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Fall 2018, UNH Students Bring Hope to Togo for a Second Summer

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UNH Global

UNH Students Bring Hope to Togo for a Second Summer

Monday, October 22, 2018



(l. to r.) Hannah Morin-Roy, Marisa Scampoli and Jordan Lavallee with Global Partners in Hope in Togo

In the small west African country of Togo children have a 52% chance of dying before the age of five according to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). Lack of proper medical care, access to clean water and nutritious foods are a challenge for most of the rural poor in Togo, a country of about 7.6 million people. It is against this stark backdrop that Global Partners in Hope (GPIH), a Nebraska based social enterprise, is working to build

lasting solutions to multiple problems the people of Togo face. CEO Ian Vickers explains: “We collaboratively develop international communities through a sequential, holistic, and sustainable process. Water is the beginning of making positive, lasting change to impoverished communities. After water, Global Partners in Hope continues working to provide medical centers, sustainable energy and education/ leadership training.”

GPIH is a UNH partner through the Center for Social Innovation & Enterprise’s Social Sector Franchising Initiative, a program funded by both the Peter T. Paul Innovation Fund at Paul College and UNH’s Collaborative Research Excellence (CoRE) Initiative. This past June, three University of New Hampshire honors Nursing undergraduates had the unique opportunity to travel to Togo and volunteer with GPIH as part of an international medical mission to provide care to hundreds of

children and adults this past June. Hannah Morin-Roy, Student Nursing Organization president, was joined by Marisa Scampoli and Jordan Lavallee on the two-week visit which was funded primarily by the UNH Emeriti Council Student International Service Initiative (EC-SISI) Grant. Morin-Roy described the Togo mission as “life changing,” explaining that “my heart has never felt so full until now. Being able to not only provide medical care to the people of Togo, but to connect with them and learn their lifestyle was eye opening and humbling.”

When the trio visited a large orphanage in the capital city Lomé they were able to treat hundreds of children and babies, including a child who had been brought to the orphanage just days before. Morin-Roy explained “She was so sweet and latched on to all of us. She quietly followed us around and was so excited to have us visit”.



Hannah Morin-Roy (r.) performing an assessment at a rural clinic in Agbelouve, Togo

The organization is building a Center of Excellence Hospital in the rural community of Agbelouve, which is about sixty kilometers outside the capital. Right now a large capacity well and a small clinic have been established. In the future a larger clinic will be built which will be connected through a spoke system to several smaller clinics within the region.



Marisa Scampoli with a young child triaged at a clinic in the village of Agbelouve

For UNH Nursing student Marisa Scampoli, the trip to Togo “was a once in a lifetime opportunity which exceeded all my expectations. I loved the scenery, culture, food and most of all the people. I am grateful for the humbling and rewarding experience, which only solidified my passion for nursing. I hope to go back someday.”

The master plan for the medical services that will eventually be created include several smaller clinics a day’s walk in several directions from the main hospital complex. In this way the entire region around Agbelouve will have access to high quality medical services. The annual clinics offered by GPIH and supported by medical teams from

universities including the University of Nebraska and UNH help to acclimate the rural communities to regular, preventative medical care, which was not available before this GPIH/ Government of Togo initiative.

The third nursing student Jordan Lavallee described the clinic where over 400 children were treated as challenging in multiple ways. “Not only were our nursing skills put to the test, but also our creativity, communication, and cultural awareness. Being able to make an impact on so many families was one of the best feelings in the world, and if I had the chance to, I would go back in a heartbeat.”



Jordan Lavallee performing assessment on a young child at clinic in Agbelouve

This is the second year that UNH, through the Center for Social Innovation & Enterprise’s Social Sector Franchise Initiative, has partnered with GPIH with the support of the EC-SISI grant. The students’ advisor Bill Maddocks of the Carsey School of Public Policy and the Center for Social Innovation and Enterprise (CSIE) says that “support for large scale health initiatives which put UNH students on the ground in challenging developing world circumstances is one of the best examples of engaged learning that makes a concrete impact in the lives of everyone involved”.

The nursing student team made this short video about their June experiences in Togo (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eOP4vTvL8SU&list=PLNrM_wYXzvY-R1ZQHhJtctjdW4dkooXzm).

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