

The Center is Open!

The **Center for Global Health**, opened in January 2009, serves Weill Cornell Medical College and Cornell University in fostering global health collaborations. The Center stands on the pillars of our major international collaborations in Brazil, Haiti, and Tanzania. The Center, which is based in the Department of Medicine and the Division of Infectious Diseases, welcomes the participation of faculty from both Ithaca and New York who have like-interests in addressing problems of global health inequality.

We **define Global Health** as research, service, and training that address health problems that transcend national boundaries, disproportionately affect the resource poor, and are best addressed by multidisciplinary solutions.

The **objectives** of the Center are three-fold:

1. To provide global health training, in the classroom, laboratory, and field, for students at all levels
2. To provide reciprocal training programs in New York for colleagues and students from our network of international collaborating institutions
3. To coordinate ongoing collaborations and to develop new programs among Cornell University researchers to solve existing and emerging problems in global health



Welcome International Scholars!

- Andrew Luhanga, MD – Tanzania
Benson Kidenya, MD – Tanzania
Cynthia Riviere, MD – Haiti
Linda Severe, MD – Haiti
Ricardo Riccio, PharmD – Brazil
Sandy Nerette, MD – Haiti

Center Updates

- Dr. Warren D. Johnson received a citation from the Infectious Diseases Society of America "in recognition of outstanding achievement in the field of infectious disease". The award was presented on October 29, 2009 in Philadelphia.
- Dr. Jennifer Downs was awarded the first Pfizer/Merle Sande fellowship (\$60,000) from the IDSA for her work on female genital schistosomiasis in Tanzania.
- Dr. Warren Johnson received a \$1.8 million 5 year NIH grant for training postdoctoral fellows in clinical and laboratory research.
- Dr. Albert Ko received a 3-year, \$2.8 million Small Business Innovative Research Grant (SBIR) from the NIH to fully develop a rapid diagnostic test for leptospirosis.
- Dr. Rob Peck will extend his appointment in Tanzania to 2011 .
- Thank you to Dr. Kevin Holcomb who donated \$10,000 for an ultrasound in the ob/gyn department in Tanzania.
- Dr. Jean Pape received a 5 year \$3.1 million NIH grant for research training in Haiti.
- Dr. Roger Hartl and his team of neurosurgeons recently returned from Tanzania. Read about their experiences in the online journal at: www.med.cornell.edu/globalhealth.
- Erin Byrt, a recent graduate of Cornell University with a minor in global health has joined the Center as a research assistant.



Dr. Albert Ko (far right, in white) and his team in Brazil



Cornell residents, medical students, and undergraduates at Weill Bugando in summer 2008

Brazil



Urban slum study site in Salvador, Brazil

WCMC's principal research collaborations in Brazil are at the Federal University of Bahia's School of Medicine (UFBa) and the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation/Brazilian Ministry of Health (Fiocruz) in Salvador. This year marks the 45th anniversary of the remarkable collaboration between Weill Cornell Medical College and UFBa, the longest collaboration of its type in the world today. It has provided training and research opportunities for over 350 US medical students, residents, and fellows, and an equal number of Brazilians. Multi-disciplinary research in Brazil focuses on leishmaniasis, tuberculosis, HTLV-1, helminth infections, and leptospirosis. The research program has developed to address the changing needs of urban poor who have seen a 350% increase in the slum population within the last 40 years. The research program employs approaches from a number of fields, including epidemiology, immunology, genetics, clinical trials, and vaccine development. The two major research programs are led in Brazil by Dr. Edgar Carvalho, MD, PhD, and Dr. Albert Ko, MD. Dr. Carvalho has worked with WCMC since 1979, and he directs leishmaniasis research at the NIH Tropical Medical Research Center located at UFBa. Dr. Ko works at Fiocruz and leads a group in researching leptospirosis and other infectious diseases relating to urban poverty.

Haiti

The Weill Cornell program in Haiti began in 1980 with the establishment of a unit for the study and treatment of infantile diarrhea at the State University Hospital and Medical School by Dr. Jean Pape and Dr. Warren Johnson. As the first cases of AIDS began to appear in the early 1980s, the group was the first to document its pathology in a resource poor setting. In 1982 the Weill Cornell team began its AIDS research with the formation of Groupe Haitien d'Etudes du Sarcome de Kaposi et des Infections Opportunistes (GHESKIO). GHESKIO's three part mission includes clinical service, research, and training in HIV/AIDS and related diseases. GHESKIO provides integrated primary care services to the local community in Port-au-Prince, including HIV counseling, AIDS care, prenatal care, and management of tuberculosis and sexually transmitted infections. GHESKIO has also initiated several social programs including a microcredit program and a nutrition program for mothers and children. Through the conduct of research, GHESKIO defines HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention models for Haiti and through both long and short-term training, GHESKIO expands these models to the national level.



GHESKIO in Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Tanzania



Weill Bugando Medical College at the Bugando Medical Center

The relationship between Weill Cornell and Weill Bugando began over 20 years ago. Father Peter Le Jacq, M.D., an alumnus of Weill Cornell and a Maryknoll priest worked in Mwanza, Tanzania between 1987 and 1997 and helped to found a medical college at Bugando Medical Center. The WCMC and New York Presbyterian Hospital (NYPH) established their formal affiliation with Bugando in 2006. The collaboration is supported by Dean Gotto, and the TOUCH Foundation. Dr. Robert Peck and Dr. Beatrice Im are currently based in Tanzania to coordinate the educational exchange which matches Weill Cornell departments with Weill Bugando/BMC departments. Clinical residents from NYPH/Weill Cornell provide hands-on training on the wards for the Weill Bugando medical students, interns, and residents, while Tanzanian residents and faculty have the opportunity to train in New York. Faculty from both institutions work together on curriculum development. In 2009, 66 NYPH/Weill Cornell clinical residents and faculty visited Bugando to teach on the wards and conduct tutorials in internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, ophthalmology, neurology, psychiatry, and surgery.

David Skorton Visits Weill-Bugando

In July 2009 Cornell University President Dr. David Skorton, his wife Dr. Robin Davisson, professor of biomedical sciences and cell and developmental biology, and Dr. Alice Pell, professor of biomedical sciences and vice provost for international relations, visited Weill Bugando. WCMC has collaborated with Weill Bugando for the past 3 years through exchanges of faculty and students in order to train medical professionals in Tanzania. President Skorton is co-chair of the Africa-US Higher Education Initiative which works to develop higher education institutions in Africa and further engage American schools in Africa-related issues. The visitors were hosted by WCMC resident faculty members Dr. Rob Peck, Dr. Jen Downs, Dr. Beatrice Im, and the Weill Bugando faculty. They visited the hospital and school, taking the time to round with patients, talk with students of the Weill Bugando Medical College, and meet with the Weill Bugando and BMC leadership.



Dr. Skorton examines a young patient.



Dr. Skorton, Dr. Peck, Dr. Bertelsen and Weill Bugando students on rounds.

"I recently had the privilege and uplifting experience of visiting the Weill Bugando Medical College and the Bugando Medical Centre in Mwanza, Tanzania. I was honored to meet the leadership of the Centre and the College as well as physicians, nurses, other health workers and students of various disciplines. Most important, I was able to meet many patients and to learn of the enormous impact that Weill Cornell Medical College is having on their lives and the lives of their families. Through direct patient care, research, and teaching at all levels by Drs. Warren Johnson, Rob Peck, Beatrice Im, Dan Fitzgerald, and their faculty, staff and student colleagues, WCMC and the Cornell Center for Global Health are making a difference - a difference that will grow in impact over the years."

Dr. David J. Skorton

GHESKIO Dedication



The new Warren D. Johnson Jr. Medical Center in Port-au-Prince, Haiti

"The GHESKIO team has persevered through adversity and has thrived. We were told many times over the years that it couldn't be done, let alone be done in Haiti. But it was done, and often for the first time anywhere. It has been my joy, my honor, to participate in this vision."

Dr. Warren D. Johnson

On February 10, 2009 GHESKIO celebrated the opening of the Warren D. Johnson Jr. Medical Center in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. For the group that first documented the outbreak of AIDS in a developing country, this new clinic represents a milestone in the more than 25 year history of GHESKIO. What originally started as a small group of physicians and researchers studying cases of infantile diarrhea and dehydration in 1980, has grown to a cadre of over 350 people committed to improving health care in Haiti. The new center will provide much needed space for testing, counseling, and care of adults, adolescents, and children with AIDS, tuberculosis, and other infectious diseases. It will also house laboratories sponsored by bioMérieux Foundation, a French organization, for development and training in new therapies and approaches for tuberculosis, diarrheal illnesses, typhoid and AIDS. The new facility will include a laboratory for tuberculosis diagnosis and research.



(From left) Dr. Warren D. Johnson Jr., the B. H. Kean Professor of Tropical Medicine and director of the Center for Global Health at Weill Cornell; Alain Mérieux, president of bioMérieux; Dr. Jean Pape, founder and director of GHESKIO; and Dr. Andrew Schafer, Chairman of the Department of Medicine at Weill Cornell Medical College

New Triangulation Program Funded

Weill Cornell Medical College recently received an NIH award of \$100,000 to support a unique training program that will facilitate the exchange of students, fellows, and faculty at all levels between Tanzania, New York, and Haiti. The goal is to build capacity at Weill Bugando in Mwanza, Tanzania in order to replicate the quality of research, training, and care that is delivered at GHESKIO in Haiti. Another goal is to establish GHESKIO as a training center in clinical and implementation science research for investigators from other developing countries. The NY component will involve training and courses in research methodology and exposure to the laboratory tools available to support clinical investigation. This program includes our new Global Health track in the WCMC degree program in Clinical Epidemiology directed by Dr. Mary Charlson. The triangulation program is meant to strengthen relationships and foster exchange between two developing countries facing similar health care challenges with respect to HIV and tuberculosis. Local strengths and assets will be utilized to train a cadre of highly qualified health care professionals in global health.



The new triangulation program will connect Weill Bugando in Mwanza, Tanzania with GHESKIO in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and with WCMC in New York City to strengthen research and training.

Elizabeth Dumay Shares with First Years



Mrs. Dumay fields questions from first year medical students with Dr. Dan Fitzgerald and Dr. Patrice Severe.

Recently, WCMC first year medical students met Dr. Patrice Severe and Mrs. Elizabeth Dumay, both of whom traveled from Port-au-Prince, Haiti to teach the students about HIV illness and treatment in a resource poor country. Mrs. Dumay, who is living with HIV and is now a peer counselor for patients newly infected with HIV, recounted to the students how it wasn't until after her husband died of AIDS that she was tested and learned she was HIV positive. She struggled with the decision to tell her daughter, family, friends, and church community. Her experience, early on, was marked by discrimination and stigma. Now things are better- she is doing well on ART and working as an HIV counselor at GHESKIO. Her message to the students was to pay attention to every aspect of a patient's life, not just the illness. A poor patient who has no food will not take the medications on an empty stomach, and a patient won't return for regular visits if

he or she cannot afford transportation. She stressed that psychological and emotional support is critical for patients who must decide whether to divulge their status, and whether to have a family. Dr. Severe talked to the students about how GHESKIO deals with many of the issues Mrs. Dumay raised. In addition to providing free HIV treatment, GHESKIO uses food baskets, money for transportation, cell phones with prepaid cards, and field workers as tools to make treatment and adherence effective. Offering additional needed services like dental and eye care as well as family planning, and microcredit has encouraged patients to continue treatment despite stigma. Dr. Severe's advice to the first years was to learn to 'listen' to everything the patient has to say.

Center for Global Health
Director- Dr. Warren D. Johnson
Co-Director- Dr. Daniel W. Fitzgerald
Administrator- Gladys Rodriguez
Editor- Erin Byrt

440 E. 69th Street
New York, NY 10021
Phone: 212-746-6680
Fax: 212-746-9744

E-mail: globalhealthweb@med.cornell.edu

We have a new website!
www.med.cornell.edu/globalhealth

was launched in July of 2009 with the help of an NIH grant to Dr. Warren Johnson