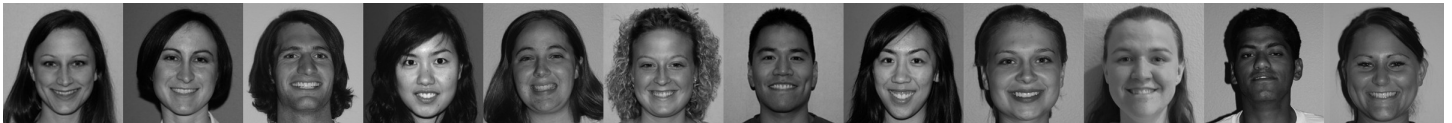


Changing Lives: Theirs and Ours

THE MEDICAL STRATEGIC NETWORK
WHOLE PERSON CARE PRECEPTORSHIP

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Did you know...

... the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations requires healthcare workers to offer spiritual care?

... research shows that patient spirituality can improve health?

... most patients want their healthcare provider to address their spiritual needs?

Preceptorship Goals

When patients enter a healthcare facility—whether that be a hospital, physician's office, or rehabilitation center—they enter as physical, emotional, and spiritual beings. However, it is common practice in healthcare to fragment individuals by examining only physical symptoms. Twenty-eight healthcare students from across the US and the world joined together for a month-long Whole Person Care Preceptorship with the shared vision of treating patients as whole people by integrating spiritual care into their future medical careers. These students' eyes were opened to the reality that the healthcare system is a tremendous mission field. Patients are to be loved as God's precious children and healthcare workers' have a responsibility to inquire about and address spiritual needs. Continued spiritual growth and dependence on the Lord allows ministry in healthcare to become an overflow of love for the Lord.

-Laura Menze

A Summer That Lasts A Lifetime

While the preceptorship has been an incredible opportunity to address spiritual needs of patients, the true hope of the program is that the skills developed in the four weeks will be extended and built upon for a lifetime. The preceptorship is designed to equip students to go wherever God leads them—schools, private hospitals, or foreign lands—and integrate whole person care. In essence, the summer experiences are intended to shape students' lives and to emphasize that patients' true needs are not solely physical illnesses but often spiritual concerns.

For four weeks, the students were privileged to learn the depth of spiritual needs and how they can be addressed. Significant time was spent accompanying Christian doctors who served as role models in coupling medical and spiritual healing. Each mentor had a unique setting and approach to sharing Christ's love, but sensitivity to the Holy Spirit and respect for patients' rights were fundamental in all circumstances.

In addition, the students were given time to apply what they were learning. Students had many opportunities to address the spiritual concerns of individual hospital patients. "The clinical experience really taught me how important spiritual care is," remarked one student after seeing a patient pray to receive Christ during the evening hospital practice time. He continued, saying, "The things learned in the preceptorship will help shape my entire career because I've seen how necessary whole person care really is for patients."

-Brian Schwab



Practicing Patient Care

Upon entering Loma Linda University Medical Center for the first time, the notion of administering spiritual care was daunting. The preceptorship broke through that fear. Through the preceptorship, we gained confidence in speaking with patients about spiritual matters, developed a vision for integrating spiritual care into practice, and expanded our view of how God uses healthcare in His ministry.

Spiritual care was modeled by seasoned Christian physicians whom we shadowed. These physicians represent various specialties including pediatric neurology, child psychiatry, gynecologic oncology, orthopedic surgery, internal medicine, and infectious disease. By watching physicians administer spiritual care to patients, we saw a glimpse of what our future practices might resemble.

We also spoke to hospital patients to obtain spiritual histories to gain insight into dealing with illness as a whole person. Spiritual care questions such as, “What has been your source of strength?” and “How has this illness affected the way you view yourself and God?” opened doors to deeper conversations.

We entered the hospital to touch patient’s lives, but little did we know how much the patients would touch our own lives. Some patients told us how their illness had drawn them closer to the Lord, others shared their testimonies and most desired prayer. We appreciated the opportunity to learn from patients. These experiences will certainly shape our futures. *-Laura Menze*



*Students outside Loma Linda University Medical Center:
Laura, Binu, Erin, Andrew, Valerie*

Growing Together

Have you ever shared your life story with people you have only known for a week? That is exactly how we began our small group experience: with a day of life-sharing dubbed “Soul-to-Soul.” Over the course of two days, the small group members shared personal stories of struggles and triumphs. After each person shared, the group encouraged and prayed for their brothers and sisters in Christ. This experience



Students enjoying free time together: Kristyn, Kristan, Amy, Liz, Teresa, Esther, Gabe, Ryan, Prince, Mike

established an immediate sense of intimacy and laid the foundation for lifelong friendships.

As a result of soul-to-soul, we felt more free to open up during our book study. We were able to challenge each other and to establish accountability, which will continue even after leaving the preceptorship. As nursing student Amy Birdsong stated, “Small groups were a key component of the preceptorship. They allowed me to be challenged and inspired by authentic women of God.”

Community was quickly fostered among the larger group of students and faculty as we all focused on a common vision. As a group, we learned, grew, and played together.

-Kristen Pagel



Small group members: Mike, Jon, Jasper, and Jeff

Gaining Global Vision

During the fourth of July weekend, we traveled to a small village outside of Ensenada, Mexico, along with several friends and family members. The aim of the trip was to develop a heart for the world and foreign medical missions. In order to gain a greater appreciation and respect for the people we would be serving, we sacrificed some of the modern conveniences we are accustomed to in the U.S., such as electricity, running water and paved roads. We lived on a ranch in the very type of homes which we would build.

On Saturday, we were divided into three different groups to serve the Mexican people. Two groups ran health clinics in a migrant camp and at a church. The other group built a loft house for a needy family.

Over 50 individuals received medical care through the health clinics for illnesses ranging from infections and headaches to colds and abdominal pains. These patients were given appropriate medications and vitamins that we supplied. Physical needs were not the only areas addressed—spiritual needs were also treated. By interacting with these individuals, we were able to utilize our formal training in medicine, pharmacy and Spanish. We saw that God can powerfully use whatever we have, even if we feel as though we have little to offer. We were also blessed by playing with the patients' children who enjoyed our love and attention. As Annie DeCaster stated,

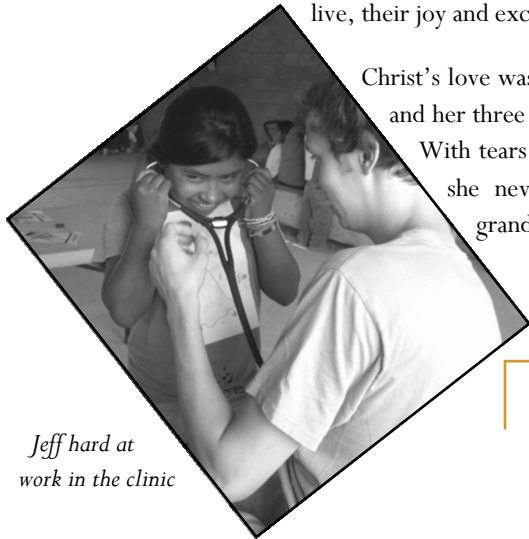
"I saw Christ in the smiling faces of each and every child that came into the clinic. Despite the desolate conditions in which they live, their joy and excitement for life never ceases. Their memory will forever be an inspiration to me."

Christ's love was also very present in the construction team, which built a loft house for a single mother and her three small children. At the end of the day, we dedicated the home and prayed for the family. With tears in her eyes, the mother stated that having a home had always been a dream of hers, but she never envisioned that this dream could come true. Addressing the METS team, the grandmother added, "Thank you for being the hands of God."

- Laura Menze



Loft house dedication



Jeff hard at work in the clinic

Psalm 103:2-3

Praise the Lord, O my soul;
and forget not all his benefits—
who forgives all your sins and
heals all your diseases...

By the Numbers

- 40 Hours each student spent administering whole person care in clinical settings
- 5 Disciplines represented (Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Occupational Therapy, Dietetics)
- 3.9 Largest earthquake experienced
- 20 Countries and States Represented (AL, CA, CT, FL, IL, IN, KY, LA, MI, MN, NE, NC, OK, OR, TN, TX, WA; Canada, India, Philippines)
- 65 Hours one student spent traveling to the preceptorship
- 2 Hours set aside for quiet time each day
- 112 Degrees Fahrenheit recorded on the hottest day of the preceptorship



Final Thoughts...

This truly will be the summer that lasts a lifetime. We learned so much: introductions to healthcare evangelism, bioethics, Christian worldview and Kingdom mentality. At the end of this amazing experience, here is what we are taking home:



Janice, Amy B., Amy K.

"The people who I have met will continue to shape who I am and the views I hold. I thank God that He has allowed me to come here."

-Prince Singh

"It's challenged me to love God more and to see people with the compassionate eyes of Christ; not only in the hospital setting but wherever we may be. God is so real and so good, and His heart is with His people."

-Esther Lee



*Gabe, Christina,
Janice, Andrew*

"I've never thought so deeply about naturalism, medical ethics, and evangelism."

-Teresa Tan

"The experience of visiting patients in the hospital has been priceless and it has helped me to see how to care for patients' spiritual needs."

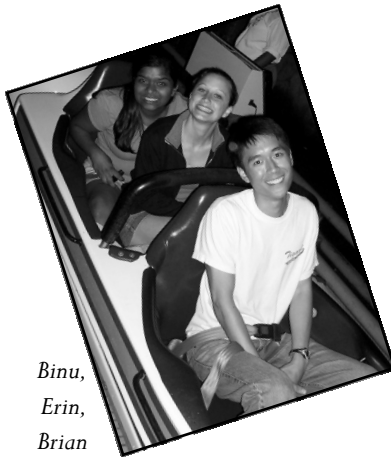
-Lane Olson

"I learned that it is possible to not compromise between your faith and your practice."

-Andrew Tran

"I've been so inspired by fellow healthcare students who are actively seeking Christ within the realm of medicine."

-Erin Morgan



*Binu,
Erin,
Brian*

"The METS preceptorship has allowed the truth of the Gospel to transform my daily life and has reinforced my Christian worldview."

-Gabe Hodges



Emily, Kristen

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