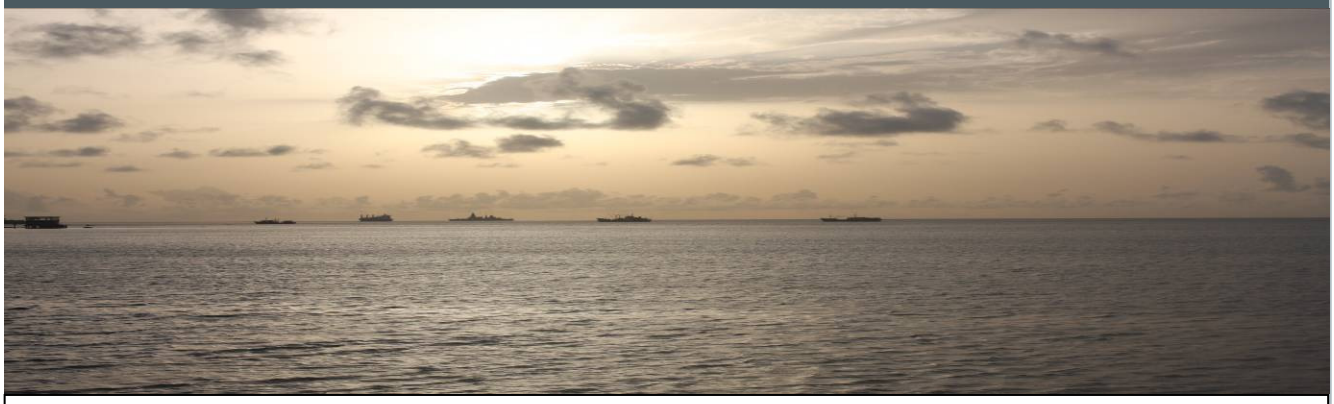
iLEAP READER

Enriching Our Profession, Expanding Our Horizon



The International Learning Activity for Pharmacy students (iLEAP) was created as a longitudinal project intended to expose students to international pharmacy, specifically in resource poor areas globally. This project is a compilation of various short trips with motivated students who actively work on interdisciplinary projects to help the global community in a sustainable way.

The iLEAP 4 Team

The iLEAP program has offered me much more than I can ever imagine. The experience was truly life changing and greatly served to improve my cultural competence skills. I saw first hand the difference a well trained and ethical health care professional can make in areas in need; and the fact that instead of asking who, what, and how? We all can be that who, the resources we are provided with can be that what, and how can be accomplished by just giving our best effort. I am proud of the sustainable projects we embarked on, the great team I worked with and hope to incorporate services projects like this into my future practice.

- Chukwuemeka Chukwurah
PharmD Candidate 2013

Being a part of the iLEAP program has given me an enriching opportunity to extend my cultural and professional experiences as a student pharmacist. I've been able to meet many wonderful people who are actively seeking to provide care for underserved populations and try to provide solutions to challenges in other areas that we don't face here. I will never forget the memories of the villages we visited and the many individual stories of people I met in Sierra Leone. I am grateful for the humbling experience and hope to incorporate the values of a global perspective into how I practice healthcare in the future.

- Erica Weinstein
PharmD Candidate 2013

When I first signed up for the trip to Sierra Leone, I did not know what to expect. After coming back, I realized how truly blessed we are to be able to be living in a country where the basic necessities in life are not hard to come by. Not only has this experience allowed me to help others, but it has also ignited a strong interest within me in the field of international pharmacy practice. I am glad that I had taken part in this trip and with an amazing team who made the experience that much more memorable. In the future, I hope to continue working with iLEAP team on their projects to come.

-Jennifer Kurian
PharmD Candidate 2013

Trip Itinerary

Week 1: Bo

- Government Hospital
- Pediatric and Nutritional Wards
- West African Fistula Foundation
- Yamandu Clinic

Week 2: Freetown

- Connaught Hospital
- College of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences (COMAHS)
- Sierra Leone Board of Pharmacy

Dr. Suzanna Gim
Faculty Preceptor/ Director of the iLEAP program

Our Summer Trip 2012

The Bo Government Hospital houses a clinic managed by the West African Fistula Foundation (WAFF). WAFF is a nonprofit organization that helps provide surgical and medical care for women who suffer with fistulas. Fistulas are a complication of pregnancy that results in uncontrollable urination and/or defecation. Women afflicted with this complication sadly become excommunicated from their communities because of it. Fortunately WAFF provides the opportunity for these women to obtain a surgical procedure which corrects the complication, free of charge and in a safe environment before surgery as well as during recovery. One problem most clinics and institutions managed by foreign aid encounter, is the organization and management of donated medications and supplies. In order for the much needed donations to be used effectively, the staff needs to be aware of its existence as well as where to locate it. To assist the WAFF doctors and nurses, the GSEP team volunteered to transform the stock room of donated hospital supplies, operating tools, first aid supplies and medication into an organized space. This was no easy task and required the assistance of the local nursing staff to help identify items and plan organization of the space. Dr. Darius Maggi, the founder and main operating physician of WAFF, invited members of the team to observe scheduled fistula removals and C-sections inside the operating theater. It was amazing to watch these surgeries, while realizing how careful he had to be, as the clinic had limited supplies of antibiotics and analgesic medications.

The following week in Freetown, we worked in Connaught Hospital, one of the main government hospitals in the city and teaching institution for the medical, nursing and pharmacy students. We became familiar with the different wards, the various hospital staff around us, and helped dispense medications with local pharmacy technicians. We also visited the campus of the College of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences (COMAHS), which contains the only school of pharmacy in the entire country. The main pharmacy building is located in Connaught Hospital. We met with the pharmacy students and forged a relationship that resulted in the creation of a Facebook page for their class, creating a bridge from their school to any other school in the world. The current student body President for their organization *National Association of Pharmaceutical Students* had explained to us that they were recently adopted into the International Pharmaceutical Students' Foundation (IPSF) and at COMAHS they were trying to create a more cohesive group amongst their colleagues. As we were all already Phi Delta Chi members, we certainly had an idea as the importance of building a strong organization from the ground up. Therefore, we offered our help to them during our stay by speaking to current pharmacy students about the importance of supporting the profession globally. Through Facebook and Skype technology, we will be continuing our efforts to assist them and share ideas.

-Erica Weinstein

While we were providing training in the Malnutrition and Pediatric Wards in Bo, we noticed that staff members were experiencing difficulties obtaining blood from the infants for testing. After speaking to the staff, we discovered that the difficulty in obtaining blood samples from the infants coupled with the limited access to labs leaves most infants presenting with generalized fatigue undiagnosed. After ruling out malaria and other common infectious diseases, infants who are not progressing may stay in the ward for weeks receiving nothing but supportive care. Many infants who are not progressing due to dehydration, malnutrition or other anemia-aggravating disease would benefit greatly from a blood transfusion. However, without the confirmed lab tests required for the institution's blood transfusion protocol, the patient would not be able to receive blood. Although the protocol appears to be a barrier, it is necessary since there is a limited supply of blood as well as an overwhelming demand for it.

The hospital has a Red Cross blood bank, which uses sterile equipment, with trained personnel who follow aseptic technique. According to the staff, the majority of donors are family members, who give blood based on acute need. Rarely will donors give blood just to provide blood for the bank. In addition, many Sierra Leoneans are themselves anemic or malnourished, restricting them from donating safely. After hearing about the high demand for blood and the lack of supply, several members of the GSEP Ambassadors decided to donate.

An avid blood donor in the United States may find donating blood in Sierra Leone a very different experience. Upon registering to donate, we were asked to provide blood samples to test

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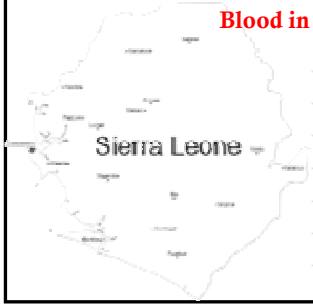
Team members who helped save lives by donating Blood in Sierra Leone



- Chukuemeka Chukwurah
- Dawn Kilts
- Derrell Melton
- Jacqueline Boyd
- La Shaina Dickerson
- Norisbel Jimenez
- Suzanna Gim

Yamandu Village Clinic Day

The GSEP team spent one day in the small village of Yamandu, outside of Bo. There we set up a clinic for a day. We saw over 160 villagers during this time frame. We took their general information, vital signs, chief complaints, and dispensed medications that could be of help in the village's make shift pharmacy. Seeing how our supplies of vitamins and antibiotics were running low, Jennifer and Erica made several trips to the village pharmacy to purchase these items with their own money. We provided counseling in the pharmacy of the village, countlessly explaining how often to take the medications, or providing patients with urgent health matters a referral to a doctor at Bo Government Hospital. Overall our day made a difference in the life's of many as they left with the needed medications.

-Jennifer Kurian

Da Bodi Fine

In Sierra Leone a common greeting is "How da bodi?" Which is answered by saying "Da bodi fine" meaning your happy and enjoying life.

LIU Brooklyn

GSEP

Global Social Entrepreneurship Project

School of Business, Public Administration and Information Sciences | School of Nursing | College of Pharmacy

We, the iLEAP 4 team travelled with the Global Social Entrepreneurship Project (GSEP).

GSEP mission is to bring innovation and transformative change through the development and implementation of sustainable solutions in the health sector

Students interested in becoming GSEP Ambassadors, email LaShaina.Dickerson@liu.edu

our hemoglobin. For a standard Sierra Leonean donor, this would make sense. But as Americans who were not underweight, we wanted them to be able to save the equipment for testing future donors. In addition, the healthcare workers at the blood bank were interested in obtaining our blood pressure in an effort to make sure that we would be able to give blood safely. After it was determined that we were able to give blood, a liter of blood was collected in a sterile manner -using a clean new needle, and wiping down the incision site before placing the needle. A weighing scale was used to determine when enough blood was collected and a cotton ball was used to stop the bleeding after the needle was removed. The whole process was finished in less than 10 minutes and we were free to go after the blood was collected.

Donating blood in a resource-poor country such as Sierra Leone is still lacking in various aspects. But as long as the center is sterile with proper equipment and trained staff, anyone can donate blood safely anywhere. Sierra Leoneans are in crucial need of blood donations and their continuous efforts in improving the process with such limited resources is commendable. They manage to maintain a clean sterile environment, with a relatively quick and painless collection process. It was an amazing experience and we would definitely encourage more people to help save lives by donating blood in a foreign country.

- Emeka Chukwurah & Suzanna Gim

Thinking outside the Boxes…

BEFORE

AFTER

One of the sustainable projects we completed at Bo was erecting newly painted white shelves inside a medication supply room inside the Pediatric Nutritional Ward, so that the staff would be able to access medications easily, quickly and accurately for the sake of improving patient care. We also stressed the importance of developing an inventory system so that this ward could appropriately request restocking from the hospital's main warehouse in a timely manner. Prior to our visit, the stock room was filled with piles of boxes containing medications, in no particular order, with hardly any space to move, no light source for someone to find something (they do not have electricity running throughout most of the day) and it was extremely dirty.

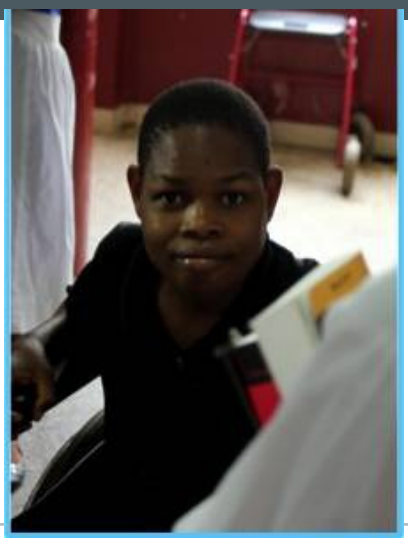
The nurses were finding it difficult to know what was in the room and how much of the medication was available. Since we were looking for a sustainable project to support with the donations we had collected in the U.S., we decided to build labeled shelves in the room, so that the staff would be able to access medications easily, quickly and accurately for the sake of improving patient care. We also stressed the importance of developing an inventory system so that the staff could appropriately request restocking from the hospital's main warehouse in a timely manner. In a matter of two days, the room was transformed into a clean, brighter, accessible area with medications neatly organized in a manner the nurses approved and understood clearly. Shelf areas were labeled clearly. We taught the nurses about using tall man-short man lettering for medications that were considered Look-alike, sound-alike drugs, which they confessed had been a common issue of error inside the ward. We also encouraged the staff to perform monthly expiration date checks, to help improve the standards of medication delivery.

- ***Erica Weinstein***

Where there is no Medicine: Karim's Story

Karim is a soft-spoken 15 year-old Sierra Leonean boy, who just like every boy his age, likes to play and engage in various activities. But due to being afflicted by osteomyelitis, his mobility is very limited and he is forced to spend most of his time in bed or in a wheel chair. His condition was not improving so the doctor was planning to amputate his leg.

After meeting him, we each felt very connected. We took a look at his medical profile and medication history and discovered the he was not receiving the medication he needed for the past 9 months. As we looked into this, we discovered that this was because Karim's family could not afford the needed medication. In order to help Karim we decided to provide several months supply of the medication and medical supplies he needed.which hopefully would assist in the efforts to save Karim's leg.



This effort would not have been possible without the generosity of each and every one that donated towards our trip; and for that we greatly thank you.

-Emeka Chukwuruh & iLEAP4 Team

Thanks to our Donors !!!

The iLEAP team would like to express their appreciation for all the donations that were made towards this trip. We were able to help those in need a great deal thanks to all of you!

Agnes Cha, Aileen, Alexander Budovich, Alex Kogan, Amanda Dacey, Amy Ho, Anna Nogid, Anthony Cutie, Beatrice , Courtney Frederick, Cynthia Ukwu, Efua Ghansah, Fernando Gonzalez, Gabriel Guerra, Gail Fitzgerald, Jason Chang, Jeffrey Kurian, Judy Pierce, Karamjeet Kaur, Kelly Moore, Kenza Benzaroual , Lianne Ng, Marissa Job, Michelle Kaufman, Norm Sutaria, Olivia D'Cunha, Pamela Weinstein, Patrick Paulinas, Puneet Singh, Nelson, Stanley Fiefer, Tina Zerilli, Trina Quevedo, and Global Social Entrepreneurship Program (GSEP)

West Africa Fistula Foundation

Help by donating at:

www.westafricafistulafoundation.org

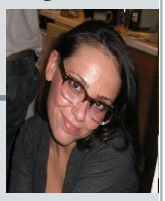
Alumni Corner

Name: Nana Dwumfour
Country Visited: Sierra Leone
Year: Spring 2010

Nana applied to the program because he wanted to experience pharmacy practice in a third-world country. The most impactful moment for him during the trip is when he realized that the students of Sierra Leone were eager to learn however they were lacking the required resources, such as textbooks. His participation with the iLEAP team has influenced his future goal of developing a pharmacy in a third world country. Nana is currently working in a specialty and home-infusion pharmacy in Maryland. He hopes to relocate back to Ghana after completing his graduate program in the near future.

Name: Katrina Valuyeva
Country Visited: Haiti
Year: January 2012

She decided to be part of the iLEAP team because she believes that although it is important while receiving an education to focus on specific topics, it is also important to broaden one's horizons and essentially see the big picture. One of Katrina's most memorable moments from the trip to Haiti was walking through the tent city. She stated that "Tents were made from any available durables, clothes were hung to dry on barbed wire and flies surrounded the food in the market. But the people displaced from homes continued to live, raise livestock, create art, exchange goods and send their children to school. I was humbled by their resilience". She is currently working at Walgreens as a graduate intern and at a dialysis clinic as a volunteer.



Name: Victoria Rupp
Country Visited: Sierra Leone
Year: Spring 2010

She had an interest in joining the Peace Corps post high school, but decided to go to the Arnold & Marie Schwartz College of Pharmacy. She applied for the trip to Sierra Leone because she had seen this as an opportunity to pursue her desire to volunteer abroad. She states that "This trip was a great experience which not only opened my eyes to the world but also taught me about my internal strengths and weaknesses". Victoria is currently finishing her PGY-1 residency at the Memphis VA Medical center in Memphis, Tennessee. Her future goals include pursuing a PGY-2 and obtaining a master's degree in Public Health.