



“Learning While Serving”

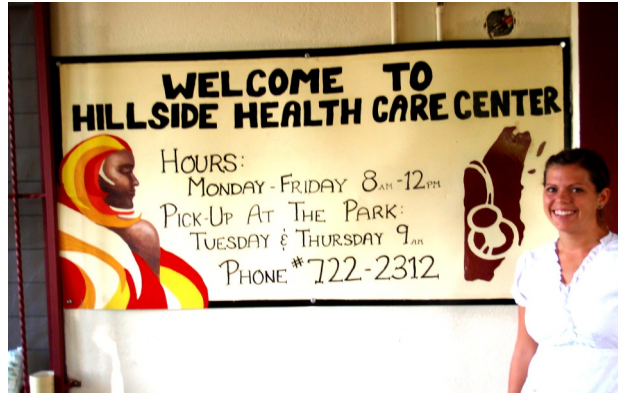
# Hillside Health Care International Update

January 2012

## Reflections from the Hillside Clinical Director

By Dan Thibault, FNP, Hillside Clinic Director

The New Year 2012 is heralding a lot of activity around Hillside. The month of January will see more than 50 volunteers passing through Hillside in one way or another. Besides the usual roster of pharmacy and medical students, Monica, Hillside’s long-term volunteer physical therapist, will be supervising a large group of PT students and preceptors for 10 days



Suzanne Miller, RN and the new entrance sign she painted

of intense experiences. Almost at the same time, Sarah and Liz, our two long-term volunteer nurses, will be supervising the experiences of a 3 large groups of RN students and faculty from Concordia University. Most of this activity will take place in the villages in the Hillside catchment area and not at the Hillside Clinic, but Hillside’s presence will be very obvious in Toledo.

We also welcome Dr. Dan Fein (Internal Medicine) and his wife Dr. Elissa Lapide (Psychiatry) as our new Medical Directors for 6 months. Fortunately, Dr. Sue and Len Leib were here their first week to help orient them, while we were busy with our daughter’s wedding in northern Belize. Our frequent pharmacy preceptor and Hillside Board member Denise Soltis, is now also with us for her 6 month sabbatical and will give our pharmacy program a big boost.

Maria and I will be slowly moving many of our responsibilities to our Belizean staff in anticipation of our departure this summer. We will transfer the rest of our work to Bill Brown and Angela Thomas, a husband and wife team of family physicians, when they arrive and assume the medical leadership of Hillside in

June. They are hoping to be at Hillside for 2-3 years. Fortunately, Natalie Ryan, a past pharmacy preceptor, will be volunteering with her family starting in the summer for one year and continuing with the work Denise will have started. Maria and I are both very happy with our Belizean staff, our Board of Directors, and our U.S. volunteer professionals. It appears that 2012 should be the best year yet for Hillside!

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### Board of Directors

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- Jeff Hartman
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- Dick Anstett
- Jacquelyn Nohl
- Patrick Carter
- Denise Soltis
- Stephen Franz
- Steve Schnoll
- Len Leib
- Sue Leib



Preparing for a Mobile Clinic Visit



## Physical Therapy Outreach at Hillside

By Monica Roe, Hillside Rehabilitation Director

2012 already promises to be quite eventful here in the physical therapy department. January will bring a short-term group of DPT students and faculty from the University of Wisconsin (UW) to work on educational outreach, disability awareness education, and presentations for clinical staff at local polyclinics. These projects have been carefully selected and agreed upon to ensure that they will be of direct benefit to the long-term vision of Hillside's physical therapy program and we are looking forward to this collaboration.

April will bring the first of the year's official DPT student clinical rotations. We have had very promising interest from several accredited U.S.-based programs and currently have four students booked for next year, with two more applications currently pending. We are quite excited at the prospect of integrating DPT students into Hillside's current outreach efforts and being able to offer rehabilitation services to the Toledo District.

Along with preparations for both the UW group and next year's clinical rotations, my current focus remains on starting and developing a rehab program that is community-based with a goal of long-term sustainability. Current projects underway include the development of rehab-specific patient files for all villages that Hillside serves, organizing and scheduling a system of regular physical therapy village visits, and partnering with local Peace Corps and Ministry of Education representatives to begin educational outreach to village schools.

Stay tuned for more news as things progress. Best wishes to all for an enjoyable winter.



*Monica Roe, new PT Director for Hillside*

## Our Hillside Experience

By Sarah Kelly, MD, and Ben Ballisat, MD

We were introduced to Hillside by my sister, who is in her final year at medical school and thoroughly enjoyed her elective there earlier this year. Ben Ballisat and I were keen to get involved, excited by the prospect of practicing medicine abroad and having the opportunity to teach. Having trained in the UK, we were unfamiliar (but very impressed) with the 'preceptor' system of supervised practice, which really prepares the students for working life and fits beautifully with the charity's ethos of learning through serving.

We arrived in Belize at the same time as a tropical storm, which felt dramatic, but was thankfully uneventful. We soon settled into Eldridge as everyone made us feel so welcome. Special mention should go to the scorpion which visited our room on 'Culture Day' for making the experience even more authentic!

We really enjoyed the challenge of family medicine, seeing so many different patients, different conditions and even the odd pet! One of Ben's most memorable experiences was on overnight clinic being asked to see a mother and newborn baby at home, as the midwife had not attended the delivery. Both were well, but everyone was worried at the disappearance of the midwife. The mystery was solved on return to the clinic as the students waited to present their patients, including the midwife, who had a broken wrist and so was sent to PG hospital for treatment.

Thank you to everyone at Hillside, we had a wonderful time and would love to come back!



## A Look at Hillside's Pharmacy Program

By Denise Soltis, RPh

This January marks the 3-year anniversary of the Pharmacy Program at Hillside. The pharmacy program was developed by Denise Soltis, June Johnson, each from Drake University, and Curt Johnson from the University of Wisconsin after a visit to Hillside in March of 2008. Previously medical students would all spend time in the pharmacy and dispense medications. In January of 2009, Drake University sent the first pharmacy student to work in the clinic and the mobile visits. Erin Frazee, the first student from Drake, raised over \$13,000 prior to arriving at Hillside in cash and donations. Since that time student pharmacists have contributed to the safe delivery of medication and the selection of pharmacotherapy in collaboration with the medical, physician assistant, and nursing teams. Because of limited resources, many times the medications that usually would be prescribed are not available and pharmacy can help the group come up with innovative solutions for treatment.



Diabetes Screening in San Jose

In June of 2009, Hillside began taking two pharmacy students each rotation. University of Iowa joined the schools of pharmacy that began to send students to Belize. In May of 2011, the number of students was increased to three students so that there would always be a student pharmacist in clinic, on mobile, and at the Polyclinic in Punta Gorda. Lipscomb University was added to the pharmacy collaborative to insure that all the pharmacy slots would be full each year. The pharmacy program at Hillside has improved dramatically over the last three years. Most recently, the addition of two Belizean technicians Alva and Alfia has allowed consistency between rotation groups. These technicians maintain the inventory and keep the pharmacy well organized while juggling the separate inventory of medications provided by the San Antonio and Punta Gorda Polyclinics for mobile visits in their respective catchment areas.

*“Hillside provides a team approach that most students would like to continue at home.”*

Since its inception the pharmacy program has hosted 67 student pharmacists with another 15 scheduled through May of 2012. The improvement in pharmacy services has been a concerted effort of long-term volunteers, pharmacy faculty from the respective colleges, in addition to the enthusiastic work of the student pharmacists and Belizean technicians. Hillside provides a team approach to caring for patients that most students would like to continue at home.

Here are a few quotes from student pharmacist essays regarding their time at Hillside:

“I had the most amazing experience in Belize. It far exceeded my expectations in every aspect of the trip. It was great to live a far different lifestyle than what I am used to. It was interesting to see the cultural diversity and varying views about healthcare. I loved working so closely as a team with other healthcare workers. The influence I had on drug choice and dosing was amazing practice for my future as a professional.”

“The rotation at Hillside clinic in Belize was an amazing experience. It provided opportunities to actively participate as a critical member of a cohesive healthcare team.”

“I was forced to utilize drugs in ways I had not previously done in the States, but in ways that soon became second nature.... I was frequently called upon for starting doses, recommendations on when to titrate medications, and target doses for disease states.”



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**A Look at Hillside’s Pharmacy Program (cont.)**

“...without Hillside's continual commitment to quality care; many of these patients would go untreated.”

“Before this experience, I think I was more ignorant to the realities faced by many in developing countries. So many times I have heard the words ‘lack of access to care’ and simply not understood the full ramifications of that.”

“...these patients are counting solely on you in order to understand their medications. ”

“It would be great if we could practice side by side with physicians at home!”

Denise Soltis, Assistant Dean of Clinical Affairs at Drake University and member of the Board of Directors of Hillside, started a six-month sabbatical at Hillside January 2, 2012. During her sabbatical she will be working in the clinics and mobiles, studying the effect the inter-professional environment on student perceptions, helping the technicians complete an online technician program, and looking for additional opportunities for students. A special thanks to Curt Johnson who passed away this year.

**Featured Hillside Alumni**

*Mike Latrenta, R.N., Hillside Class of 2005*

**Education:** Concordia University, May 2006

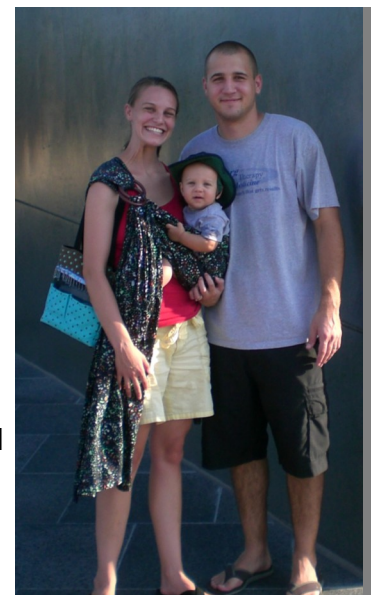
**Currently:** Working as a travel nurse in Chapel Hill, NC.

**Why did you go to Hillside?:** I went for my community clinical for nursing school. I thought it would be a great opportunity to see another culture and another part of the world.

**How did Hillside impact you personally and professionally?** Personally it made me very thankful for what I have and I realized that not everyone is as fortunate as I am. I loved meeting the people of the different cultures and getting to know them. It also made me realize that you don’t need a ton of money or material possessions to be happy. While I was there I met some of the friendliest and happiest people. It was a refreshing change from our American way of life.

**What was the best memory of your time at Hillside?** The experiences I had were all unforgettable. My best memory would be visiting two small villages we had the chance to see. We were invited into one of their small thatched homes where they prepared us lunch.

**Why should people support Hillside?** Hillside is a very important entity that provides great service to the people of Belize. It also provides great opportunities for students



**Considering a Donation to Hillside?**

**Thinking of Volunteering?**

Hillside Health Care International can’t accomplish its mission of serving those in need of medical care without the support of people like you. If you want to offer financial support, donations can be sent to: **Hillside Health Care International , 6650 W. State Street, Unit D #111 Milwaukee, WI 53213.** You can also donate online at [www.hillsidebelize.org](http://www.hillsidebelize.org)

If you are a medical professional with a desire to volunteer, Hillside may be the perfect match for you. Opportunities can be short-term (a week to one month) or long-term (several months to a year). Imagine an environment off the beaten path– jungles and rainforests dotted with small villages along a remote river or at the ocean’s edge. Visit our website at [www.hillsidebelize.org](http://www.hillsidebelize.org).