Global Health Day 2008

May 19th – the turnout and excitement surrounding the 3rd annual Global Health Day event at The Ohio State University College of Medicine proves that international awareness, and the Ride for World Health (R4WH), are here to stay.

Global Health Day, one of the paramount events along Ride for World Health’s 55 day coast-to-coast lecture series, was hosted by channel 10TV news anchor Andrea Cambern. Dean Chip Souba kicked off the event with words of encouragement and support for the R4WH team.

In the afternoon, members of the 23-rider strong national R4WH team shared pictures and stories from their cross-country journey to raise funds and promote awareness of global health issues. Afterwards, Daniel Lucey, MD, an infectious disease specialist, gave a stimulating talk on malaria and the devastating toll it takes on underdeveloped countries that lack the financial and medical resources to combat this completely curable disease.

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OSU Receives NIH Fogarty International Center Global Health Grant

OSU has been awarded an NIH Fogarty International Center Global Health Grant. The three-year award will help support an infrastructure and educational program that is truly multidisciplinary, serving the Health Sciences Colleges, other campus colleges, and the Metro High School in the mission of educating and igniting student interest in global health. The Ohio State University Health Sciences Center for Global Health, officially approved by OSU in June 2007, will serve as the functional home for this effort.

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Michael Newman, MD was a featured speaker at the 2008 OSU Global Health Day.

Q: What advice do you have for medical students who want to get involved with global health?
A: Get your education first and then work for a few years before doing mission trips. MSF discourages brand new doctors and nurses from initially working abroad in developing nations. Most volunteer organizations want people who have some “seasoning” before they take on the challenge of working internationally.

Q: We are working on an Interdisciplinary Specialization in Global Health that will be available to interested medical students to do in tandem with their required curriculum. Do you think that this will be helpful if they are seeking a global health oriented career?
A: Definitely. That would be a plus for any student who wants to do work internationally.

Q: You mentioned different times where you have been encouraged or discouraged during your work with MSF. How do you feel about what’s going on here at OSU?
A: I am very encouraged by the activism amongst the students.

Q: What has been the high point of your work with MSF?
A: It’s heartwarming that people from all over the world are coming together to help those who really need it. It is not about self-interest, or politics, or money and that is a wonderful thing.

Q: And the low point?
A: There are some very hard places in this world. People are really suffering and it is grim. In Nigeria it’s all for oil. There is a lot of money being made from oil but the people of Nigeria are not seeing any of it and the conditions they live in are pretty desperate. I am a surgeon and in parts of Africa I don’t see gallstones or diseases of old age because most people don’t live to 50. I don’t have any fat patients.

Q: 60 Minutes recently featured a product called Plumpy’nut that Doctors Without Borders is using to fight malnutrition. What can you tell us about it?
A: Plumpy’nut (fortified peanut butter stuffed with milk and vitamins) has an amazing effect on malnourished children. It is relatively cheap to produce and deliver and I’m not sure why it is not used more widely.

Plumpy what?

Never heard of Plumpy’nut? Plumpy’nut is what you would create if you needed a nutritional ready-to-eat food that is inexpensive to produce, needs no refrigeration, has a 2-year shelf life, contains no water, is resistant to bacteria, is easy to transport, can be “administered” without a physician, rapidly puts weight on a malnourished child, and tastes good to boot.

Sound too good to be true? It’s not. This product exists, it’s called Plumpy’nut and where it is being used, it is saving lives.

Plumpy’nut was invented by French scientist, André Briend. Each packet is 500 calories and by giving babies two packets per day for four weeks they can gain as much as 1-2 pounds a week. A four-week course of Plumpy’nut costs about $20.00.

To learn more about Plumpy’nut go to: http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/news/issue.cfm?id=2396
my take
by Yun Xia, MD, PhD
Department of Anesthesiology

I was in Dalian (northeastern China) on May 12 when the powerful 8.0 magnitude earthquake jolted southwestern China. Dr. Manful Shoo and I, both from the OSUMC, were attending an annual conference for anesthesiologists. Within the hour, the government established an earthquake emergency committee headed by Premier Wen Jiabo, who then boarded a plane and headed for the disaster area within two hours. More than 200,000 relief workers arrived during the first few days, with some arriving in less than 20 minutes.

We witnessed overwhelming support for the rescue and relief efforts in China. The whole country was mobilized; doctors, nurses, and other medical personnel gave up their vacations and selflessly participated in helping the victims. Many of my anesthesiology friends from China went to Sichuan on May 13 and 14. Groups including people from OSU also participated in transferring goods at the Chengdu railway station. The earthquake emergency committee discouraged non-organized volunteers from going to the disaster area due to the fear of increasing the burden of the local people; and suggested that what was needed most for the disaster area were tents and money. Donation drives coordinated by numerous organizations could be seen everywhere we went. The members of the Chinese American Society of Anesthesiology (the group I was with) made donations and observed three minutes of silence to mourn for the victims before leaving China. Nearly 70,000 people died and many more were injured as a result of this catastrophe.

Back in Columbus, disaster relief fundraising activities have been planned by various organizations ranging from the University to local churches. Musicians from the Columbus Symphony Orchestra and other groups performed several benefit concerts. OSU President Gordon Gee wrote to the OSU Chinese Students and Scholars Society and expressed his sympathy and support. Leaders, faculty and staff from many departments at the OSU Medical Center offered generous aid as well. We hope with the help of many, the relief efforts and reconstruction of the disaster area will be successful.

The Aftermath
The World Health Organization has released the following information about the earthquake aftermath (as of July 1, 2008):

Dead: 69,195
Injured: 374,176
Missing: 18,389
Treated: 96,383 injured people had been hospitalized, of whom 86,359 had been discharged, and 7,380 were still being treated (as of July 2)

http://www.wpro.who.int/sites/eha/disasters/emergency_reports/chn_earthquake_latest.htm

Developing a worldview of health
Global Goings-On
Global health news from around campus

IHIG Residency Fair
The International Health Interest Group (IHIG) hosted an International Health Residency Fair on April 16. The event featured residency programs from Ohio and Indiana with global health opportunities, as well as community service organizations from the Columbus area.

Global Health Residency Guidebook

Panel Discussion on Community Health
The colleges of Public Health, Medicine and Nursing, along with the Center for Folklore Studies and the American Folklore Society, will host a panel discussion about community health and vernacular health systems on July 21, from 3:30-4:30 p.m., in Room 165 of the Davis Heart and Lung Research Institute. For more information, contact Kathy Renick at 293-8260 or e-mail krenick@cph.osu.edu. No RSVP required.

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To wrap up the day’s events, Michael Newman, MD, of the world-renowned Doctors without Borders, presented an eye-opening slide show on the disparate conditions surrounding the delivery of health care in remote international sites.

The 2009 leadership team is working hard to echo the success of the 2008 team, who was able to donate over $50,000 to Doctors Without Borders.

Contributed by Clare Kelleher, 2009 R4WH CEO

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Daniel Sedmak, MD, director of the Office of Global Health Education and executive director of the Health Sciences Center for Global Health is the principal investigator with Mary Ellen Wewers, PhD, MPH, from the College of Public Health and Richard Love, MD, in the College of Medicine serving as co-investigators.

This prestigious designation as a Fogarty Center for Global Health gives OSU an unparalleled opportunity to advance global health and respond to the remarkable growth in interest by students at all levels. Watch for more details on the new center in the next edition of The Global Address.

Contact
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