



GEISEL  
— SCHOOL OF —  
MEDICINE  
AT DARTMOUTH

# Urban Health Scholars CHICAGO

Spring Break  
Immersion trip 2013

Class of 2016 Scholars:

Asha Clarke  
Bianca Williams  
Evelyn Bae  
Asha McClurg

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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. 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 first year scholars, Asha Clarke, Evelyn Bae, Bianca Williams, and Asha McClurg spent their Spring Break (March 9<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>, 2013) visiting Chicago, a city with tremendous racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity, and large disparities in health outcomes among vulnerable populations. Chicago's racial and ethnic populations are largely divided into distinct neighborhoods, providing an opportunity to explore health outcomes across different communities. We also aimed to explore how the needs of different populations are being met how Chicago's physicians strive to reach out to disadvantaged communities. Chicago is also close to our hearts because it is the home city of first year scholar Bianca Williams.

The established objectives of the trip were as follows:

- Learn about the challenges inherent in the delivery of healthcare in Chicago, an urban and richly diverse setting.
- Visit and explore a wide range of healthcare models 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, job environments, and perceptions of the field of medicine.
- Serve the 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- Chicago Immersion Trip 2013

Saturday-March 9th		
1:00pm	Arrive at Chicago Midway.	Fairfield Inn & Suites Chicago Downtown 216 East Ontario Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611 USA Phone: 1-312-787-3777
3:50pm – 12:00am	Shadow at Cook County ER and Trauma unit.	Contact person: Dr. Patrick Lank (Adult ED) and Dr. Kim Joseph (Trauma)
Sunday- March 10th		
10am-4pm	Volunteering at the Family Rescue- Women's Shelter	Family Rescue, Inc. PO Box 17528 Chicago, IL 60617 <a href="mailto:administration@familyrescueinc.org">administration@familyrescueinc.org</a> 773-375-1918
Monday- March 11th		
8:00am- 12:- 00pm	Community Health Center	Nicole Potempa, RN <a href="mailto:npotempa@communityhealth.org">npotempa@communityhealth.org</a> Kelly Tondini <a href="mailto:ktondini@communityhealth.org">ktondini@communityhealth.org</a> Community Health 2611 W. Chicago Avenue Chicago, IL 60622 Phone: (773) 969-5926 x 26 <a href="http://www.communityhealth.org">www.communityhealth.org</a>
12:30 pm- 1:30pm	Hispanic Health Coalition	Chicago Hispanic Health Coalition Esther Schiammarella 2525 South Michigan Avenue; Suite 247 B; Chicago, IL 60616 <a href="mailto:chhc@chicagohispanichealthcoalition.org">chhc@chicagohispanichealthcoalition.org</a>

Tuesday- March 12th		
8:00am-12:00pm	Volunteer at food pantry.	St. Philip Neri Church 2058 E 72 <sup>nd</sup> St Chicago, IL, 60649 773-363-1700
1:00-3:00pm	Diabetes Education group.	St. Philip Neri Church
6:00pm	Alumni dinner	Dr. Jill Rosno, Geisel '11 <a href="mailto:jillrosno@gmail.com">jillrosno@gmail.com</a> Dr. Chetan Huded Geisel '11

Wednesday- March 12th		
9:00-11:00 am	Dr. David Ansell, CMO Rush Medical Center and author of County	Dr. David Ansell <a href="mailto:David_Ansell@rush.edu">David_Ansell@rush.edu</a> Sharon Gates, Senior Director, Multicultural Affairs <a href="mailto:Sharon_Gates@rush.edu">Sharon_Gates@rush.edu</a>
12:00-2:00pm	Illinois Primary Health Care Association: hear about FQHCs in Chicago and the work they are doing.	Contact Person: Ashley Colwell: 217-541-7309 Dr. Rajesh Parikh 542 S. Dearborn St., Suite 300, Chicago, IL 60605
3:30pm-6:00pm	Cook County Hospital: Tour Neonatology unit	Dr. Dick David <a href="mailto:rdavid@uic.edu">rdavid@uic.edu</a>
7:00-8:30 pm	Presentation on adult trauma access on Chicago's South Side- University of Chicago	Dr. David Ansell <a href="mailto:David_Ansell@rush.edu">David_Ansell@rush.edu</a>

# Clinical Experiences:

## Stroger Hospital ER and Trauma Unit

We kicked off our trip to Chicago with an evening trauma and ER shift at Stroger Hospital. The Stroger Hospital ER, formerly called Cook County, serves over 100,000 patients a year and is open to the public, regardless of their ability to pay. The hospital is a fixture in the Chicago community, and serves as the city's medical largest safety. The hospital is equipped with a Level 1 trauma center and burn unit, and treats some of the most severely injured patients in the city of Chicago. These elements contribute to an incredibly diverse patient population that presents with a huge host of health needs, ranging from emergent to chronic health conditions and medication refills. The scholars split our time at Stroger into two parts, shadowing 4 hours in the ER and 4 hours on the trauma unit. It was a very quiet night on the trauma unit, but we enjoyed hearing about the experiences of a number of medical students and residents, and were given the opportunity to learn about how to read an ultrasound. The students and physicians on the trauma unit were incredibly hospitable and welcoming, giving the scholars the opportunity to ask lots of questions and learn about the physician experience at this hospital.



In the ER, we were incredibly fortunate to have the opportunity to shadow Dr. Patrick Lank, an ER attending, and Dr. Neeraj Chhabra. Dr. Lank took the scholars along for his busy evening of seeing a wide variety of patients. He demonstrated the art form of meeting patient needs, both physically and emotionally, while working through the massive patient load present in the ER. The scholars were able to relate much of what they observed to material learned in the first two semesters of medical school, including watching

an inferior alveolar nerve block, discussing a cold agglutination test, and seeing many joint injuries. The scholars used this opportunity to reflect on the incredible relevance of "basic" sciences in medical care.

Additionally, Dr. Lank talked to the UHS students about his experiences in urban health and patient care, providing great insight and many teaching opportunities for our scholars. All the physicians the scholars met were compassionate, gentle and caring towards patients. The scholars feel so fortunate to have had the opportunity to shadow such excellent physicians at the Stroger Hospital and observe the realities of a busy urban emergency department.

### **Community Health Center- Free Clinic in the Ukrainian Village**

On Monday, the scholars visited two community health clinics in Chicago. First we headed to the Community Health Clinic, located in Chicago's Ukrainian Village which is home to the largest population of Polish people outside of Warsaw, Poland. The Community Health Clinic goes above and beyond to serve not only the local Polish population but also the nearby Mexican neighborhood. The clinic is completely funded by private donors such as Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Rush University, Astra Zeneza, and Bank of America. Because of these donors, the clinic is able to offer a plethora of medical services, including adult internal medicine and dental services, as well as medications, completely free of charge to patients. The effectiveness of the care the clinic offers to its diverse patients is rooted in its multilingual capabilities, with multiple Polish and Spanish interpreters available at all times. Health care is provided by over five thousand medical volunteers, including physicians, specialists and nurses. Only three of the staff members are paid, but the clinic manages to serve over 10,000 patients per year.

Healthy eating was the focus of the day's work. Specifically, the scholars taught patients about the amount of sugar and fat in the foods they often eat. Using nutritional information from a McDonalds menu, yogurt, juice containers, and soda cans, the scholars were able to do an active demonstration about the amount of sugar and fat in these common food items. Teaspoons of Crisco and sugar were scooped onto plates to match the amount present in each food item. Patients were shocked to find that some foods thought to be healthy, like fruity flavored yogurt, actually contained as much sugar as a can of Pepsi, and that small fries contained a heaping amount of fat. Patients then felt motivated to discuss ways to change some of their eating habits, such as incorporating healthy snacks, or substituting sugar-rich foods for healthier items. The scholars also gave out flyers for fitness, body, and health classes the clinic offered for free to their patients. These included yoga, Zumba, nutrition, and diabetes classes. The Community Health Clinic is an advocate for patient centered care and provided the scholars with an excellent example of how a community health clinic can provide comprehensive care at low-cost, without compromising on facilities or patient experience.



### **Diabetes Education- Philip St. Neri Women's Group**

We traveled to the beautiful Philip St. Neri Church on Chicago's South Side to lead a diabetes small group education class with members of the church and local community. The attendees were a mixture of diabetics, pre-diabetics, and those simply interested in maintaining better health. We opened the session by encouraging the women to share how diabetes affected their daily lives, and what their biggest struggles were in maintaining their illness and health. In particular they mentioned the challenges of keeping up with exercise, eating right and managing portions, taking their insulin/medications, and forgetting to eat meals- especially a challenge for the women who lived alone. Several women also expressed frustration at the lack of coordination between multiple providers, particularly when it came to redundancy in medications and prescriptions. The need for better communication between providers and patients about what each of their medications was for exactly and why it was important to take emerged as a theme in our discussion, and something we really took to heart as future providers.



The scholars used the same demonstration we learned at Community Health Center to educate the women on the surprisingly high amount of sugar in favorite everyday items such as soda, orange juice, fruit cups, and flavored yogurt. Alternative food items and healthy snack ideas, the importance of reading food labels, as well as proper portion recommendations using My Plate were all discussed as part of this group exercise. The scholars then touched upon the way common diabetes drugs worked,

and ended the session with the women sharing a few goals for their diabetes and/or health management going into the future.

# Educational Opportunities

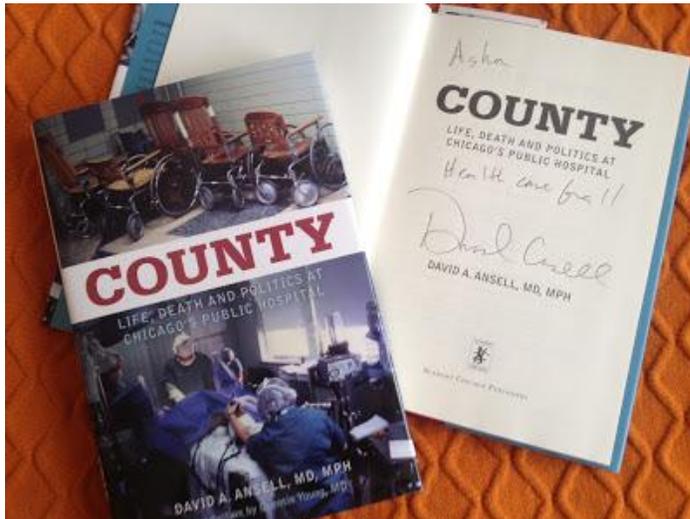
## Hispanic Health Coalition

We visited Hispanic Health Coalition where they spoke with Executive Director Ester Schiammarella. The Hispanic Health Coalition is a non-profit organization that strives to close the gap between health disparities in the Latino communities. In addition to their medical services they are focused on outreach to the community to increase awareness and access to resources available for disadvantaged. She provided insight into the challenges of collaborating with other organizations to provide the best services for their patients. In particular, she



emphasized the clinic's concerns about how the upcoming implementation of the ACA will impact undocumented patients. She also highlighted the importance of networking and getting involved in local policy to create systems that best support patients. This was a wonderful and inspirational conversation, and the Hispanic Health Coalition is a strong advocate for Chicago's Latino patients.

## Discussing Patient Dumping and Health Disparities with Dr. David Ansell



We were lucky to get to meet with Dr. David Ansell, current CMO of Rush Medical Center. Dr. Ansell has been serving the people of Chicago for his entire medical career, spending 17 years at Cook County hospital and another 10 years at Mt. Sinai before joining Rush. He has been pushing to close the gap in health outcomes across races, openly battling patient dumping, and advocating for a single payer health care system. Dr. Ansell provided the scholars with an excellent perspective on the reasons for health care

disparities in Chicago, the need for preventative medicine and a single-payer system, and the interesting developments in the care of undocumented patients at Rush and other Chicago area hospitals. His decades of service to the urban population are incredibly admirable, and the scholars learned a lot through this opportunity to meet him and hear about his work.

Sharon Gates, Senior Director for Multicultural Affairs and Service at Rush, then took the scholars on a tour of a beautiful clinic connected to the Simpson Academy for Young Women, a school specifically for pregnant and parenting teens from 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade. The clinic was built a few years ago to meet the prenatal as well as general health needs of the young women attending the school. In addition to their prenatal services they provide extensive outreach including anger management, education on healthy behaviors and primary care. The clinic includes 3 exam rooms, providing excellent primary and prenatal care in an intimate, private and convenient setting. Additionally, they work with community partners to ensure that the girls have good birthing and post-natal care available until they return to school. The scholars had a wonderful time talking to the passionate providers at the clinic about the community they serve, and the unique concerns and challenges of their patients. Meeting Sharon and Dr. Ansell and finding out more about their work was a real highlight of the trip!



We rejoined Dr. Ansell later that evening to attend a presentation organized by University of Chicago students to evaluate the need for a trauma unit on the south side of Chicago. The University of Chicago Hospital is located in Chicago's south side, adjacent to a predominantly African American community with a historically higher violence rate. The hospital formerly operated a trauma center in the area, but closed the unit claiming that they were losing money and unable to keep it open. The University of Chicago Hospital still operates a pediatric trauma unit, but does not accept patients over 16 years of age. Since the closing of the trauma unit on the south side there have been some high profile trauma deaths leading to community outrage and public concerns that the deaths were due to the long transit time to trauma units located elsewhere in the city. The community of the south side has been demanding that the University of Chicago Hospital raise the age limit of the pediatric unit, or open an adult unit to meet the needs of the community. Students from the University of Chicago organized a presentation evaluating the need for a trauma unit on the south side, and the differences in ambulance transit time around the city. This was an excellent presentation that opened the scholars' eyes to the complex issues that hospitals and providers face serving urban communities, and how local policy can dramatically impact care. Observing this presentation and the following discussion was a lesson in the importance of partnership between providers and their community.

### **Neonatology at Stroger and Exploring Racial Disparities in Neonatal Outcomes**

Dr. Dick David, a neonatologist at Stroger Hospital, gave the scholar a tour of the NICU spoke with us about his experiences working at Stroger and his research into neonatal outcomes. Dr. David was very honest about the separate-but-not-equal care that is provided within the city of Chicago, where the uninsured must be seen at Stroger and those with insurance can go to other

city hospitals. He talked about how the NICU has been affected by the availability of Medicaid to pregnant women and children, drastically reducing the number of patients being seen at Stroger NICU. Finally, Dr. David talked about his very interesting research into neonatal outcomes based on race and class. One of his research studies demonstrated that women who reported experiencing stress due to their race, for example being unable to find a job due to other racial inequalities, were significantly more likely to give birth to a low birth weight baby that required care in the NICU. Another study showed that women with high-stress-low-independence jobs, meaning that they experienced high levels of stress at their job but were not in a position to make independent changes or decisions, also showed worse neonatal outcomes. He pointedly discussed the effects of systemic racism in our culture on health outcomes, and encouraged the Urban Health Scholars be both thoughtful and optimistic in the future in order to tackle issues of health care disparities.

### **Illinois Primary Health Care Association**

The scholars went to the Illinois Primary Health Care Association to meet with Ashley Colwell, the director of recruitment, and Dr. Rajesh Parikh, the vice president of clinical services. The Illinois Primary Health Care Association (IPHCA) is a nonprofit agency that oversees the federally qualified community health centers (FQCHCs) of Illinois. Their mission is to provide high quality health care to



underserved communities, both in urban and rural areas, regardless of ability to pay or legal status, and the scholars had the opportunity to learn about some of the ways in which they achieve this goal. In addition to providing medical care through family practitioners, internists, OB/GYNS and pediatricians, the Community Health Centers attempt to provide wrap-around services in the form of mental health workers, social workers, dental providers, and midwives. It is this patient-centered and comprehensive approach to health care that allows the IPHCA to be so successful in treating patients within underserved communities. One of the most amazing things we learned at this visit is that the Community Health Centers are ranked as one of the top ten most effective federal programs and are estimated to save the health care system between \$9.9 and \$17.6 billion per year, proving that excellent care can be incredibly cost-effective. Additionally, CHCs have a positive economic impact of \$12.6 billion annually, providing a much-needed boost to some of America's most economically depressed neighborhoods. Finally, the scholars learned about the incredible loan repayment options available through the National Health Service Corps, along with the competitive salaries and excellent benefits provided to physicians working for the IPHCA.

# Service Experiences

## Family Rescue Women's Shelter

On Sunday, the Urban Health Scholars arrived at a women's shelter on the South Side of Chicago. The shelter is run by Family Rescue, a social services agency that works to provide comprehensive support services and shelter to victims of domestic violence in Chicago. The facility provides shelter to women and their children, up to 18 years of age, who have experienced domestic violence and are in need of a place to stay. In addition to lodging, the shelter provides education groups for women, including parenting classes, decision making groups and addiction support groups. They also provide groups for the children staying at the shelter, along with counseling and a great array of wrap-around services, including court advocacy and future planning assistance. Family Rescue is funded by a combination of state funding and private donations, but they stretch every dollar to provide incredibly compassionate care for the women and children they are working with.



During our visit we had the opportunity to speak to the program director and learn about the resources provided at this shelter. The scholars then spent a number of hours doing service projects, including organizing the extensive clothing and linen donation areas, sorting and organizing the food pantry, and working to make toiletry items more accessible in a large laundry room. The scholars then enjoyed lunch with two of the directors, and had the opportunity to talk to them candidly about the challenges they face in their line of work. They spoke about what brought them into working at the shelter, as well as the challenges that many of their clients face. It was wonderful to see how much love they had for the women they worked with, and their unconditional acceptance of what the women brought when they arrived at the shelter. The scholars were glad to be able to give our day to such a great organization and help them in a small way.

## Service at St. Philip Neri Food Pantry

The UHS group spent one day of our trip at the St. Philip Neri Parish in South Shore, which happens to be the church where UHS 1<sup>st</sup> year scholar Bianca Williams grew up attending as a child. We were hosted by Bianca's grandmother, Evelyn, and her church members. The scholars also had a prospective medical school student, Chinwe, join us for the day. Chinwe is a

native of Chicago, and is currently a post-baccalaureate student interested in applying to Geisel. The Urban Health Scholars were able to show her what the UHS program is about, and give some perspective on Geisel and how much we love it, as well as medical school in general.



The scholars began the day by helping out at St. Philip Neri's weekly food pantry, which runs from 9am-noon every Tuesday and is staffed by church volunteers who generously donate their time each week. Eligible local residents line up starting early in the morning and are let in 10 at a time to choose among the various items available -- canned goods, pasta, cereals, vegetables, fruits, meats, and more -- donated by local supermarkets and neighboring parishes. All clients of the food pantry are registered

and sign-in at each visit. Due to the high volume of need in the area, all participants are limited to one visit per month. The scholars began by stocking shelves and sorting donated food items, then helping clients choose items from the food pantry. Over 50 clients came through to the afternoon, and it was a great feeling to see people walking out with bundles, bags, and suitcases full of food for their families.



# Alumni in Chicago

While in Chicago we were lucky to have dinner with two Geisel alumni, Dr. Jill Rosno and Dr. Chetan Huded, who are both in residency at Northwestern. Dr. Huded is a native of Chicago and Dr. Rosno volunteers at the Community Health Clinic we visited earlier in the week, so they are both connected to the Chicago outside of their residency programs. They spoke about their love of the city and serving Chicago's diverse and urban population, as well as how much they have enjoyed their residency programs at Northwestern. The scholars greatly appreciated this opportunity to meet with alumni and hear about their paths into urban medicine, as well as their memories from Hanover.



## Conclusion:

The Urban Health Scholars learned a tremendous amount on our visit to the city of Chicago. 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 we left this trip with a renewed excitement to serve vulnerable populations through medicine. We were able to share what we and excitement from our trip to Chicago with our peers and faculty at Geisel. This trip was a highlight of the year for us and we hope return to Chicago soon either through another Urban Health Scholars trip, a future rotation, or perhaps residency! 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 first year scholars for additional information about this trip, or our plans for future urban immersion experiences.

