

Surgery Residents Involved in Global Health



Frederick Thurston Drake, MD

What are your Professional Goals? I want to have a clinical and academic career in the United States that is balanced by a long-term relationship with a developing world site where I hope to be involved in clinical service, resident and student education (ideally, both local trainees and visiting American residents from my home institution), research, public policy involvement, and writing for both the academic and lay reader.

I am currently obtaining a MPH in the Department of Global Health at the University of Washington and plan to spend approximately 6 months of the next academic year in Kenya. I will be conducting research on breast cancer (MPH thesis) and assisting with development of the new UW resident rotation site at a district hospital in Naivasha, Kenya (MPH practicum). This is part of the University of Nairobi's PRIME-K Medical Education Programme Initiative and a collaborative venture with the University of Washington.

How is the Department of Surgery Helping You Reach These Goals? The Department of Surgery has been instrumental in providing support and mentorship in these undertakings. Dr. Charles Mock serves as my thesis committee chair and MPH advisor. Dr. David Flum (my T32 Fellowship mentor) and Dr. Ben Anderson have been guiding development of my research project. Drs. Pellegrini and Horvath have fostered a culture in which global health is a valued academic and clinical interest.



Andre Ilbawi, MD

What Are Your Professional Goals? My wife and I are planning to relocate abroad and commit ourselves to a community in a low-income country. Once we understand the goals and needs of the community, the emphasis of our work will likely be on helping develop local health capacity with particular attention to training surgical residents and non-physician practitioners. I hope to establish outreach clinics, referral practices and centers of excellence to improve cancer and pre-hospital trauma care.

My current global health research projects center on improving access to surgical services in low-income countries by promoting equitable health policies, advocating for cancer care and changed perceptions of surgery as a public health intervention. I also spent vacation time rotating at a hospital in East Africa with which I still remain in touch.

How Has The Department of Surgery Helped You Reach These Goals? The Department of Surgery has provided support in every regard. I have received support with my research and submission of manuscripts and I have received funding for conferences and lectures. Most critically, I have received mentorship that has shaped my professional and personal decisions regarding a career in global surgery.



Elina Quiroga, MD

What Are Your Professional Goals? My long-term career goal is to improve global health care through improvements in surgical education, training and research in low-income countries. I hope to accomplish this through developing a model that documents and evaluates approaches that are relevant to local problems and needs, and is appropriate to the economic, technical and human resource capacity present. Currently I am working on my Global Health MPH as well as participating as a steering committee member of the "Residents & Fellows in Global Health" (<http://rfguhw.wordpress.com/>) group and its "GHET-IT" curriculum.

My global health experience to date has included performing a simulator-based series of training rounds in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, using a simple webcam, a cheap laptop, a flashlight, a box, and some instruments. Residents were able to experience first-hand techniques of laparoscopic surgery and acquire basic surgical skills, such as knot tying, suturing and instrument handling.

How Has The Department of Surgery Helped Your Reach These Goals? I have the full support of the Division of Vascular Surgery in completing my MPH and making low-income surgery education the main theme of my research agenda. The support of the UW at large with its impressive network and projects in global health, makes these efforts much easier.



Lacey LaGrone, MD

What Are Your Professional Goals? My goal in global health is to participate in clinical education and policy development. I am particularly interested in educating non-physician practitioners to perform advanced trauma life support and basic

general surgery procedures by collaborating with physicians from Surgeons Overseas (SOS). I recently completed a paper on ultrasound training opportunities in low-middle income countries which has been accepted for publication.

How Has The Department of Surgery Helped You Reach These Goals? The Surgery Department has several excellent mentors who have helped me form my plans for future research and who provide supervision and possible collaboration in future research projects. I have also found my fellow residents to be excellent resources for advice and contacts. They have already facilitated fruitful research partnerships.



Meera Kotagal, MD

What Are Your Professional Goals? I want to integrate a career in pediatric surgery and global health. I would like to have a pediatric surgical practice in the US and a longitudinal relationship with a site in a resource-poor setting abroad where I can

focus on infrastructure development, development of surgical services and training of local capacity.

I am preparing to begin my research time in July (2012) and look forward to focusing on questions related to the development of surgical capacity in resource-poor settings. This will be as part of the UW Global Health in Academic Surgery Fellowship track. I will be pursuing my MPH and then anticipate spending 6-8 months of my second year of research time abroad. I am looking to spend time in either Haiti or Rwanda through Partners In Health (PIH) I previously spent a year in Rwanda working for PIH when I was in medical school. My work in the Global Health Track and abroad, as well as additional pediatric surgical outcomes research here in the US, will be supported by the T-32 Post-Doctoral Training Grant through SORCE.

How Has The Department of Surgery Helped You Reach Your Goals? The Department of Surgery at the UW has helped me tremendously as I pursue my goals of an integrated career, most specifically by being supportive of those goals and recognizing them as a legitimate career choice. The mentorship available through the Global Health track will prove invaluable over the two years as I work to develop a specific academic focus within the field of global surgery. Rather than solely applying the lessons we learn here in an internal context, the department's emphasis on global surgery allows residents to work with each other and with dedicated faculty, to pursue training specific to our interests abroad.



Lara Oyetunji, MD

I was born in Ibadan, Nigeria and came to the United States at the age of 17 to pursue my higher education. I am a PGY4 surgical resident and currently doing a two year surgical oncology research fellowship at the Surgery Branch

of the National Cancer Institute at the National Institutes of Health. My current research interests are in tumor immunology and gene therapy primarily in gastrointestinal cancers.

At the end of my research fellowship and completion of surgery residency, I plan to pursue a clinical surgical oncology fellowship as well as obtain a Master's in Public Health degree. The field of surgery and its role in oncology prevention and treatment has been long neglected in the realm of global health and my long-term interests are in academic surgical oncology with plans to engage in research collaborations in low and middle income countries with a primary focus on sub-Saharan Africa.