

EVAN BLANK

Q: Describe your experience and involvement in GlobeMed.

A: Around 2007, I was searching for a way on my undergrad campus to engage with global health in a meaningful and thoughtful way, and there was really nothing like it at the time. I kind of happened across GlobeMed's website and saw Peter Luckow's name on the PIH intern's website. At that time, GlobeMed was a pretty fragmented organization that was trying to find its bearings, and I applied to start a chapter. That's how I met Victor Roy and some of the original crew that started GlobeMed. So I served as a Co-Founder for the GlobeMed chapter at WashU. Back then, we went out to find our own partner, so I went to Uganda for two months to find our community partner, Ayuda. That was a pretty transformative experience. Between undergrad and medical school, I worked as a Partner Search Fellow traveling around South East Asia for four months recruiting around 15 new partners for the chapters that were starting up. It was a really exciting time and a pretty amazing experience.

Q: What are some of the main takeaways or lessons you learned from GlobeMed?

A: So much of GlobeMed is about community. As an undergrad on a college campus you have interests and you have ideals, but being able to turn what you want in the world into action - particularly in the field of global health - is something that nobody can do alone. Finding that community on an undergrad campus was so amazing. I still remember all the interesting discussions we had back then, and they continue to go on. So it's really about learning from one another, and connecting with grassroots partners in long-term, meaningful ways.



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The second part of it is building a life-long community. A lot of my friends from the initial phases of GlobeMed are still some of my closest friends today, and they are doing amazing and interesting and different things. So you need to have that community as you find your way and find out what you want to do - to pursue your individual interests, but still work together to pursue global health equity and social justice.

Q: What are you doing now?

A: I'm an intern, a first year resident in internal medicine at Mount Sinai. Initially when everyone thinks of health they think of medicine, but I think as the GlobeMed network expanded we found more and more disciplines that could contribute to global health equity, with medicine being one component. But my passion has always been clinical medicine, and incorporating that with global health and social justice. In medical school it's mostly digesting facts and learning how to understand the human body. I think having that GlobeMed community outside of medicine has been so helpful in grounding me in the ideas of global health and social justice.

Q: Did your time in GlobeMed prepare you for your current career/goals? How?

A: More and more of medicine is a team-based enterprise. So working in a team is essential, which is on the base-level of GlobeMed. But also having an idealist community where you push for your convictions and make a stand for them is a really important thing to have in your background. A lot of times it comes down to advocating for a single patient, and having that background makes you realize you don't have to put up with the status quo, but in small and practical ways you can try to bend and shape it. GlobeMed also allowed me to think outside the box of clinical medicine and understand where people are coming from, and how and why they get sick.

Q: What role do you think GlobeMed alumni have or will have in global health in the future?

A: I think we're already starting to see it in really interesting ways. People are working at all types of interesting organizations. All my friends from GlobeMed are doing really interesting things, and I know they will continue to and will collaborate in the future. But having that idealistic background and grounding is so important when there are other factors to push in on the decisions that you make. From a clinical medicine standpoint, I know the people that have gone into medicine from GlobeMed are going to be richer and more compassionate doctors for it. In all instances I think there's a huge role to play for GlobeMed alumni.

Q: Anything else?

A: I think all of the alumni are excited to interact with the current students and people that are graduating. I would just encourage anyone to reach out if people have similar interests or are trying to figure out what they want to do, because it's a continual process. Having mentorship and people to talk to is so crucial.