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GlobeMed at Boston College

# GlobeMed At Boston College Spring Newsletter 2017



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## GlobeMed Staff Retreat

On the afternoon of October 30th, the newly assembled GlobeMed staff gathered for a retreat to build relationships and spend some time reflecting. The balmy weather allowed us to gather on the lawn outside of Higgins Hall with St. Ignatius looking down over us. The GlobeMed E-Board divided the staff into random groups and led icebreakers. We shared our passions and interests with each other and reflected on why we decided to become involved in GlobeMed at Boston College. By the time lunch was delivered, there was already a change in the group dynamic as everyone was chatting and laughing. Two E-Board members, Bridie Lawlor and Sophia Wang, shared their GlobeMed stories with us and reassured us there was a place for everyone to contribute to the goals of the organization. They described how GlobeMed provided them with a community that is passionate about global health equity, and also provided them with a way to share the gift of their education with the world. They inspired us to create our own GlobeMed stories.

By: Chloe Kinzig '18



♥ chueunice, guavamajician and 23 others

globemed\_bc Here are our Globemedders at the 2016 Hilltop Conference: Emerge, Health, and Recovery in Post- Conflicts Settings!

NOVEMBER 13, 2016



"...A conference that the GlobeMed chapter at Columbia [University] does every year inviting regional GlobeMed chapters from other schools to discuss humanitarian aid and other relevant contemporary issues in Global Health..."

*"This year focused on health in Post-Conflict settings, particularly applicable during the current refugee crisis."*

## A Whole-in-One

A long pause. Silence.

I could make out distinct words amongst the bodies around us that merely fell back into the murmurs of the scenery. "Caramel macchiato!" one of the employees of Boston College's Chocolate bar screamed, beckoning the coffee's owner to claim it. Amidst the Gothic style structure in Stokes Hall South and the mahogany chairs and tables, junior Ali Mills describes her experience at Columbia University's Hilltop in solely one word. She finally makes direct eye contact with me and says, "connection."

Ali is among some of Boston College's GlobeMed students that attended the Hilltop conference, which is a conference that the GlobeMed chapter at Columbia [University] does every year inviting regional GlobeMed chapters from other schools to discuss humanitarian aid and other relevant contemporary issues in Global Health. This year focused on health in Post-Conflict settings, particularly applicable during the current refugee crisis.

At Hilltop, many different types of speakers come to discuss global health concerns and the kinds of research they are doing with GlobeMed chapters from universities from as close as Manhattan to as far as North Carolina. Ali's favorite was Dr. Veronica Ades, an OB-GYN who worked for

Doctors without Borders in South Sudan, Ghana, and Uganda. "She spent a few years doing that and working with women who don't have access to healthcare, [delivering] babies in situations where sometimes she wouldn't have electricity or sanitary equipment, and sometimes she would be the only doctor there." Ali's passion for Veronica Ades' work with refugee populations who suffer from situations of violence was evident in her tone: convicted, continuous, determined and persistent. Equally impressive were other speakers who were professors in public health from Columbia University, NYU, and the Mailman School of Public Health. Dr. Jack Saul, a professor at Columbia, explored the role of mental health following trauma and the role that community based mental health counseling can play in recovery. He noted the importance of community resilience and collaboration to protect against fragmentation of the community. Dr. Sally Guttmacher, an NYU professor, discussed her work with migrants, and the barriers in place that often impede their health and success and propagate the stigma against them. With a focus on child health, Dr. Cassie Landers of UNICEF discussed programs she has helped implement in war-torn areas, notably programs like a "school in a box". These seemingly simple interventions help to create safe spaces for children and reduce the "toxic stress" they experience, which often can seriously impede their success later in life. The keynote speaker, Dr. Rachel T. Moresky investigated how best to implement Emergency Medicine systems in understaffed and underfunded hospitals, and has worked with many international partners to strengthen health care at all levels of the system. (Cont'd page 3)

Additionally, Ali spoke about how the alumni panels, featuring recently graduated GlobeMed alumni, offered the audience an insight into what their post-graduate plans might involve, including those who went on to attend medical school, complete Fulbright Scholarships, obtain a Masters in Public Health, and volunteer with the Global Health Corps. She said it was interesting to see how a foundation in GlobeMed could inspire such diverse career paths all based in the same belief in social justice. I asked her how she would apply the learning experience she gained from Hilltop to both GlobeMed and her future career in medicine. Naturally, she replied that sometimes she would lose sight of what she was studying so assiduously for; chemistry, biology, physics ... they're all quantitative and qualitative conceptualizations of the way the body and the world works. Ali emphasized that sometimes you get so caught up in learning the fundamentals that you "lose sight of what the end goal is." Hilltop, she claims, was a physical reminder of the life she wants as a doctor and the change she wants to effect as a researcher and advocate of humanitarian rights.

For students like Ali, they like to see the whole rather than the individualistic perspective marred by close-mindedness. The connection she refers to is the connection of communities worldwide – to join together and fix the things we take for granted; to come together and effect a change so big that it will end suffering, injustice, and invisible partitions that divide us where no boundaries should be made. So, yes, there's no doubt that this generation is *the* generation that can make it to the top of the hill and make a mountain to move. The hard part? Getting there. After all, "We're 20-22 year-olds," Ali says as she laughs. "We're idealistic."

By: Megi Maci '20

"He noted the importance of community resilience and collaboration to protect against fragmentation of the community."

## What's Coming Up This Semester

This semester, GlobeMed has planned a whole new agenda of ways to learn about and support the cause of addressing health disparities worldwide. To start off, the United Nations' World Day of Social Justice is on Monday, February 20th, and GlobeMed will have a booth set up on campus to advocate for social justice and global health. This day is all about promoting equal opportunities and human rights, which tie in closely with GlobeMed's mission to work toward global health equity. In April, we will be sponsoring an event in collaboration with BC's charity: water and WeRunBC to bring Dave Spandorfer, the co-founder of Janji, to speak to us about his company. Janji is a running apparel brand that donates 10% of its profits to help fund clean water projects. This season, Janji has partnered with Evidence Action to support clean water initiatives in Kenya, similar to how GlobeMed has partnered with Cord Siruvani in Tamil Nadu, India. Following Janji's steps in fundraising through clothing sale, we will be selling Marathon Monday apparel soon as well to spread some BC spirit! Follow us on social media for more information on all of the exciting events we have coming up this semester: Facebook- @GlobeMed at Boston College, Integra- @globemed\_bc

Written By: Leena Rijhwani '20

# Meet Our Co-Presidents

Isra Hussain ('17) *left*, is majoring in Psychology and Arabic Studies at Boston College while serving as co-president of the GlobeMed club as well as being involved in the international students assistant program. When she first joined the club as a sophomore, she was a general member and quickly became more involved which led to her being appointed the Director of the Communications Committee the following year. Hussain differentiates GlobeMed from any of the other global health organizations on campus by saying, "I wanted to join a social justice organization on campus, but one that steered clear of the service trip mentality" said Hussain. "Through travels to Pakistan throughout my life, I learned how problematic service trips and the white savior complex can be for developing communities... the partnership model really drew me in. The emphasis on partnerships, grassroots work, and empowerment have kept me so involved over the last few years." When asked her favorite part of working with the BC chapter, Hussain responded, "the diversity in thought and talent amongst the members of our club... Additionally, seeing our ideas turn into tangible change for CORD Siruvani over the years has been incredible." As for the future of the club, Hussain will be focusing on creating "a name for GlobeMed on campus" and distinguishing it from other global health clubs and bringing our complex discussions to the wider BC community. Ideally, these conversations would be followed by taking action through "educational events or political advocacy."

As Hussain graduates this spring she reflects on how GlobeMed has changed her perspective and life path; "GlobeMed has taught me about the strength in partnerships. Going forth, in whatever life path we take, it will be crucial to recognize the talents within every individual. Understanding this and helping to promote silenced voices will be key to moving forward as a society." Hussain is hoping to find a job in policy research after graduation and feels particularly drawn to migration policy.

***"GlobeMed has taught me about the strength in partnerships. Going forth, in whatever life path we take, it will be crucial to recognize the talents within every individual."***

Ayanna Griffith ('17) *right*, majoring in Political Science and double minoring in Biology and International Studies, is involved with both GlobeMed and the Global Citizens club. Griffith joined as a general member her sophomore year and went on to become the GROW Coordinator the next year. As a member of the GROW team, she organized the annual trip to India to visit our partner organization CORD



Siruvani. Now as a senior and Co-President of GlobeMed, Griffith recalls her introduction to the club saying, "I heard GlobeMed representatives talking about health in a way that I had never heard before."

This club looked at health through a political, social, and economic lens. This intrigued me, and has actually re-directed my future career plans more in the direction of public health and international development work." Griffith shares an important aspect of our weekly meetings and her favorite part about our chapter by saying, "Every week we have GHU's and this gives everyone in the organization a chance to discuss current issues. I love having the opportunity to discuss and think of topics from points of views that I would never have thought of by myself." For the rest of her senior year, Griffith looks forward to developing a "tangible impact" with our partner organization CORD Siruvani. As a chapter, our main goal is addressing the real needs of the community and having a positive impact wherever possible. Griffith would also like to inspire people here on campus to, "care more about social justice and become educated about these global issues so that they can eventually work to dismantle oppressive systems."

***"Griffith would also like to inspire people here on campus to, "care more about social justice and become educated about these global issues so that they can eventually work to dismantle oppressive systems."***

Following graduation, Griffith hopes to work with an organization focusing on sustainable global public health issues or go to England to get her Masters in Public Health. With graduation approaching Griffith acknowledges how her goals have changed as a result of GlobeMed. Initially Griffith believed her career path in the medial field was limited to being a doctor. She now says, "GlobeMed has opened my eyes to the injustices that plague communities worldwide. As a result, I would love to have a career working in global public health and international development so that I can work to end these injustices."

Written By: Grace Harrington '19

## On Business & Healthcare: David Barash

In the fall semester, GlobeMed at Boston College teamed up with the Carroll School of Management Honors Program to bring Dr. David Barash, MD, to campus as part of the new "Business & Series" of speakers. A Cornell-educated emergency physician, Dr. Barash is the Executive Director of the Global Health Portfolio and the Chief Medical Officer of the GE Foundation. In his conversation with representatives from both GlobeMed and CSOM Honors, Dr. Barash shared the story of his career development, full of pivots that lead him to his current roles in both medical practice and global health advocacy.

Dr. Barash spoke to both the business aspects and the advocacy aspects of organizations benefitting global health such as the GE Foundation. He outlined the process of identifying need and developing solutions that are so central in his industry. While the GE Foundation has made great strides in improving public health worldwide, Dr. Barash acknowledged the fact that there is still much to be done, such as improving costs and access to technology through education in the areas of the world that his organization often serves. The event was a great success and a wonderful opportunity for students from a wide range of interests and backgrounds to learn more about the importance of corporate citizenship and the wide-ranging impacts of philanthropy in global health.

Written By: Brian Eagan, '18

## Meet Our Partner- CORD Siruvani

Our grassroots approach to learning about global health care and affecting real change would not be possible without our partner: Chinmaya Organization for Rural Development—CORD—Siruvani. CORD was founded by Swami Chinmayananda under the mission to selflessly serve society, and CORD Siruvani is located in Thennamanallur in the Coimbatore District in southwestern India. CORD covers over 700 villages, and their clinics treat 14,000 people annually. To create lasting and integrated development in rural India, CORD focuses their efforts on things such as empowering those in rural communities, emphasizing social justice and education, creating rehabilitation centers and providing community healthcare. These sustainable objectives really complement and expand upon the comprehensive understanding we strive for in GlobeMed. The worldwide head of Chinmaya Mission, Swami Tejomayanda, said, "CORD is a bond of love and understanding, encouraging a process of sharing which enriches both the giver and the receiver," and our GlobeMed chapter has been able to experience this statement through our partnership.

Written By: Mackenzie Hulme '19

