunteers, and/or health care professionals?
- How far is the housing arrangement from the hospital or clinic?
- Can I walk to work? Is it safe? If not, is there public transportation?
- Are meals included?

## • Costs

Living outside of the United States is not cheap, and it is crucial that you plan ahead. Most programs (volunteer, language, etc) charge a **program fee**. It is very important that you find out what is included in this fee.

Costs to consider are as follows: international flight, in-country travel (air, train, bus), lodging and meals, MEDEVAC and international insurance (see “The Next Step”), passport/visa, immunizations, sightseeing excursions, shopping, and leisure. Following this section is a budget worksheet that you may use to estimate costs.



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The financial aid office at Texas Tech will not give you money for travel or summer programs. The only option available through them is the short-term loan option, which is merely an advancement of the following semester's loan. Please note that the borrowed monies will be taken out of the student's next financial aid check. For more information on the short-term loan visit [www.ttuhs.edu/FinancialAid/](http://www.ttuhs.edu/FinancialAid/).

The section entitled "Funding Sources" lists possible scholarships and grants for financing your international experience. Know that it is competitive, but not impossible, to receive these monies.

### • Objectives

Identify your objectives for traveling abroad. Do the program's goals line up with your personal objectives?

### • Language

Many programs do not require the student to be fluent in the language of the home-country, but it is helpful and culturally sensitive to know some of the basics. It can be stressful to rely on a translator while working in the medical field. If you have time, a language immersion course one-month before the program begins can be very beneficial. If not, make sure you pick up a phrase book before you go - chances are you will have a few hours on the flight to look at it.

### • Assessing the program

Ask yourself the following questions when assessing the program:

- Would I prefer to participate in a program that is structured or one in which I independently organize projects?
- What are my clinical responsibilities as a student?
- Will I be with other students from the United States?
- What types of outside programs are offered? language classes?
- Are the values of the program analogous to my own?
- Is there an orientation or cultural-awareness training?

\*It is CRUCIAL that you are familiar with the culture, as traditions and expectations vary between cultures (treatment options, dress-code for women, etc).

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# Budget

*This worksheet is designed to assist you in preparing a budget for your international health experience. Some of these costs may be absorbed in the program fee. Please inquire about included costs with individual programs.*

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<i>Before you go:</i>	
Program Fees	
International Flight	
Passport	
Visa	
Immunizations	
MEDEVAC	
International Health Insurance	
<i>Once you are there:</i>	
Housing	
Food	
In-country transportation	
Sightseeing Excursions	
Shopping	
Leisure	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

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# The Next Step

*Now that you have chosen an international health experience, several important details must be worked out. These details are outlined in the following pages.*

## • Applying for credit

First and second year medical students may now apply to receive credit for international electives. Students will receive pass/fail credit on their transcript, but the international medicine elective will not count towards fulfilling a fourth year elective. In order to receive credit, students must follow specific guidelines outlined in the International Health Elective Application available at [www.ttuhsct.edu/som/curriculum/international\\_health\\_elective.aspx](http://www.ttuhsct.edu/som/curriculum/international_health_elective.aspx). Some of these arrangements must be made well in advance.

Upon successful completion of the international health elective, fourth year medical students will receive elective credit fulfilling one of three away electives required during the fourth year. Please refer to the International Health Elective Application for guidelines and requirements.

## • Flight arrangements

The earlier the better, as this can be a large portion of the cost of the trip. Cheapest Airfares (<http://airfare.michaelbluejay.com/>) is a website dedicated to advising travelers on how to find the best deals on flights. Also try discount sites such as Travelocity, Expedia, Orbitz, Cheaptickets, AirTech, Air Courier, Sidestep, and Travel Zoo.

Remember: As a medical student, you still qualify for student rates on flights. Make sure to compare prices with companies like STA Travel ([www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com), 800-781-4040).

## • Passport/visa requirements

This may take six to eight weeks. Apply early!

[www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/brochures/brochures\\_1229.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/brochures/brochures_1229.html)

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## • Immunizations

[www.cdc.gov/travel/vaccination](http://www.cdc.gov/travel/vaccination) OR [www.who.int/ith/en/](http://www.who.int/ith/en/)

## • Funding

It is a good idea to create a budget in order to estimate project costs. There are several funds available to medical students traveling abroad.

## • Health and Medical Evacuation Insurance

Most United States health insurance companies do not cover problems that arise outside of the United States. It is a good idea (and required if you are applying for credit) to obtain MEDEVAC and insurance coverage for the time in which you are away. This is especially important if you plan to go to a third-world country. The State Department has published a list of MEDEVAC and insurance companies, which is available at:

[http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/health/health\\_1185.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/health/health_1185.html).

NOTE: International health insurance is NOT the same thing as travel insurance.

**Travel insurance** covers trip cancellations, travel interruptions and delays, lost baggage, ticket protection, etc. If you are bringing expensive equipment (i.e., laptop computer), you might like to have your belongings insured.

**International health insurance** covers a broader range of health costs while in a foreign country than most American health insurances (which may provide some coverage, but usually this is only for emergent costs). It is a good idea to have some coverage because healthcare administration can be very costly and sometimes, especially in developing healthcare systems, must be paid in cash.

**MEDEVAC** covers emergency medical evacuation to the US and is not covered by international health insurance. Without MEDEVAC coverage, emergency evacuation can cost more than \$15,000 and is usually only provided if paid in advance.

## • Research about your country of intent.

In order to enhance your experience abroad, it is suggested that you research the country of intent before leaving so that you are culturally aware of what to expect. Lonely Planet offers a condensed version of their popular travel guides at

[www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/), as does Let's Go

[www.letsgo.com/destinations/](http://www.letsgo.com/destinations/). This is a great place to start, but research should not be limited to these websites. The US Department of State is also a great resource (<http://www.state.gov/travelandbusiness/>).

There are an abundance of budget travel books available at most bookstores such as those published by Lonely Planet, Let's Go, Rough Guide, Frommer's, and Independent Travelers to name a few.

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# Other Resources

*These websites are some excellent resources that have already been developed in order to assist students in organizing and international health experience.*

## **Texas Tech University Office of Student Affairs**

The Office of Student Affairs has compiled a plethora of opportunities into three PDF files: Spanish Language/Medical Spanish Courses in Latin America; International Health Related Websites; and International Health Opportunities. The details of these documents are as follows: courses and programs; job, field placement, and volunteer opportunities; and databases and websites with links to opportunities.

[www.ttuhsu.edu/som/studentaffairs/opportunities.aspx](http://www.ttuhsu.edu/som/studentaffairs/opportunities.aspx)

## **GHEC: Resources**

Especially helpful is “Foreign Language Study and International Health Work: Selected Resources” created by Don Wedemeyer, MD and Sara Pirtle, MBA. This resource serves to guide those interested in language acquisition in a foreign country and details several medical Spanish opportunities.

[www.globalhealth-ec.org/GHEC/Resources/resources.htm](http://www.globalhealth-ec.org/GHEC/Resources/resources.htm)

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# Finding an International Health Experience

*There are several ways to go about establishing an international health experience. One option is to go through one of the **organized programs** listed in the following pages. There is a myriad of opportunities available ranging from two weeks to two years. Another option is to go through an **individual host physician**. This must be pre-arranged by the student. In order to receive credit, the overseeing physician must be willing to comply with the responsibilities outlined on page four of the International Health Elective Application available at [www.ttuhschool.edu/som/curriculum/international\\_health\\_elective.aspx](http://www.ttuhschool.edu/som/curriculum/international_health_elective.aspx).*

*Do NOT limit yourself to the following programs, as there are countless opportunities out there, but START EARLY!*

## General Databases

### **TTUHSC International Health Opportunities**

([www.ttuhschool.edu/som/studentaffairs/opportunities.aspx](http://www.ttuhschool.edu/som/studentaffairs/opportunities.aspx))

A PDF file containing links to many international health opportunities, several of which are further described in this document.

### **University of Arizona's Global Health Page** ([www.globalhealth.arizona.edu](http://www.globalhealth.arizona.edu))

This site contains links to international health programs for fourth years, programs for first and second years (preclinical years), and a link to search for funding.

### **International Federation of Medical Students** ([www.ifmsa-usa.org](http://www.ifmsa-usa.org))

A federation of 68 national associations of medical students with committees on public health, refugees and peace, reproductive health and AIDS, medical education, and professional and research exchange offering programs to first year medical students as well as third and fourth year electives.

### **AMA** ([www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/12675.html#electives](http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/12675.html#electives))

AMA provides an international health database with links to websites on funding, organizations that offer medical electives, mission trips, and much more. Also contains links to University sites with international opportunities.

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**AMSA** ([www.amsa.org/global/ih/](http://www.amsa.org/global/ih/))

Not only an amazing database of medical opportunities around the world, AMSA Global Health provides a student with necessary information about traveling abroad.

**GHEC** ([www.globalhealth-ec.org/GHEC/Resources/GHonline.htm](http://www.globalhealth-ec.org/GHEC/Resources/GHonline.htm))

Global Health Education Consortium provides an organized annotated list of international health-related websites such as educational programs and courses, multilateral organizations, governmental organizations, NGOs, language training, and more.

**Global Medicine Network** ([www.globalmedicine.org/GMN/student.html](http://www.globalmedicine.org/GMN/student.html))

GMN was created to provide personal and professional contacts among individuals and organizations working in international health and global medicine. It is a database for students listing international opportunities around the world.

**Child Family Health International** ([www.cfhi.org](http://www.cfhi.org))

Established in 1992, CFHI has sent over 2,300 volunteers all over the world. They aim to combine instruction, experience, service, and reflection to create a model that supports physicians and clinical sites abroad, addresses the healthcare needs of the underserved, and adds an unforgettable experience element to each program participant's education. Student programs are not designed to provide service to those who would otherwise not have healthcare because they are not an episodic volunteer organization.

**International Service Learning** ([www.islonline.org](http://www.islonline.org))

ISL projects are team programs that present a unique and exciting opportunity for pre-meds and medical students to experience field clinical work first hand in the challenging context of both rural and urban areas. Teams of students are sent to Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Belize, Panama, Mexico, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania.

**Mission Finder** ([www.missionfinder.org/medstudents.htm](http://www.missionfinder.org/medstudents.htm))

Mission Finder is a database that lists primarily Christian based volunteer opportunities for all medical students in countries around the world.

**Medics Travel** ([www.medicstravel.co.uk](http://www.medicstravel.co.uk))

A UK based organization that provides ideas of places to go, lists of hospitals in over 120 different countries, NGOs, and Recruitment Agencies that work around the world.

**Global Volunteers Network** ([www.volunteer.org/nz](http://www.volunteer.org/nz))

Global Volunteers Network offers a variety of volunteer projects, not limited to healthcare, to the following locations: Alaska, China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ghana, Honduras, India, Kenya, Nepal, New Zealand, Philippines, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda, and Vietnam.

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**Global Health Outreach** ([www.cmdahome.org/?CONTEXT=cat&cat=32](http://www.cmdahome.org/?CONTEXT=cat&cat=32))

Global Health Outreach (GHO) is a branch of Christian Medical & Dental Associations (CMDA). Their Christian-based missions include short term trips to Haiti, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Ecuador, China, El Salvador, Mexico, and Honduras. GHO provides opportunities for doctors, pharmacists, nurses, dentists, and medical students to work and learn in rural settings.

**Idealist** ([www.idealist.org](http://www.idealist.org))

A HUGE database! Well organized listing of an unlimited number of volunteer opportunities around the world.

**Diversion** ([www.diversion.com/volunteerintro.asp](http://www.diversion.com/volunteerintro.asp))

Diversion is a website that is designed to provide information on travel and other medical meetings and physician volunteer opportunities. Many of the opportunities are restricted to physicians, however they do offer several programs for medical students to participate in. The easiest way to navigate this page is to search the page for (Ctrl+F) “student”.

**UC Students for Global Health** (<http://sgldata.org/sgh/index.php>)

SGH is a student run organization at the University of Colorado that provides a database listing International opportunities for students and recent graduates.

## Africa and Asia

**Unite For Sight** ([www.uniteforsight.org/intl\\_volunteer/others/](http://www.uniteforsight.org/intl_volunteer/others/))

Medical students have the opportunity to make a difference as a community-based intern and assistant for eye doctors in Ghana, India, or Thailand. The clinic’s doctors diagnose and treat eye disease in the field, and surgical patients are brought to the eye clinic for surgery. Unite For Sight funds the surgeries for those patients unable to afford eye care.

**Crossing Cultures in Senegal** ([www.interculturaldimensions.org](http://www.interculturaldimensions.org))

Crossing Cultures selects a small group of volunteers led by two former Peace Corp volunteers to undertake projects that are centered around family life and community projects in rural areas.

**Volunteer In Africa** ([www.volunteeringinafrica.org/index.htm](http://www.volunteeringinafrica.org/index.htm))

Volunteer in Africa is a two-fold organization. First, it acts as a database for a myriad of volunteer programs throughout Africa. Secondly, Volunteer in Africa hosts a program in Ghana available to nursing and medical students. Participants shadow local medical doctors and nurses by assisting them in their work, observing, and volunteering under supervision.

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**Interactive Voluntary Development Network** ([www.intvolnetorg.org](http://www.intvolnetorg.org))

Established in 2000, IVDN is a non-profit, non-religious, NGO that has programs in Kenya for medical students in any year. Not only are you individually placed in a grassroots project, but IVDN also encourages cross-cultural learning and free-time exploration. Program fees cover room and board, 2 meals per day, and costs of visas.

**Karing for Kids** ([www.karingforkids.org](http://www.karingforkids.org))

Karing for Kids is a well-established clinical program since 1997 that provides medical care to the remote villages of Nepal.

**Himalayan Health Exchange**

([www.himalayanhealthexchange.com/student/htm](http://www.himalayanhealthexchange.com/student/htm))

Himalayan Health Exchange is a healthcare service program with the missions to provide medical and dental care to the underserved people living in the remote regions of the Indian and Nepalese Himalayas. In addition to the short-term healthcare expeditions, and extended program for medical, dental, research, public health, and nursing students desiring international health exposure can be arranged. Student will be working side-by-side with U.S.-based healthcare providers.

**Medic India** ([www.medicindia.org](http://www.medicindia.org))

Medic India offers a 6-week preceptorship for first year medical students at the new civic hospital in Surat, Gujarat, India. They also offer rotations for fourth year students in both public and private centers in both rural and urban areas.

**Village Projects** ([www.ifmsa-usa.org/village.htm](http://www.ifmsa-usa.org/village.htm))

Formulated by IFMSA with the WHO in 1986, Village Concept Projects are international health projects that are designed to improve the living conditions of villagers in low-income countries in Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, and Ghana. Village Projects are completely student-designed with areas of focus including healthcare, HIV/AIDS, orphan support, clean water, malaria prevention, and reproductive health and education.

**International Alliance in Service and Education** ([www.iaseco.org](http://www.iaseco.org))

IASE aims to promote culture specific healthcare literacy and disseminate general education and life skills to members of local and disenfranchised communities. The focus of the South Africa program is on clinical work, primary care support, health education, and community research projects. Participants also may attend language and culture classes and seminars throughout the week.

**Global Service Corp-Tanzania (GSC)**

([www.globalservicecorps.org/d/TZihi.html](http://www.globalservicecorps.org/d/TZihi.html))

GSC offers opportunities to students to participate in short-term HIV/AIDS prevention programs in Tanzania. Summer interns work as camp counselors providing HIV/AIDS behavior change instruction.

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### **Global Service Corp-Thailand (GSC)**

([www.globalservicecorps.org/d/THMAIN.html](http://www.globalservicecorps.org/d/THMAIN.html))

GSC offers opportunities to students to learn about the organization, structure, and administration of the Thai Health Care System. Students will have the opportunity to shadow doctors and nurses in examinations, surgeries, and other hospital procedures. GSC has also recently developed a program for students to participate in HIV/AIDS Education and Awareness Day Camps. Camps will strive to provide Thai youth with health information and also train them to be peer educators in their own schools and communities.

## **Central and South America**

### **Amerispan's SALUD Program** ([www.amerispan.com/salud](http://www.amerispan.com/salud))

Medical Spanish elective (and some clinical experience) in Mexico, Argentina, or Guatemala endorsed by AMSA.

### **Pan American Health Opportunities** ([www.paho.org](http://www.paho.org))

A valuable international medical resource. PAHO offers a summer internship program geared towards future global public health leaders. Special technical projects teach interns about the Organization's work in the Americas.

### **Project Medishare** ([www.projectmedishare.org](http://www.projectmedishare.org))

Project Medishare coordinates and manages groups of medical students, doctors, nurses, and other health professionals for health fairs, schools, and orphanages in Haiti.

### **Institute for Spanish Language Studies** ([www.isls.com](http://www.isls.com))

A Spanish-language school with sites in Costa Rica, Panama, Spain, Ecuador, and Mexico.

### **CACHA Medical Spanish Institute** ([www.cachamsi.com](http://www.cachamsi.com); [www.ydclinic.com](http://www.ydclinic.com))

CACHA's immersion and interactive program allows healthcare providers to fulfill goals in Medical Spanish in Riobamba, Ecuador. The medical Spanish component of the program allows students to work one-on-one with Spanish tutors for 2 hours a day, 4-5 days per week. The clinical component of the program allows students to work with various physician preceptors among different hospitals and clinics. Program fees include instruction, textbooks, social events, cultural trips and three weekend trips (including transportation, guide, and lodging).

### **Interhealth South America** (<http://www.interhealthsouthamerica.net/>)

Interhealth South America provides a study and service program in Ecuador for first year and fourth year students of all levels of Spanish-speaking abilities throughout the year. Students will take medical Spanish classes and learn how to interview a patient in Spanish. Students will also work in a group setting participating in

community health brigades, public health surveys, and primary and community healthcare programs.

**Institute for Latin American Concern** ([www2.creighton.edu/ministry/ilac/](http://www2.creighton.edu/ministry/ilac/))

An organization founded by Creighton University that offers six-week summer projects for fourth year medical students in the Dominican Republic. Projects include a one-week language course and orientation. Students will be offering education and healthcare in rural clinics.

**Spanish Language Schools in Latin America**

([www.ibw.com.ni/~nssmga/guide.htm](http://www.ibw.com.ni/~nssmga/guide.htm))

A very comprehensive directory of Spanish language schools in Latin America. A great resource for those wanting to go to Latin America to learn Spanish!

**International Health Central America Institute** ([www.ihcai.org](http://www.ihcai.org))

IHCAI has opportunities for first and second year medical students to participate in a research project. IHCAI also offers clinical rotations to fourth year students as well as an intensive four-week medical Spanish course.

**International Alliance in Service and Education** ([www.iaseco.org](http://www.iaseco.org))

IASE aims to promote culture specific healthcare literacy and disseminate general education and life skills to members of local and disenfranchised communities in rural and urban Mexico. Participants work in clinics under the supervision of a physician providing basic care and checking for any major health problems. Participants also may attend language and culture classes and seminars.

**Adventure Education Center** ([www.adventurespanishschool.com](http://www.adventurespanishschool.com))

Adventure Education Center (AEC) is a Spanish school in Costa Rica offering both core immersion Spanish programs as well as medical Spanish programs (20 hours per week) at three different campuses. AEC provides the opportunity for students to volunteer in a medical setting, participating in visitations to local hospitals, community outreach programs, and an exchange with a Costa Rican medical professional. Students stay with Costa Rican families from anywhere from one to four weeks. Class size never exceeds six students and private tutors are available for an additional cost. Weekend adventure excursions are also included in the package.

**Spanish-Medical.com** ([www.spanish-medical.com](http://www.spanish-medical.com))

Spanish-Medical.com is a network of three Spanish language schools in Argentina, Chile, Mexico, and Guatemala. The programs offered have the primary goal of language acquisition and cultural immersion. Also, students will participate in clinical shadowing in clinics and hospitals two to three times per week.

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# Texas Tech Faculty

*Here at Texas Tech University Health Science Center there are several physicians who have provided health care in an international setting at one point and some who continue to do so. Many of them are eager to provide interested students with information regarding their experiences, provide contact information, and even take students on their annual adventures*

**Elmus Beale, M.D.**

Associate Professor  
TTUHSC, Lubbock  
Switzerland  
806-743-2705  
[Elmus.beale@ttuhsc.edu](mailto:Elmus.beale@ttuhsc.edu)

**Cornelia de Riese, M.D., F.A.C.O.G.**

Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology  
Associate Professor  
TTUHSC, Lubbock  
Germany  
806-743-4342  
[Cornelia.derise@ttuhsc.edu](mailto:Cornelia.derise@ttuhsc.edu)

Dr. de Riese has several contacts in Germany within the clinical setting. Contact her for more information.

**Kenn Freedman, M.D.**

Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences  
TTUHSC, Lubbock  
Chihuahua, Mexico  
806-743-2020  
[Kenn.freedman@ttuhsc.edu](mailto:Kenn.freedman@ttuhsc.edu)

Dr. Freedman has been going to Chihuahua, Mexico two times a year for five days at a time to provide medical, dental, and eye care to the locals. Third and fourth year students are invited to join him at any time provided that they can fund their portion of the trip.

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**Theresa Hines**

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**Donald Meier, M.D.**

Professor of Pediatric Surgery, Chairman of Division of Pediatric Surgery  
TTUHSC, El Paso  
Nigeria; Aldama, Mexico  
915-545-6855  
[Donald.meier@ttuhsc.edu](mailto:Donald.meier@ttuhsc.edu)

Dr. Meier spent 15 years working as a missionary surgeon in Nigeria. Currently he takes two-week trips four to six times each year to underdeveloped countries working with local physicians to perform pediatric surgery. He also takes four-day weekend trips to Aldama, Mexico to work with a local physician. Dr. Meier is willing to take a medical student along with him as long as they can cover their own expenses. Students must also realize that this is a very intense exposure in only one area of a medical specialty. The medical student will not actually be performing operations as she/he might in a more general hospital. The emphasis of these trips is to further train international surgeons in the discipline of pediatric surgery.



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# Funding Sources

## **Texas Tech University Health Science Center**

([www.ttuhschool.edu/som/curriculum/](http://www.ttuhschool.edu/som/curriculum/))

*F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural and Community Health Fellowships*

*Cordero International Medicine Fellowship*

*Ethiopia Fellowship*

Five \$1,500 scholarships awarded to medical students who are pursuing an international medical elective arranged by the student. Electives should foster the development of humanism and life-long commitment to service while recognizing the responsibility of physicians in addressing global health disparities

Deadline: February 20

\*subject to change, please check website regularly\*

## **AMSA** ([www.amsa.org/global/ih/travelfunding.cfm](http://www.amsa.org/global/ih/travelfunding.cfm))

AMSA provides a list of possible funding for your international elective. Funding may come from the organization in which you are participating, your medical school, or a private source. Many resources are based on religious, social, economic, educational, racial, gender, or regional affiliations.

## **Global Health Education Consortium** ([www.globalhealth-ec.org](http://www.globalhealth-ec.org))

*Carole M. Davis Scholarship Award* (<http://www.globalhealth-ec.org/GHEC/Resources/CaroleDavis.htm>)

Two \$500 scholarships awarded to students or faculty who are either GHEC members or from a school that is an institutional member of GHEC. Awards are based on statements of no more than 1,000 words that describe the global health activities for which the application will use the funding.

Deadline: December 22

*Christopher Krough Award* ([www.globalhealth-ec.org/GHEC/Resources/ChrisKrough.htm](http://www.globalhealth-ec.org/GHEC/Resources/ChrisKrough.htm))

GHEC's Board of Directors is soliciting nominations for the annual Chris Krough Award. The award is presented to a student, resident, faculty member, or other individual(s) that best represent the spirit of Christopher Krough's dedication to global health. Dr. Krough was killed in an airplane accident in 1994 while traveling for the Indian Health Service.

Deadline: December 22

## **\*University of Arizona: International Health in the Developing World\***

([http://www.globalhealth.arizona.edu/Funding\\_Links.htm](http://www.globalhealth.arizona.edu/Funding_Links.htm))

This website is a wonderful resource for funding as it lists several opportunities for students to apply for grant and scholarship monies in order to fund their international electives.

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### **MAP International Fellowship**

([www.map.org/site/PageServer?pagename=what\\_Medical\\_Fellowship](http://www.map.org/site/PageServer?pagename=what_Medical_Fellowship))

Medical Assistance Programs (MAP) International is a Christian organization promoting physical, economic, social, emotion, and spiritual health of impoverished people in over 115 countries. Third- and fourth-year medical students, residents, and interns are eligible to apply to an eight-week fellowship in which they will be exposed to community health. Students select a mission agency or hospital that has an outreach among the poor in a rural or urban setting.

Deadline: March 1

### **American Medical Woman's Association: AWHs OVERSEAS ASSISTANCE GRANT**

The American Women's Hospitals Service provides assistance with transportation costs (up to \$1,500) connected with pursuing medical studies in an off-campus setting where the medically neglected will benefit. Grants are awarded to national AMWA members completing their second, third or fourth year at an accredited U.S. medical or osteopathic medical school or a resident who will be spending a minimum of six weeks and no longer than one year in a sponsored program which will serve the needs of the medically underserved. The program must be sponsored by your school, another school, or an outside agency or, if there is no sponsor, it must be a program for which your school takes responsibility and provides academic credit. Contact Marie Glanz at 703/838-0500 or [mglanz@amwa-doc.org](mailto:mglanz@amwa-doc.org) to obtain further details about this opportunity and request an application.

<http://www.jamwa.org/index.cfm?objectId=E1D4E40B-D567-0B25-574CAFD0BB526D9B>.

### **Christian Medical & Dental Associations**

(<http://www.cmdahome.org/index.cgi?cat=259&BISKIT=1436428855&CONTEXT=cat>)

CMDA offers several scholarships, primarily to third and fourth year medical students who are members of CMDA, for service projects.

### **Child Family Health International** (<http://www.cfhi.org/scholarships.php4>)

CFHI offers half and full scholarships to medical students (first through fourth year) to be used towards designated CFHI programs.

### **CDC Fellowships for Medical Students**

([www.cdcfoundation.org/fellowships/students.aspx](http://www.cdcfoundation.org/fellowships/students.aspx))

*The CDC Experience: Applied Epidemiology Fellowship*

A 10-12 month fellowship in applied epidemiology and public health for medical students in their third or fourth year.

*O.C. Hubert Student Fellowship in International Health*

A 4-12 week program for third and fourth year medical students to gain public health experience in an international setting.

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# Antigua, Guatemala

## • What was your purpose while abroad (i.e., volunteer, work)?

To learn Spanish

## • Where were you located? How long were you there?

- Antigua, Guatemala
- 5 weeks total (4 weeks language classes + 1 week travel)

## • If you went with a program, which one? How much was it?

- **La Union** ([www.launion.edu/gt/map.php](http://www.launion.edu/gt/map.php))
- \$125 per week for one-on-one Spanish lessons; additionally, I paid \$75 per week for room and board

## • What were the program's strengths and weaknesses?

I would have liked to split the language instruction between Xela (Guatemala) and Antigua. Antigua has a large international population so it was very easy to speak English. I stayed with a family in order to have an immersion experience, but because I went to Guatemala knowing no Spanish and my host family did not speak English, it was hard for me to pick up. I had great conversations with my Spanish teacher, but outside of the school environment, it was hard to communicate with people because they would use vocabulary that I did know.

Overall, I think if you are interested in learning Spanish, you can not beat Guatemala for the **price** and **quality** of instruction, but the program **did not have medical focus**.

I also volunteered at a hospital, but since I could not speak Spanish, my experience consisted of mostly feeding and playing with the children, which I enjoyed, but if you want a more intense medical experience, this might not be the program for them.

## • Contact information

Sophia Tcheung: [ltcheung@gmail.com](mailto:ltcheung@gmail.com), (281) 935-4230

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# Costa Rica/Nicaragua

• **What was your purpose while abroad (i.e., volunteer, work)?**

I shadowed and assisted in mobile village clinics.

• **Where were you located? How long were you there?**

- Costa Rica/ Nicaragua
- Two weeks

• **If you went with a program, which one? How much was it?**

I went with **International Student Learning (ISL)**. The fees cover **food** and **lodging** but not flight. Different programs have different costs, the website is [www.islonline.org](http://www.islonline.org)

• **What were the program's strengths and weaknesses?**

This program was a lot of fun but did not have as much hands on experience. We interviewed patients in Spanish and assisted the doctors, but it was mainly family medicine and distributing vitamins. It was a good experience to see third-world health care and learn about Central American culture. We also had quite a lot of tourist time and were able to see both countries.

• **Contact information**

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# Guatemala

## • What was your purpose while abroad (i.e., volunteer, work)?

I shadowed and assisted in mobile village clinics, assisted in a large local clinic, gave shots, pulled teeth, started IVs, did stitches, took blood pressure.

## • Where were you located? How long were you there?

- Guatemala
- Four weeks

## • If you went with a program, which one? How much was it?

I went with **Health Talents International Medical Evangelism Training**. The fees covered **everything including flight, lodging and food**. The website is [www.healthtalents.org](http://www.healthtalents.org).

## • What were the program's strengths and weaknesses?

I loved this experience. It was much more Christian based. There were only ten students, but we went to church with the community three times a week and on the other nights had bible studies in each others' homes. We stayed with **host families** which helped to learn the language. With this program we also had **vacation time** and got to experience Guatemala.

## • Contact information

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# Belize

## • What was your purpose while abroad (i.e., volunteer, work)?

I went to Belize in hopes of improving my Spanish-speaking skills while obtaining some clinical experience. While there, I shadowed physicians in a hospital, volunteered in a clinic, and set up mobile clinics in remote villages.

## • Where were you located? How long were you there?

- Belize
- Two weeks, Summer 2002

## • If you went with a program, which one? How much was it?

I went with International Student Learning (ISL). In total, the program fee was about \$1,500, and that covered food and lodging. Students were responsible for the cost of the flight and any extra activities.

[www.islonline.org](http://www.islonline.org)

## • What were the program's strengths and weaknesses?

My team was comprised of pre-med students, medical students, and a resident. More than anything, it was a great learning experience, exposing me to aspects of medicine that I had never seen before. Because several people on our team did not speak Spanish, I was able to improve my speaking skills. I speak Spanish at a proficient level, but did not know any medical Spanish before I went. ISL provided us with a basic Spanish-English dictionary for the medical setting.

We spent about half of our time working and the other half traveling. At the time, it was a perfect balance. I really enjoyed the work, the play, and the people. Since then, my goals have changed; however, you **must** consider your goals and desires for the experience before taking someone else's advice.

## • Contact information

Katie Chung: [kathleen.chung@ttuhsc.edu](mailto:kathleen.chung@ttuhsc.edu), (512) 699-2115

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# Ecuador

**• What was your purpose while abroad (i.e., volunteer, work)?**

Clinical experience, learning medical Spanish, travel

**• Where were you located? How long were you there?**

- Riobamba, Ecuador
- Four weeks, July 2007

**• If you went with a program, which one? How much was it?**

Cacha Medical Spanish Institute (MSI). The cost varies slightly depending on where in Riobamba you choose to live (Rincon Aleman, Foundation Duchicela, or a family stay). According to the website, the price ranges from \$1400 to \$1900+, not including the cost of a plane ticket.

**• What were the program's strengths and weaknesses?**

One of the strengths of Cacha MSI is the variety of clinical experience it offers. In this program, you spend three weeks rotating through different hospitals, and one week in Cacha, an indigenous community about 30 minutes from Riobamba. Additionally, the Spanish class sizes are small enough so that you receive individual attention as you try to learn the language. Finally, the program directors recognize that part of the "abroad experience" is traveling and seeing the country, and are therefore very flexible in terms of scheduling and they even help you plan weekend trips if you ask!

Few people in Ecuador speak English, but with a good Spanish dictionary in hand, it is very possible to survive the first few days before you begin taking classes. I had not taken Spanish classes since high school, but once I began working in clinics/hospitals and taking classes, I felt as though my understanding dramatically improved. At the end of the program, I was by no means fluent, but felt comfortable conversing. Additionally, I feel confident that I could interview a patient in Spanish and understand their answers, which will be especially helpful practicing in Texas. There are not many bad things to be said about this program. I will mention that some of the hospitals are definitely more organized than others in terms of what you do while there. It can be slightly frustrating

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if you arrive in the morning and the hospital employees don't know what to do with you. However, this problem is usually resolved quickly, and no matter what, you will get a lot of clinical experience through participation in Cacha MSI.

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• **Contact information**

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Jenny Chua-tuan: [jenny.l.chuatuan@ttuhsc.edu](mailto:jenny.l.chuatuan@ttuhsc.edu); (806) 239-9876  
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Lauren Leavitt: [lauren.leavitt@ttuhsc.edu](mailto:lauren.leavitt@ttuhsc.edu); (713) 899-4285

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# Nigeria

## • What was your purpose while abroad (i.e., volunteer, work)?

Clinical experience

## • Where were you located? How long were you there?

- Nigeria
- 2 weeks, Summer 2005

## • If you went with a program, which one? How much was it?

Global Health Outreach (CMDA); Program fee was \$2500 and included a flight from New York City to Nigeria, most meals, and housing

## • What were the program's strengths and weaknesses?

I traveled to Nigeria with a team of 10-15 Americans (MDs, nurses, EMTs, dentists, and two medical students). In Nigeria we worked with about 30 Nigerian doctors and surgeons in a rural setting. There was an abandoned hospital in the area, so we were able to use that as our primary facility. We ended up seeing more than 8,000 patients in the two weeks that we worked, and at times this became very exhausting. Because of the surplus of patients, I was able to not only take vitals, but also see patients (which was a bit overwhelming as I had only completed one year of medical school). There was a large Nigerian surgical team, and I was also able to see several surgeries. I still keep in contact with several of the Nigerian doctors today.

The only weakness of the program was that two weeks did not enough time; however, it was a lot of work and very exhausting. Students should be aware that GHO is a Christian-based organization, but our work was localized to the medical field.

The language barrier was not a problem, as many people spoke English well enough. Also, there were always translators available in the case that the patient or doctor did not speak English.

## • Contact information

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# Nicaragua

## • What was your purpose while abroad (i.e., volunteer, work)?

Clinical experience

## • Where were you located? How long were you there?

- Nicaragua
- 1-2 weeks, Summer 2005

## • If you went with a program, which one? How much was it?

Dr. Patti Patterson's organization; Program fees were about \$2500 and included airfare from Houston, housing, and most meals

## • What were the program's strengths and weaknesses?

Dr. Patterson is the vice president of Rural Community Health at Tech. I went with a team of doctors, nurses, pharmacists, dentists, and two pre-med students to Nicaragua. While there, we set up rural clinics in an abandoned school house and provided basic medical care. A lot of patients came through these clinics, and so not only was I able to take vitals and histories, but was able to see patients. This was a great opportunity to work with Dr. Patterson.

The language barrier was not a problem in Nicaragua. I know some Spanish, which was helpful, but we also had translators. This was very safe trip. My only complaint with this experience was that it was too short.

## • Contact information

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# Cambodia

## • What was your purpose while abroad (i.e., volunteer, work)?

Public health internship – developing, piloting, and implementing an evaluation of the Equity Fund – a health financing scheme for the poor in Svay Rieng, one of the four poorest provinces of Cambodia

## • Where were you located? How long were you there?

The briefing/initial research and debriefing/presentation took place in Phnom Penh for 1 week; actual work took place in Svay Rieng Provincial Hospital for 7 weeks.

## • If you went with a program, which one? How much was it?

UNICEF Internship Program; interested students can apply online at [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org) (deadline February 1 for summer internships).

UNICEF pays for all transportation within field country and all costs related to work. The intern pays for airfare, housing, and meals. I funded my internship through the Kenneth H. Ashworth Fellowship Program, which is part of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The Fellowship is for 2000 and that was enough to fund my trip.

## • What were the program's strengths and weaknesses?

Strengths: organized program, independent work and ownership of project, good support system, flexibility, meet and learn from experts in the field, future opportunities (at the end of my internship, I was offered a paid internship for the next year).

Weaknesses: UNICEF does not pay for airfare nor room/board.

## • Contact information

Ana Nguyen: [ana.nguyen@ttuhsc.edu](mailto:ana.nguyen@ttuhsc.edu), (214) 336-0204

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# India

## • What was your purpose while abroad (i.e., volunteer, work)?

Volunteer work

## • Where were you located? How long and when were you there?

- The Himalayan Mountains in the state of Himachal Pradesh
- Three weeks, Summer 2007

## • If you went with a program, which one? How much was it?

Himalayan Health Exchange ([www.himalayanhealth.com](http://www.himalayanhealth.com))

The total cost of the program including airfare, lodging (camping and hotels), food, and all transportation within the country was \$4,180.

## • What were the program's strengths and weaknesses?

Himalayan Health Exchange (HHE) is an excellent program that has been established for 12 years which was quite evident in the impressive level of organization the program had to offer. The staff was amazing as well as they always made sure that we were well fed and comfortable. The Chansal Pass Itinerary lent itself to be one of beautiful scenery, challenging hikes, and very impoverished communities.

The group was made up of 30 medical students, 4 residents, and 4 US/Canadian doctors. We also worked with several Indian doctors and lab technicians. As medical students we were expected to perform complete history and physicals, and throughout the clinic were coached on making diagnoses. We hiked between the villages (3-8 hour hikes) and camped in and around the areas that we were serving. I honestly have no complaints about this program and would recommend it to anyone who enjoys adventure, outdoors, and a challenge.

## • Contact information

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# Nicaragua

**• What was your purpose while abroad (i.e., volunteer, work)?**

Clinical experience volunteering

**• Where were you located? How long were you there?**

- Nicaragua
- 1 week, Summer 2007

**• If you went with a program, which one? How much was it?**

Olive Branch Ministries; The cost of the flight, food, housing, transportation, travel insurance and part of the medication we were giving to people came to \$1698.70

**• What were the program's strengths and weaknesses?**

We traveled to Nicaragua with a team of 19 Americans (Nurse practitioners, nurses, dentist, pharmacist and four medical students). In Nicaragua we teamed up with a physician in the town of La Dalia in the local clinic. To see such a large volume of patients, we took over several of the administrative offices and converted them into clinical spaces. We treated 1,500 patients in medicine not including eyeglasses and dentistry. We were the first large medical team to ever visit La Dalia. It was an amazing experience!

We were able to help taking vitals and learned how to clean wounds. We practiced taking short histories in our broken Spanish. They were also kind enough to invite the medical students over to a different part of the clinic to watch a live birth. The major strengths were seeing a variety of clinical cases that we would not be able to see in the U.S.

The last day in Nicaragua, we were able to be tourists and see some of the markets, churches, climb a volcano, and eat lunch by a beautiful lake.

The main weakness was the cost of the program. Since you have to pay for your share of the medicines that are taken on the trip, it is pretty pricey. However, almost all food is included and you do not have to worry about any transportation once you get there. The other thing to

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watch out for is theft. Physical crime is not a problem there and we felt safe, but a digital camera was stolen from our locked hotel room in Managua, the capital, while we were eating dinner!

The language barrier was not a big problem. There were some translators and it was fun to practice Spanish as it will be useful in Texas as well.

Overall we had a wonderful experience and would love to share more of our experiences and answer any questions if you're interested.

#### • Contact information

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Our goal is to open students' access to experiences in global health, and encourage them to take advantage of these amazing opportunities.

***Disclaimer:*** The International Experience Resource is a product of Texas Tech University medical students. Texas Tech and International Medicine Club take no responsibilities for the electives listed herein or any adverse outcomes that may result in participating in these opportunities.