



GEISEL  
— SCHOOL OF —  
MEDICINE  
AT DARTMOUTH

# Urban Health Scholars Boston

Fall Immersion trip 2013

Class of 2016- 2017 Scholars:

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Evelyn Bae	Christina Jaramillo
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# Introduction:

The Urban Health Scholars of the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth are a group of students dedicated to becoming competent practitioners, researchers, and public advocates for medically underserved urban populations in an effort to promote health equity. The purpose of UHS is to foster an increased understanding across the Geisel community of the needs of diverse urban populations, while providing the Scholars with the tools they need to positively impact the health of these communities in their future careers.

In accordance with this mission, the Scholars organize educational and service trips during the year to large urban centers around the country in order to gain a better understanding of the challenges faced by these populations. The second year scholars (Asha McClurg, Inyang Udo-Inyang, Bianca Williams, Asha Clarke, and Evelyn Bae), along with the newly selected 1<sup>st</sup> year scholars (David Whitehead, Christina Jaramillo, Cristina Alcorta, Tiffany Hoang, Hayley Jones, and Alyssa Corely) traveled to our closest large urban center, Boston, for our first trip of the year. Boston has a vibrant and diverse population, and is the home to several large academic hospitals. The state of Massachusetts has also been a pioneer in health care reform, recently passing legislation to create almost universal insurance coverage. This unique policy climate gives the scholars the opportunity to see how these policies impact patients and vulnerable populations in Boston.

The established objectives of the trip were as follows:

- Learn about the challenges inherent in the delivery of healthcare in Boston, a regional multistate urban center.
- Visit and explore a wide range of healthcare models, from large academic centers to community clinics, in order to learn more about how different organizations are working to address the needs of their target communities.
- Meet and network with Geisel School of Medicine alumni in the area to learn about different career paths, and hear why they decided to pursue urban medicine, and the rewards and challenges of serving in an urban community.
- Serve the Boston community by participating in local volunteer efforts.
- Share newfound experiences and knowledge about urban medicine with colleagues at the Geisel School of Medicine.

# Itinerary

## Urban Health Scholars- Boston Immersion Trip 2013

Thursday, September 5

Time	Place	Event	Contact Person
5:00pm	<b>Greater Lawrence Family Health Center</b>  34 Haverhill Street, Lawrence, MA	Tour of Health Center; Dinner with Geisel alumni and residents	Dr. Andrew Smith ('04)  Dr. John Raser ('06)
8:00pm	<b>Courtyard Boston-South Boston</b>  63 R Boston Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02125	Hotel Check-In and prepare for Friday!	

Friday, September 6

Time	Place	Event	Contact Person
9:00 - 10:00am	<b>Boston Medical Center</b>  <i>Vose Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor</i> Conference Room 88 East Newton Street Boston, MA 02118	Meet with Dr. Megan Sandel ('96) Medical Director of National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership	Megan Sandel, MD
10:30 - 12:00pm	<b>The Lemuel Shattuck Hospital</b>  170 Morton Street, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130	Tour of facility and services, including Department of Corrections Medical Inmate Unit	Daniella Floru, MD
12:30 - 2:30pm	<b>Boston Health Care for the Homeless</b>  Barbara McInnis House 780 Albany St	Service activity - bingo with medical respite residents	Alyssa Brassil
3:30pm	<b>Tufts University School of Medicine</b>  136 Harrison Avenue Boston, MA 02111	Meet with Dr. Joyce Sackey ('89)	Ariella Green

7:00pm	<b>Alumni Dinner- Fire and Ice</b>	Dr. Katie O'Donnell Dr. Chris Worsham	
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**Saturday, September 7**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Contact Person</b>
8:30 am - 3:30 pm	<b>Mattapan Health Care Revival</b>  Boston Public Health Commission's Campus 249 River St Mattapan	Assist with health screenings; healthy eating and cardiovascular health education	Monique Screen-Berry

# Clinical Experiences:

## Greater Lawrence Family Health Center

The Urban Health Scholars look forward to our visit to Lawrence each year, due to a strong Geisel connection with this program. Many of our alumni have gone on to the Family Medicine Residency Program at GLFHC. The fact that several of them, including Dr. Andrew Smith ('04) and Dr. Jon Raser ('06) have remained in Lawrence over the years and stayed on to become attending physicians is a testament to the vibrancy of the community and the compelling nature of meeting the needs of an underserved population.



Dr. Smith gave us a tour of the clinic and spoke to us about the role GLFHC plays in Lawrence, a city in which more than 51% of residents live below the poverty line and nearly 60% of the population is Latino. The unique residency program at GLFHC prepares its residents for working with this population by including Spanish immersion courses. These additional classes allow all residents at GLFHC to graduate fluent in Spanish.

Dr. Smith discussed how physicians at GLFHC and across Massachusetts operate in a special environment due to Mass Health, a theme that came up regularly during our trip. Health care policy in Massachusetts allows almost all residents to be eligible for health insurance, including immigrants, and creates strong support for health centers providing medicine to the underserved. This policy climate provides a much more stable revenue stream to GLFHC than they would receive in other states in the country allowing them to provide a greater breath of services than would be possible under different policies.

After our tour, we were fortunate enough to be joined by another alumnus Dr. Jennifer Bentwood, as well as Dr. Raser, who shared their hilarious, shocking, and poignant stories about all the communication mishaps, awkward translations, and highs and lows of serving a predominantly Dominican patient population over dinner. We are so grateful and inspired by all 3 alumni physicians who were so evidently passionate and dedicated to the community they serve.

## Lemuel Shattuck Hospital

The scholars had the incredible opportunity to speak with a group of interprofessional providers and tour the Lemuel Shattuck Hospital, a public health hospital operated by the State of Massachusetts. This 255-bed facility provides acute and ambulatory care to patients referred by public agencies as well as private sector providers, enabling economically and socially disadvantaged patients, including those with co-morbidities and psychological issues, to receive quality care. This hospital also operates a correctional unit in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health and the state's Department of Corrections, and provides medical services to all Massachusetts inmates with conditions that cannot be cared for in prison.

When we arrived at Shattuck we were greeted by Dr. Daniella Floru who gave us a description of the diverse challenges and illness that patients at Shattuck face as well as insight in to her experience working with patients who have high rates of mental and addictive illness. Dr. Robert McMakin, a clinical psychologist provided us with further insight by explaining that mental illness is not often what lands an



individual in the hospital, but is nevertheless addressed and treated as equally important to providing quality care to their patients. Dr. McMakin's role is complimented by the Addiction Services Supervisor, Jennifer Malizia, who further elaborated on the challenges patients with addiction face, both medically and socially within the community. Ginger Bailey, a licensed social worker who coordinates the discharge plans for patients, demonstrated the hospital's commitment to making sure patients have access to resources that will allow them to stay healthier and hopefully out of the hospital long term. The team at Shattuck highlighted the stigma patients with addiction face each day, and emphasized the importance of treating addiction as we would any other chronic condition.

Our visit ended with a tour of The Shattuck Hospital Corrections Unit. In addition to speaking with the medical team we had the opportunity to speak with the officers on the secured unit about the challenges of working with incarcerated patients. This was a truly eye opening conversation about the heavy toll these demanding jobs take on the lives of correction officers. We left Shattuck thoroughly impressed with the commitment of its interdisciplinary teams to providing quality care to patients who often have co-morbidities and psychosocial issues that are challenging for other providers. Their compassion and understanding towards their patients was a perspective we are excited to take back to Hanover with us.

# Educational Opportunities:

## Dr. Megan Sandel and Safety Net Hospitals: Boston Medical Center

We visited Boston Medical Center to meet with Dr. Megan Sandel and learn more about her work there as a pediatrician and physician advocate for the underserved patients in Boston. Dr. Sandel is a Medical Director of the National Center for Medical-Legal Partnerships, and a national expert on housing and adolescent health. During our visit Dr. Sandel discussed social determinants of health, including income, housing and insurance, and how these issues affect the health of individuals as well as the hospitals and clinics that serve them. During this conversation the scholars were able to learn a little about the financial infrastructure of "essential" hospitals like BMC that serve disproportionately poor patients and act as a safety net hospital. We talked about the challenges they face to provide quality care to their patients while keeping costs low, and how they plan to adapt and innovate with the implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

We were also interested to hear more about the National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership and Dr. Sandel's role as the Medical Director. Many of the underserved patients coming to BMC are confronted with a variety of social barriers that prevent them from leading healthy lifestyles. Dr. Sandel is particularly interested in housing issues and related several cases in which inadequate housing influenced the health of her patients. In one example, a child suffered from chronic asthma in large part due to mold growing in the child's house. Part of Dr. Sandel's work has focused on elucidating the fact that this child has legal rights that could help address the asthma problem at its cause. Other low income patients with chronic conditions are protected by the law to not be evicted in the winter months. With the Medical-Legal Partnership, Dr. Sandel hopes to provide these types of patients, and others, with access to legal help. The Medical-Legal Partnership seeks to promote teamwork between the health care providers and lawyers to address the health needs of patients not only in the hospital, but in the community and home as well. We were very excited to talk and learn from Dr. Sandel about social interventions and policy changes at local and national levels that have the potential to positively affect urban populations. Dr. Sandel encouraged us as future physicians to be advocates for our patients, especially those who are underserved, and she emphasized that physicians should be leaders in the community to promote change.



## Dr. Joyce Sackey and Serving through Global Medicine

Our visit with Dr. Joyce Sackey, a Dartmouth College and Geisel alum, was a highlight of our trip to Boston. Dr. Sackey is Dean of Global Health & Multicultural Affairs at Tufts University School of Medicine, as well as a practicing internist at Tufts Medical Center. As a leader in addressing global health issues and cultural competency in medicine, she has been instrumental in multiple programs to improve care for AIDS patients in Ghana and Sudan and educate local physicians. We were excited to hear about her career path, and how she has channeled her passion for serving the underserved.

Her stories of training Ghanaian physicians to care for HIV positive patients inspired us to impact and improve our own communities. She was a real example for all of us for how to maintain service as a part of a successful career as a physician-educator. She talked about how even as a high school student she never dreamed of having the kind of impact she has had on the Ghanaian health care system.



We had the wonderful opportunity to hear about her time as a Geisel student. She shared heartfelt stories of Dr Mosenthal and Tenney and the amazing service they did for Dartmouth, the “true giants” who are now the namesakes of the societies at Geisel. This inspiring conversation was a reminder to each of the Urban Heath Scholars of why we made the decision to join the ranks of this wonderful profession.

# Service Experiences:

## Bingo at Barbara McInnis House of Boston Health Care for the Homeless

After touring Shattuck Hospital we traveled to The Barbara McInnis House of the Boston Healthcare for the Homeless Program. The Barbara McInnis House is a beautiful 104 bed facility located on the Boston Medical Center campus that provides “medical respite” care to people experiencing homelessness that are too sick for a shelter. Many of the patients are in the process of recovering from a hospitalization or illness. Beyond the Barbara McInnis House, BHCHP provides primary care and behavioral health services to the homeless in outpatient and shelter sites throughout Boston.



The Urban Health Scholars hosted a bingo afternoon for patients, and had the wonderful opportunity to chat and interact with patients. The scholars took turns calling out the numbers, passing out the winning prizes, and mingling with the patients. The scholars heard firsthand from the patients some of the avenues (personal tragedy, illness, financial crisis) through which people come to experience homelessness. Many of these events that led to homelessness were out of the patient’s

control. With this lens, the scholars saw how incredibly essential the services the BHCHP provides are. We had a wonderful time playing bingo, getting to know the patients, and handing out prizes.

## Mattapan Health Care Revival



On Saturday, the UHS scholars and a member of the Urban Health interest group attended the Mattapan Health Care Revival. This was the 17th year this festival has taken place with the purpose of engaging the Mattapan community in conversations about their health, and the 8th year that a group of Geisel Students has been in attendance.

The scholars set up a table about the salt and sugar content in a number of common food items. We used a hands on demonstration with sugar and Cricso to help patients visualize the amount of sugar or fat in the foods they often enjoy. People were surprised to find that fruit yogurt in fact contains as much as 37g of sugar - almost 10 teaspoons! Students were able to engage visitors in conversations about alternative options, such as using plain yogurt and sweetening it themselves with honey or fruit.



Another group of students worked in the children's tent, talking about healthy food options and heart health. Kids were encouraged to listen to their hearts using our stethoscopes and think about what kinds of things might give their hearts extra exercise. Other students engaged visitors in a variety of activities, including blood pressure screenings, health surveys and even voter registration! This was a great way to end our Boston Immersion Trip - a fantastic combination of community service, hands-on learning and a lot of fun!

## Alumni in Boston:

The scholars were able to connect with two Geisel alums, Dr. Katie O'Donnell and Dr. Chris Worsham, that live and work in the Boston area. We were excited to hear about their path to urban medicine, and to hear about the highlights and challenges of working with Boston's urban population.

Dr. Katie O'Donnell continues to be an incredible mentor to the Urban Health Scholars. Over dinner she talked about her work at Children's

Hospital Boston as a pediatrician and toxicologist. As a Geisel graduate, Dr. O'Donnell was able to provide advice about moving from a rural to urban location when she started practicing. She also provided advice about residency and finding balance into the future. We are so happy to continue to have her support and encouragement.

Dr. Chris Worsham graduated from Geisel this past spring, and jumped right into pursuing his interests in urban medicine as an intern at Boston Medical Center, Boston's safety net hospital. We enjoyed hearing about the fast paced life of an intern, the diverse patient population he works with, and how much he has already learned in a few months!



## Conclusion:

The Urban Health Scholars learned a great deal during our trip to Boston. We would like to thank all the individuals who helped make this trip possible and took time out of their busy days to spend with us. Each opportunity we participated in furthered our understanding of urban medicine, and the challenges to achieving health equity. We left this trip with a renewed excitement to serve vulnerable populations through medicine, and are excited to share what we learned in Boston with our peers and faculty at Geisel. We are also incredibly grateful for the support provided by the Geisel School of Medicine. This support, both financial and organizationally, has been critical in allowing scholars to pursue different opportunities to engage in urban health experiences. Please feel free to contact any of the scholars for additional information about this trip, or our plans for future urban immersion experiences.

