As long as you are excited about the work you are doing, you’ll be able to make your next step,” advises Nancy Fullman ’07, about entering the field of Global Health. Nancy serves as Scientific Advisor at the University of Washington’s Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) in Seattle.

Nancy was a Psychology major at Middlebury, certain she wanted to go into clinical psychology and research. Upon graduation, Nancy worked as a researcher at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), where she discovered her interest in public health.

In working with pediatric patients, “I became more and more interested in why our health system and healthcare system was failing many of these patients who were coming in for our research,” Nancy said. “We had amazing research and knew what medicines and therapies would work for these kids, but they weren’t getting proper diagnoses or types of care out in the real world. I realized I was passionate about bridging these gaps. What can we do to make sure the research we’re doing is applied and used so people get the best care they can?”

Nancy began talking to people working in public health. She worked one summer at the O’Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law at Georgetown University. Upon learning that a former Middlebury classmate was doing a fellowship in global health, she contacted her to learn more about the field and the program, the IHME Post-Bachelor Fellowship program at the University of Washington in Seattle. Nancy applied to the fellowship, was accepted, and her global health career began.

After the fellowship, Nancy worked at University of California, San Francisco, doing policy and communication work on their malaria elimination initiative. This built on the work she had done as an IHME fellow, tracking the delivery of malaria interventions and evaluating their outcomes.

IHME recruited her back as a policy translation specialist. “I was technically on a communications team, but embedded in a research team. I worked with researchers and country collaborators to translate their findings and figure out, ‘This is what this research could be used to inform, here is what to prioritize, and these are the current policy dialogues in the country.’”

Though Nancy missed the research side in this position, she explained, “I enjoyed the opportunity to do writing and critical thinking about how we use and write about research and science for the most good, and in the most compelling way, while staying true to the research.”
My focus has shifted from one-on-one individual patient care to looking at healthcare in a broader framework,” Klaudia said, describing herself as someone who has become “very social justice oriented” at Middlebury. She hopes to bring that passion into her work after graduation, saying, “I see global health as something that is inherently based in social justice, so it makes sense for me to head in that direction.”

In fall of her junior year, Klaudia took the Global Health class, which was pivotal in developing her passion for global health.

“The class was key because we looked at a lot of international contexts, and that’s when I realized that this could be more impactful than the one-on-one work I would do as a physician,” Klaudia explained. Specifically, the examples of large-scale public health disasters, such as the Bhopal gas disaster, influenced her interests.

“If I do public health work,” she said, “I can help impact more people than I would as a one-on-one physician.”

Klaudia pursued an internship in line with her new interest in public health. Last summer, she interned at an HIV clinic in Greensboro, NC, through the Shepherd Higher Education Consortium on Poverty. The clinic served a wide range of patients in terms of race, class, and gender identity, but most were low-income or uninsured.

“It was a really powerful internship in terms of understanding public health policy and how broken the system is,” Klaudia said. (Continued on p. 3)
“We have a national act, the Ryan-White Act, which guarantees anyone with HIV access to HIV medication anywhere in the country. It’s a federal law,” Klaudia explained. Since North Carolina chose to opt out of the Medicaid expansion offered by the Affordable Care Act, the resulting coverage gaps mean that “…a lot of the folks in the clinic had their HIV meds covered, but didn’t get coverage for their high blood pressure medication, high cholesterol medication, eye care, things you need to live a full life.”

In conversations with case managers and doctors, Klaudia learned that, more than anything, they wanted changes in health policy so that they could provide better care for their patients. This realization has informed Klaudia’s career decisions. She hopes to work abroad after graduation to gain international experience. Long term, she wants to work in public health, but is unsure in what capacity. “Perhaps that means working for the CDC or a big NGO. I don’t know if that will be domestically or internationally,” Klaudia said. She plans to attend graduate school, at some point, for a degree in public health or international development.

Klaudia continues to think critically about what it means to do public health work and development in an international context, something she is “…constantly thinking about. It’s part of the reason I became an African Studies minor. It has given me the tools to think about how you approach international development and health internationally.”

Despite questions of how to best approach global health work and where she fits in, Klaudia is certain that a career in global health is right for her, as someone who wants to have the greatest positive impact on health for the most people possible.

John Graham Housing and Services (JGHS) serves Addison County residents experiencing homelessness through a fully staffed emergency shelter in Vergennes and transitional housing units in Vergennes, Bristol, and Middlebury. JGHS provides not only safe shelter, but also a community and range of services to those who lack access to affordable housing.

“The thing that makes John Graham shelter so special is that it’s a community and it’s a family. The relationships that the residents develop among themselves and with the staff are so strong and meaningful,” said Jonah Heiser ’17, one of the many students involved with JGHS. Jonah interned at JGHS this past summer through the Shepherd Higher Education Consortium on Poverty internship program, which places a student with JGHS each year. Jonah is now a member of the board of directors and visits JGHS weekly with the student organization, Friends of John Graham Shelter (FOGJS).

Students who are part of FOGJS go to the main shelter in Vergennes every Wednesday afternoon for two hours.

“We’ll bring a craft or a game or something fun to do, for example playing kickball in the yard with the kids,” Jonah said. “It’s adding to the community and creating that community feeling.” Doing activities with the kids also gives a break to the children’s parents, who are busy with jobs and working with shelter staff.

To support its mission, JGHS holds an annual Sleep-Out by the Falls to End Homelessness in Middlebury, which raises funds for its services and increases awareness of housing issues and homelessness in Vermont.
Thanks, Alessandria, farewell!

Alessandria Schumacher ‘17 is graduating and will be sorely missed! She has served as research assistant and project assistant to the Global Health program coordinator. She was invaluable in so many ways for our research project Local Determinants of Health in Addison County and is the chief architect behind the production of this newsletter. After graduation, she hopes to work in public health research or health policy and has a particular love for anything that combines health and environmental issues. She is a hardworking, organized, reliable person who is also wonderful to be around. Alessandria, you’re the best! Best of luck to you after graduation!

Global Health Program Development Updates

- With support from the One Middlebury Fund, Pam visited the Middlebury Institute for International Studies at Monterey to explore future collaborations. She thanks the many faculty, staff, and students who gave generously of their time.

- The experiential learning program planned for Nairobi (see the fall 2016 newsletter) is on hold until after the Kenyan elections. It is tentatively planned for summer 2018.

- We are thrilled to have created three scholarships to support students working at unpaid summer internships in the field of public health. This kind of support is critical, especially for students with financial need, to ensure that students get professional experience in the field and can place their academic learning in context.

- Our senior seminar, offered in conjunction with the Privilege & Poverty and Food Studies programs, is approved! The course, titled “Health, Food, and Poverty: Critical Frameworks for Social Change” will launch in spring 2018, co-taught by Jessica Teets (Political Science) and Pam Berenbaum (Global Health Program).

Events on Campus:

The Global Health program sponsored or co-sponsored these events during the spring 2017 semester:

- Jan. 18: Student panel on Internships in International Development and Global Health.

- Feb. 20: “Rising Health Care Costs: Is Price Transparency the Answer?” talk by Betsy Querna Cliff, PhD candidate at the University of Michigan School of Public Health.

- Apr. 13: “Bodies and Culture: Toward a comparative history of medicine” talk by Soyoung Suh, Assistant Professor of History, Korea Foundation Professor, and Assistant Professor of Middle Eastern Studies at Dartmouth University. This event was part of the Rohatyn Center for Global Affairs’ Future of the Past series.

- Apr. 17: Screening of “Clínica de Migrantes,” a documentary about a clinic providing medical services to the undocumented immigrant population in Philadelphia.

- Apr. 18: Screening of “Poverty, Inc.” documentary about foreign aid and the aid industry.

- And, two information sessions about the Global Health minor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Want to connect? Midd grads can join MiddNet, the online searchable database of 7,500 Midd alumni, to give or receive advice about a particularly industry or career field.

Want to hire someone? If your organization has an entry-level position or internship to offer, please post it on MOJO: http://www.middlebury.edu/student-life/creativity-innovation-exploration/engagement-careers/careers-and-internships/employers.

Share the love: Feel free to forward this newsletter to others who might want to hear about our Global Health happenings. Mailing list requests may be sent to globalhealth@middlebury.edu.

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!