Aibonito, Puerto Rico

Summer 2005
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What we did…

- Each day at the hospital, we would work with a different physician or group of physicians
- The format of the experience is similar to rotations - we would work in a different department each day.
- Departments included: General Surgery, Orthopedics, Pathology, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, OB/GYN, Infectious Disease, and EM (some more than others)
Accommodations

• Most of us stayed in houses (3 stayed in a hotel) – houses ranged from apartment style to rooms with bunk beds.
• We paid the family about 400 dollars/person to stay for the month – some families provided some meals
• Aibonito is the city with the highest elevation in PR so the views were amazing

¿Habla Español?

• Spanish is not necessary for this trip – a few people in our group spoke Spanish well (which was very helpful at times) while others ranged from no Spanish to several classes.
• If you want to improve your Spanish, this is a good opportunity to do so
• The doctors were bilingual and most were very willing to help with translations

Community Service

We volunteered at Bill’s Kitchen, a soup kitchen for San Juan residents living with HIV/AIDS.

New Directions

A few of the students had the opportunity to attend a planning meeting for a new breast cancer hospital and hospice to be built in Cayey, Puerto Rico. Attendees included the First Lady of Puerto Rico, the Mayor of Cayey and the Director of the Puerto Rican Department of Health.

Outside of work in Aibonito – Dinners with the Docs

Dr. Collazo
Dr. Vera
Dr. Rosario
The weekends…

- Every weekend we traveled to a different part of the island.
- Most places were within a few hours by car (beaches are everywhere as well)
- We would rent cars every Friday (paid for by stipends/fundraiser money)

Ponce, Caja de Muertos, and Las Piedras (southern PR)

Culebra (off of east coast)

Rincon (northwestern PR)

San Juan – Last weekend

Puerto Rico Crew