



# All Things Ignatian



## In the Global Service of Others: Jesuit Medical Collaborative

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### ABSTRACT

The Jesuit Medical Collaborative utilizes shared international immersion experiences and distance collaboration to address best practices and shared programming in Global Health initiatives. This session presents the mission-centered impetus for joint programming and how we can share Ignatian values in our international practice of medicine.

### INTRODUCTION

The first meeting of the Jesuit medical schools happened at Loyola. The Associate Dean for Medical Education at Loyola Stritch wanted to develop collaborative efforts to enhance each of the 4 Jesuit medical schools' global opportunities. In 2010, at the meeting held at Creighton, there were faculty and staff members who began to discuss organizing shared global health resources and initiatives. Loyola was building a global health office with resources and staff available to lead the organization of the collaborative. After a collaborative website was constructed, it was decided that a collaborative trip would further joint programming in a unique and irreplaceable way. In 2011, Panama was chosen for the 2012 collaborative trip for its ease of access, its safety, and its established program. Each of the Jesuit Schools had a "contact" person who then established the selection process and coordinated within each school.

### OUR JESUIT MISSION

Father Adolfo Nicolas, SJ, current superior general of the Society of Jesus, summed up our mission as students of Jesuit medical schools very well in a talk that he gave on April 23, 2010 in Mexico City: "I urge the Jesuit universities to work towards operational international networks that will address important issues touching faith, justice, and ecology that challenge us across countries and continents... We bear a common responsibility for the welfare of the entire world and its development in a sustainable and life-giving way. And the positive realities of globalization bring us, along with this sense of common belonging and responsibility, numerous means of working together if we are creative and courageous enough to use them."

### WHERE WE WENT

During our Jesuit Medical Collaborative trip, we went to the East Panama region, about 3 hours east of Panama City. Our public health project focused on working with local families in the community. We also opened clinics for two distinct populations. **The Guacuco Kuna** are the indigenous people of the East Panama region. A spiritual leader is in charge of each individual village. We worked out of their local area of worship to provide medical care.

**El Tirao** is a Latino community further south in Panama, closer to the Colombian border. We worked out of a local school to provide medical and dental care.



Image 1. Our Jesuit Medical Collaborative Trip was focused in the East Panama region, where we served the rural communities of Guacuco and El Tirao.

### OUR IGNATIAN VALUES

#### FINDING GOD IN ALL THINGS



Image 2. Not only did we have the opportunity to see a beautiful new land but also we had the chance to see God in the gracious Panamanian people and in our fellow classmates through daily reflections.

### CURA PERSONALIS



Image 3. Our team had the opportunity to learn about the medical practices of the indigenous Guacuco Kuna people and their thoughts about Western medicine, allowing us to know the entire person before providing care.

### MAGIS



Image 4. In addition to providing the best health care possible to the community, our Jesuit Collaborative group always sought to do better and bring happiness to the communities we served.

### MEN AND WOMEN FOR AND WITH OTHERS



Image 5. One team working on the public health project poses with their family in front of a newly constructed latrine. Each team worked alongside the family every day.

### FAITH THAT DOES JUSTICE



Image 6. Numerous patients from the community of El Tirao came for treatment that they had not received for a while, giving these people the access to health care that they deserve.

### HUMANITARIANISM

The service component of the trip exposed students to cross-cultural service. Students have taken the valuable communication and cultural awareness skills they developed and are using them back at home. All of us left Panama with a new perspective towards our futures as physicians. We have developed a better cultural understanding for our patients and new philosophies on how to approach these patients in the future.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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