

GELH Application Submitted: 2/6/2013 6:46:24 PM

Applicant Name : Miolene, Elissa

Class: Sophomore

Expected Graduation: Spring 2015

Individual or group: Group

Co-applicant name: Morrow, Alyssa

Co-Applicant Class: Sophomore

Co-Applicant Graduation Date: Summer 2015

ABSTRACT The purpose of our activity is to learn firsthand about children's health and healthcare in the underdeveloped country of Ghana. By working with the Health and Wellness Center of Heritage Academy, we will learn more about their health conditions through daily interaction with the children and the environment to formulate an understanding of what can be done to improve the general health of children in the area. Our activity would firstly include computerizing data collected on the patients and following up on the children through home visits to gain familiarity with their living conditions. We would also create a basic health and hygiene manual, which the Heritage Academy teachers would use as a guide for their health education program. Lastly, we would launch a mentoring program to empower girls by providing a support system to ensure they are aware of the huge impact education has on their health. We hope this multi-faceted approach will improve the overall health of the children at the Health and Wellness Center. In performing all of these activities, we will learn about the specific health problems that children in Ghana face as well as which methods are effective in changing their circumstances.

PROPOSAL We would like to use the Grant for Experiential Learning in Health to volunteer this summer at the Health and Wellness Center of Heritage Academy in Ghana. There will be several components to our work there, all of which will allow us to learn more about the health problems that children in Ghana face and the ways in which different aspects of the healthcare system are implemented to treat and prevent these problems. One job we would have is helping to computerize the data collected on the children who come for help; for example, their height, weight and in some cases their results on eye exams. We would also follow up with the children after they leave the center, and through visiting their homes we would be able to see what their families and home lives are like, including the environment they surround themselves in and their resulting standard of living. We could then use what we learn to interpret general trends in their health and wellness. Another main component of our time spent in Ghana would be to create a health education manual that the teachers at the Heritage Academy could use as a guide to teach the students about general health and hygiene. The manual would include information regarding the necessary ways to maintain and improve basic health, and we could expand

the manual to include certain aspects of health we deem significant as we become more familiar with the conditions and prevalent health trends in Ghana.

As an underlying theme of our activity, we want to focus on spreading general knowledge about basic health care, which we hope would greatly improve the lives of children at the Heritage Academy. We have learned through our course studies that education about the most basic preventative health measures is vital. For example, according to the WHO, 1.8 million people die every year from diarrheal diseases, but improved general sanitation reduces diarrhea morbidity by 37.5%. To try to reduce the spread of communicable diseases through improving sanitation, we could implement a program to emphasize the importance of having individual water bottles for the students at Heritage Academy. Overall, improving students' knowledge of good hygiene practices can greatly reduce the risk for various health problems, and we will learn firsthand how this can happen.

Another central focus of our activity is to teach the female students about women empowerment. As we are both women, we feel that we could make a positive difference in the lives of girls by explaining all the opportunities they could have if they continue with their education. Because female empowerment leads to healthier women and in turn fewer, healthier children, we believe setting up a type of mentoring program in either small groups or one-on-one settings would help girls to realize their full potential. We want to create a support system that aims to help girls individually, serving as role models and helping them with any problems they may face. In general, increased knowledge and education leads to greater empowerment and better health, and we will be able to see how they respond to our help.

In conclusion, we hope to spread information not only through our manual, but also by stressing the importance of clean water, clean hands and general improvements in hygiene. We want to educate the children so they know that good health begins with basic cleanliness, and we will also spend some time reading to them in the school because education is a factor of good health. Additionally, we will learn about general health patterns by seeing why they come to the center in the first place, how they are treated, and how they respond to treatment. As previously stated, we will also support the empowerment of women through a mentoring program establishing personal and individual connections, thus creating a supportive environment for girls to establish themselves, which is proven to lead to better health. We will be able to personally witness the immediate effects of everything we do with the children in addition to everything the health center staff does, all of which will contribute to our knowledge about health and healthcare in a Third World country.

DELIVERABLE Throughout our stay in Ghana, we will reflect on our experiences in journal entries and document our trip with photographs. Upon returning home, we will compile these entries and photographs and create a blog-style website to present at the symposium. Thi

BUDGET REQUEST \$6,000

BUDGET DESCRIPTION The following components of our proposed budget represent the maximum totals for both group members.

Round-trip airfare to Accra, Ghana: \$3,800

Visas: \$120

Vaccinations and anti-malarial drugs: \$840

Food, water and accommodations: \$200 per week, \$800

Activity Start Date: 6/1/2013

Activity End Date: 6/29/2013

Location of Activity: The activity will take place at the Health and Wellness Center of the Heritage Academy, founded by the Shoerke Foundation. The school and health center are located in Essiam, in the Central Region of Ghana.

Mentor: Kwesi Koomson Executive Director
Shoerke Foundation
Shoerke Foundation
P.O. Box 214, Westtown PA 19395

Letter of support requested? Yes

Additional information for committee to consider:

Submitted to other funding sources? No

Will co-applicant receive stipend? No

Is IR approval required? No