

# GERALD GUEVARRA

**Q: Describe your experience/involvement in GlobeMed.**

**A:** GlobeMed is something that I've been involved in since my sophomore year in college. I was involved in a number of different positions. My first was Campaign Chair for what was then a fundraiser called the global get-down that was held at our chapter at Loyola. And then after going on our GROW trip to Guatemala, I was on the board as Campaign Coordinator, and then GROW coordinator. Since then, I've been involved in a lot of different ways as far as advising to current students at the chapter level. I offer whatever insight I can about what I have learned over the years since our chapter has evolved.

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

**A:** Reflecting on my undergrad years, GlobeMed was a grounding force in my understanding of what social justice meant and how it related to the whole notion of global health. And I think it sparked a lot of curiosity about how I saw myself being involved with issues that really resonated with me. When we think about global health, there is the default mindset that it pertains exclusively to the health field or medical field. But I know that I define global health more broadly, and that global health can be a part of a lot of different fields or focuses. GlobeMed also helped me cultivate myself as a male ally to combat gender based violence, which is something that I hold to practice even now in my current work.

**Q: What are you doing now?**

**A:** I currently work as a Youth Program Advocate at Mujeres Latinas en Accion, which is a community based organization based in Pilsen, Chicago. My work entails a lot of different



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areas. For one, my department is connecting the youth department to the overall work that Mujeres does in the community. The main focus of Mujeres is addressing and providing resources to the Latino community and addressing violence against women. But that has a lot of layers for me, and can also be an area of youth development. You can understand our work as a community-based organization on two fronts. The first is in the area of intervention, particularly in the example of a crisis situation such as sexual assault or domestic violence that needs immediate attention. And then there is the preventative approach of our work, which is my main realm in educating youth to really prevent those cases from ever occurring. Even the whole notion of violence is something that can be defined broadly – it's not only physical, it's also mental and emotional. And that's where my role as a youth advocate is really intertwined with things happening in the community of Pilsen.

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

**A:** My experience with GlobeMed helped flourish my love and passion for Latin America. My first real, meaningful experiences abroad just happened to be in Latin America, the first in Guatemala which was my first GROW trip, and then secondly in Ecuador. So that sparked me to dive in and explore the connections among people. GlobeMed's whole idea of partnership and human empathy really resonated with me. That is the first step in wanting to make meaningful change, but how do you take that to the next level? You can have all the best intentions to do good things, but not to act on it is when you're missing out on the real change. So GlobeMed helped me to take theories and ideas, which are so often kept in the university just as conversation, and place them in the real world. In my current work with Mujeres, it's really acting on the values that I developed in GlobeMed.

**Q: How has your experience in GlobeMed shaped you as a leader?**

**A:** In many ways, GlobeMed was a platform to feel empowered. When you first join, you get rallied up about the injustices in the world. Good, meaningful people know that there is something wrong - from seeing inequalities, to reading about them, to discussing globalhealthU curriculums and having conversations. GlobeMed really gave me the tools to think critically about an issue, and then taught me how to go about creating change in a tangible way.

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

**A:** The potential for GlobeMed alum to really make drastic and impactful change is building momentum as everyone understands how versatile the notion of global health can be. It is really about us evolving and becoming transcendent to spaces of more influence that impact people lives. Being rooted in the principals that really guide GlobeMed comes out in fruitful ways through policy and education. For me, it's exciting to think that I am educating the next generation of students in the work that I do. In one small way or another, I think of myself as an alum creating ripples in the water. I think the possibilities are endless, and I think that's an exciting thought. Everyone affiliated with GlobeMed in some way or another gets to witness how that comes to fruition is really cool.