Shoulder to Shoulder Global (STSG) Welcomes New Program Coordinator

STSG Program Coordinator Craig Borie

Shoulder to Shoulder Global welcomes Craig Borie as the new Program Coordinator based out of the University of Kentucky’s College of Public Health. Craig served with the Peace Corps in Nicaragua before becoming a Senior International Contracts Manager at Sun Microsystems. After taking an extended educational trip through the Middle East and Africa, he returned to learn the Toyota Production System at Toyota Motor Manufacturing in Georgetown, Kentucky. Missing the challenges and rewards from working with the international community, Craig made a move to the university setting, helping to implement a successful international scholars program between Georgetown University and Kentucky State University before joining the Shoulder to Shoulder Global team. Welcome, Craig!

Physical Therapy Students Flex Community Research Muscles

By Lynn English, PT, MSEd, DPT

University of Kentucky physical therapists (PT) and students in the UK PT program have been participating in the Shoulder to Shoulder medical service trips since May 2008. Lynn English, PT, MSEd, DPT, Associate Professor and Director of Clinical Education in the Physical Therapy Division, College of Health Sciences is the coordinator of this effort. In 2010 Professor English initiated a qualitative research project that is ongoing.

The purpose of the project is to study the impact of our physical therapy efforts on the communities in which the services are being provided from the perspectives of the local clinic staff and patients served during these intermittent service trips. Professor English traveled to Santo Domingo in December of 2010 to conduct semi-structured inter-

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Notes from Centro Médico Hombro a Hombro
Receiving Much More than Ever Expected
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PT teaching mother of a young man with cerebral palsy
Centro Médico Hombro a Hombro (CMHH) provides medical care, prevention services, mental health, oral health, and school-based services in the community. The CMHH also serves as the clinic site for the University of Kentucky led health brigades. The staff at CMHH is working arduously day by day and this wouldn’t be possible without the valuable help that everyone brings to support the program. We currently attend to and educate approximately 10,000 patients each year.

Dr. Cristián Carrión is currently training four new volunteer community health education workers while Peace Corps Volunteer Ronald Ikechi-Ogbonna is assisting with a clean water project. We’re also currently in the process of working on some much needed repairs for the medical center’s floor and a project to improve the waiting area structure.

As a recent graduate from Transylvania University, I was eager to have the opportunity to learn outside of the classroom, and put my skills as a Spanish major to the test. Shoulder to Shoulder Global allowed me this opportunity, but what I received in return was much more than I could have ever expected. About 50 volunteers from the U.S. and several more from the Ecuadorian community donated their time and talents for the first two weeks of August. Quito marked the beginning of our excursion. After familiarizing ourselves with the capital city, we headed to Santo Domingo for a few brigade days in the main Hombro a Hombro Clinic, as well as cultural events with the Tsáchila community. We learned that the Tsáchila men in the community wear a traditional horizontally striped blue/black and white skirt, representing the black and white snake living among them. The women don a multistriped skirt.
representing the rainbow. The Spaniards called them “Colorado,” meaning colored red, since they used to color their entire body in the red juices of the achiote seed, to prevent against smallpox. Today, they continue the tradition by dying their hair red and allowing adventurous visitors to do the same. They also paint stripes on their bodies with a black fruit, which remains on the skin for several days. Most of us left the community with matching painted bracelets. Between rejected credit cards, temporarily absent luggage, cramped shared-room living, and haggling with cab drivers and in markets, our group instantly bonded and formed a family within our home away from home. We quickly learned of each other’s abilities and filed into our appropriate roles. The Ecuadorian patients were thrilled to learn that the “American doctors” were coming to see them, and they lined up by the hundreds, anxiously awaiting our arrival. Although we were limited in number and supplies, we were able to make a substantial difference in their lives. Several patients received wheelchairs, braces and equipment to improve upon and aide their physical disabilities. Most children received parasite medicine and multivitamins. Several patients with irritated eyes received drops that instantly relieved their symptoms. Pregnant women benefited from prenatal care, and those with anemia received iron supplements. Most every patient was aided from the medical supplies we had received from the U.S. Although these people had next to nothing in terms of personal belongings, they eagerly welcomed us into their community and homes. We joined them for cultural activities and meals. Several invited us into their homes, which consisted of one modest room with a few beds and a stove. However dire their circumstances were, I saw a great deal of compassion and felt that the brigades’ efforts were much appreciated. A lady from one of the communities came to us looking for a solution for the tumor that was taking over her entire neck. We did not have the appropriate equipment to take care of her, so we raised enough money to send her to a hospital that could. It is no wonder why our Shoulder to Shoulder Global volunteers make this brigade an annual occurrence. The relationships we are able to form with the patients and staff at the clinics are strong, even familial. As my first experience abroad, the bar for further brigades has been set extremely high. I cannot wait for my next opportunity to serve and learn from other communities abroad, and am extremely thankful for the opportunity I received through the University of Kentucky. I am positive that this program will continue with its successful brigades in the future, and look forward to the opportunity to participate and hear about the wonderful service these volunteers will render.
Shoulder to Shoulder Global (STSG) Stands Out

By Lee Richardson

Around a year ago, I was looking for a summer internship. I hoped to improve my Spanish and visit a South American country. While investigating abroad opportunities, I also looked for organizations that offered clinical experiences in health care settings. Internet searches yielded hundreds of volunteer-seeking organizations, many of which offered "life-changing" experiences in foreign lands. After a week of queries and conversations with on-campus resources, I began to feel overwhelmed. Muddled in the myriad of organizations doing great international work, I stumbled across one based not more than a mile from my Transylvania home.

Shoulder to Shoulder Global (STSG) stands out as a quality organization for a number of reasons.

Lee with school children outside the CMHH

The physical location of the clinic STSG supports is vital to the mission of this organization. Placed right in the heart of one of the most marginalized neighborhoods in the burgeoning city of Santo Domingo, the medical center addresses the needs of the local community in a quality yet affordable manner. As a six-week medical intern, I was tasked with a number of jobs, ranging from investigating chronic illnesses for a study conducted by a Peace Corps volunteer to conversing with incoming patients to garner a better understanding of their medical history. There was never a dull moment at the Centro Medico Hombro a Hombro (CMHH).

During my time in Ecuador, what stood out to me the most were the people that worked day after day at the clinic. As I shadowed Dr. Cristián, recorded health statistics in the nurse's ward, and spent time visiting elderly in the community, I couldn't help but notice the genuine concern each caregiver had for their patients. These people truly cared, and their patients took notice. A number of conversations with the locals revealed their gratitude and respect for the workers of the CMHH. Although certainly diverse in their approaches, the distinct skills and methods employed by the team at CMHH coalesced into an impressively positive impact on the local community. I will always cherish the lessons I learned from these individuals as I continue to travel and volunteer both domestically and abroad.

Upcoming STSG Events:

November 3rd – STSG First Informational Meeting – University of Kentucky
6:00pm, Room #201 College of Nursing
Everyone welcome!

November 13th – STSG participates in Alternative Gift Fair
– First Presbyterian Church 174 North Market Street, Lexington KY

November 17th - STSG Student Association Meeting – University of Kentucky
5:00pm, Auditorium of the William T. Young Library

December 21st – Deadline for STSG Summer 2012 Brigade Applications

Clinic workers Mercedes and Paul outside with Lee
Shoulder to Shoulder Global Student Association (STSG SA) up and running

Mary Collins, President STSG SA

The Shoulder to Shoulder Global Student Association (STSG SA) is up and running, literally. The group is planning a fundraising 5k run in the spring. In the mean time, the group has raised money through the sale of Ecuadorian handicraft items at the, “Music for Mission” event at First Presbyterian Church on September 16th, volunteered at the Ronald McDonald House, will be participating in the Alternative Gift Fair on November 13th at the First Presbyterian Church, and wrapping gifts with the, “Amazon Gift Wrap” program.

The Student Association’s third meeting of the fall semester will be on November 17th in the William T. Young Library at 5:00pm. Students will be preparing for the upcoming 5k run fundraiser.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact Mary Collins, President of STSG SA, at mc0226@uky.edu.

Shoulder to Shoulder Global Updates:

By Claudia Hopenhayn, Co-Director STSG

On September 16, the First Presbyterian Church in Lexington held a fantastic concert by International Concert Organist Felix Hell. The event was free, but donations were encouraged, and all proceeds went to Shoulder Global, to improve access to clean water in the communities we serve in Ecuador. The $2,419 raised will be used shortly to assess the usefulness of providing Potters for Peace water filters, starting with a feasibility project in two of the neighborhoods surrounding the Centro Médico Hombro a Hombro.

Funds raised earlier this year by the UK Shoulder to Shoulder Global Student Association and the IFMSA (medical student association) will be used to replace the floor at the Centro Médico, a much needed improvement.

Part of the funds donated by a generous, anonymous donor will be used to build an exterior waiting room at the Centro Médico, which will greatly improve the flow and the capacity of the clinic. Salvador Prado, an Ecuadorian architect and former graduate student from the UK College of Design, who was under the direction of Professor Tony Roccanova, will design and direct the work. Since Salvador is now a professor of architecture at Ecuador’s Universidad Central, this project will provide an educational opportunity for his students, and also expand opportunities for collaboration between UK and Ecuadorian Universities.
Donors

We would also like to say thank you to all our donors… Shoulder to Shoulder Global could not function without your dedication and support.

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Shoulder to Shoulder is a non-profit organization operating under the University of Kentucky and all donations are tax-deductible.

A very real and sincere thank you for your support!

For more information about how you can support STSG, please contact Craig Borie at craig.borie@uky.edu