

2009 *late* SUMMER MIRT NEWS

Multidisciplinary International Research Training (MIRT) Program

Striving to Eliminate Health Disparities

Tel: (206) 543-7559 e-mail: mirt@u.washington.edu www.depts.washington.edu/mirt

"Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family." — Kofi Annan

MID-TRIP REFLECTION OF UW MIRT 2009 FELLOWS

"I have seen people who have made it their lives to look out for the welfare of the needy by spending their time studying, supporting, and researching techniques to alleviate the world's problems. I have seen these people, I have met them, and I have talked to them – with all this, they have inspired me *to be like them.*" __ Nam Nguyen, *MIRT 2009 ETHIOPIA*

"I now consider myself someone with substance and life experience. I owe this life changing experience to the University of Washington's MIRT Program. "
__ Andrew Hillman, *MIRT 2009 THAILAND*

"I'm very thankful to the MIRT Program for this opportunity, as well as the truly supportive people I have met here. I know that the person flying back home at the end of August won't be the same one who arrived in July, and I think that's a good thing." __ Nicole de Paz, *MIRT 2009 PERU*



On the mountain-top, Ethiopia



Pavilion of the Enlightened in Ancient City, Thailand



Nam Nguyen
Undergraduate, UW
MIRT site: **ETHIOPIA**

As I stood upon the hill where Emperor Menelik II's palace once stood, overlooking the vast and expansive countryside, with its rolling hills, lush flora and fauna, and its untapped splendor that seemed to run on forever, I could not help but think how much beauty there was in this world. When I looked down upon the villages that sat at the foot of this hill, I saw life as it happened: the locals tilling their fields, selling their goods at the local market, and walking their livestock – everything seemed so perfect, as if it came straight from a storybook. And yet, I knew that when I was amongst these people, poverty, disease, and disparity plagued almost every aspect of their lives. How is it possible, that something so beautiful, so wonderfully natural, contain so much suffering? It is as though this juxtaposition of beauty and misery was a metaphor of the world reversing its roles of right and wrong, good and bad, beautiful and ugly. Where is the equality amongst this all? This is the face of the developing world.

Since I have been here, I have been challenged more than ever to push my limits of comfort, only to see how frivolous my challenges are in comparison to those living with poverty and disparity. Every day, these individuals trudge on with their routine that most people of the developed world would never encounter. It goes beyond the creature comforts of electricity and running water – it is the expectation of survival. I have never been challenged with monetary poverty, but children, no older than five years old, and no heavier than the weight of their bones, roam the streets of Addis begging not only for food or money, but for the idea of survival – holding their hands out to you, staring up into your face with their tiresome eyes, as if to say, “why me?” In fact, you cannot help but think the same, “why me?” – not necessarily of them, but of yourself. What makes me, *me* and them, *them*?

Each day, I face these thoughts. I encounter them everywhere I turn, and in everything I do – in the car to and from work, on the streets, in the countryside, outside restaurants, right outside the gates of my home – poverty has pervaded, *no* – plagued, every aspect of society. Only now have I realized that my life has been enshrined in a glass bubble – that I have been so myopic to the realities of this world. The saddest part is that I have only gotten a taste of it, and it has hit me harder than I had ever expected it. I can only imagine what anguish other people feel, who must, not out of choice, deal with it every day.

As grim as this may all sound, I have seen the good in it all; most importantly, I have seen the prospect of change – change that can take on so many forms, from huge country-wide initiatives to tiny little homegrown efforts. What I have been most fascinated and captivated by are those small, individual homegrown efforts – what I believe to be the *microscopic* efforts to create change – when considering the enormity of the world. New meaning has been given to the idea that a little can go a long way. That I have seen, and that I am grateful for to witness.

These past few weeks, I have had the opportunity to take part in experiences unique to the developing world. Even though the suffering is apparent and widespread, there have been glimpses of hope against the ailments of poverty. The common themes of change have taken on the form of infrastructure reformation, education, personal dedication, and the will – or the heart, or even the compassion to work for change. These small, but powerful efforts have had profound effects on the people they serve, and now more than ever, I hope to continue that work.



Alyssa and Nam at the Angolela Primary School

Nam Continued

I have seen the importance of simple hygiene infrastructure. For those in the developed world, we don't think twice about where we go to relieve ourselves, but for the developing world, it's a completely different story. For example, in our data collection site in Angolela, Ethiopia, a latrine building initiative was started. At a local rural primary school, both boys and girls latrines were shared. The schoolboys, being boys, would heckle and scare the girls to the point that many did not use the latrines during the school hours. Some adolescent girls feeling so embarrassed by their menstrual periods, would drop out of school. How much has changed when new latrines for girls were built? Their confidence levels rose, they were more likely to practice proper hygiene, and thus they became better students. This is a classic case of the additive effect with a positive outlook. As one can see, so much has come from so little.

I have seen the importance of education. Quick lessons to children about proper hygiene, such as hand, face, and teeth cleaning have played pivotal roles in the overall health status for their communities. Children are now healthier, and they are spreading their knowledge to their own families, teaching them what they have learned from school; showing them right from wrong, clean and unclean. ***The proof lies in their faces, as they look and act healthier, stronger, and overall better than they ever have before. Education is vital to not only initiating change, but sustaining it as well.*** This is best put by a Chinese Proverb: "If you are planning for a year, sow rice; if you are planning for a decade, plant trees; if you are planning for a lifetime, educate people."

I have seen the importance of dedication – those who can settle for so much more personal success, but choose to stay behind to help the masses. I have seen the teachers, the doctors, the professors – the individuals who have chosen a life of service over self-indulgence. These people make things happen – these people, one step at a time, create change. Their positive attitude and proactive ways of dealing with hardships and challenges on a daily basis make them wealthier than any amount of money can provide. They see the good in difficult situations, work at them head first, and push – as hard as it may be, for change.

Finally, I have seen compassion – not only in those who can serve it, but for those who can't. I have experienced true compassion, where individuals with nothing, absolutely nothing, not even a cent to their name, invite me into their home, and try to treat me like an honored guest. I have seen many talented doctors, who have the ability to move to the city and start their own private practice, and make more money than any of their rural colleagues, return to the countryside to serve the poor. I have seen people who have made it their lives to look out for the welfare of the needy by spending their time studying, supporting, and researching techniques to alleviate the world's problems. I have seen these people, I have met them, and I have talked to them – with all this, they have inspired me *to be like them*.

I agree, the simple challenges I have personally faced, and my responses to them have not been fair. I have been more than spoiled in my life, and I have taken it all for granted. Though, what I have seen, and will continue to see is that my future challenges aren't necessarily a burden, but an opportunity for growth. I see that even though my personal challenges may not be the same as the next person, they are challenges that must be met, nonetheless. It is about growing up, and overcoming your own difficulties in order to help the world; deciding what to do individually, on the small scale – the tiny effort, before you apply it to the world.

The individual effort must not be underestimated, for I have seen what one person can do to bring change. Little by little, step by step, our small contributions to the world will add up. ***The world, with all its blemishes of poverty, disparities, and difficulties, still holds the beauty of the future. Perhaps the answers aren't clear now, but what the future can provide is hope – and I am proud, and grateful to say that I have seen a glimpse of it; that there can be good, and that our problems can be alleviated, all with a little effort from the right infrastructure, and education, but most importantly, from dedicated and compassionate individuals who want to see change, and want the world as a better place.***

"Perhaps we're too embarrassed to change or too frightened of the consequences of showing that we actually care. But why not risk it anyway? BEGIN TODAY! Carry out an act of kindness, with no expectation of reward or punishment; safe in the knowledge that one day, someone, somewhere, might do the same for you." —Princess Diana



Andrew Hilman
Undergraduate, Queens College
MIRT site: **THAILAND**

Sawaat de khrap. The Multidisciplinary International Research Training (MIRT) program has provided me with the chance to immerse myself in one of the world's most distinctive cultures. Thailand, or the land of the Thai people, from which its name derives, is a country that has made itself seem tailor-made for me. The demeanor of its inhabitants is that of pride, charm, and goodwill towards others - one that all people, of all cultures should live by. Over the past few weeks, I have witnessed how the spirit of a group of people can alter that of another. I say this with absolute truth and sincerity, because that individual is none other than me.

In my thus-far short stay in Thailand, I have developed new and special relationships: with my research mentors (Drs. Williams and Vitool), my host family, my Thai language teacher Khruu Nareboon, and the staff and faculty at Chulalongkorn University. The organic progression of these relationships highlight the genuine nature these bonds possess. From day one, I have been what I like to call, culturally fortunate. I have been taken on tours around Bangkok – to dinners, museums, temples and parks, in an attempt to expose me to all Thailand has to offer.

As expected, my research experience has been very challenging. Epidemiology was taught from the ground up. Drs. Williams and Vitool have taken their time with me, stressing the fundamentals of doing good research; and have challenged me to think about tough public health issues in a critical, methodical and exhaustive manner. ***I currently find myself making great strides in research with the use of tools my research mentors have provided me.*** I now have a new perspective and thinking process when it comes to the scientific method, one that promotes a skepticism and inclusion of all factors that can affect a research outcome. In any research project that I will be apart of after this program ends, I will no doubly use these principles in the analysis of data, critiquing of literature, and writing of journal articles.

The ability to communicate with others is what makes the transfer of ideals, experiences and goals possible. My Thai language class has allowed for such communication to take place. Every day I find myself in conversation with Thais who speak as little English as I speak Thai. It's remarkable how my genuine interest in Thailand and my modest training in Thai language have helped me to connect with good friends this summer.

As a student and more importantly as a person, I feel I have grown this summer. First, I was taught epidemiology from two of the best researchers I have ever met. Second, my separation from the culture, people and geography that I am so familiar with has forced me to understand myself on a spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical (my stomach doesn't agree with Thai chicken and rice) level. Lastly, I now consider myself someone with substance and life experience. I owe this life changing experience to the University of Washington's MIRT Program. *Khop koon khrap.*



1 to r: Dr. Vitool, Hau, Drs
Somrat, Chiravisit , Wiroj and
Andrew at Chulalongkorn
University



Nicole de Paz
Undergraduate, Yale University
MIRT site: **PERU**

When I got off the plane in Lima and walked down to the baggage claim, I had no idea what to expect. I only knew I had to look for a sign with my name on it, held by my mentor, Dr. Sixto Sánchez, whom I had never met. When I walked out into the roped-off passenger pick-up area, it seemed like there were a hundred different signs—dry-erase marker on tiny whiteboards, sharpie scribbled on pieces of cardboard, fancy laminated travel-agency signs—and none of them had my name on them. I rolled my bags over to a nearby café, trying not to look too lost, and nervously dialed Sixto's number, breathing a sigh of relief when he picked up, asked me where I was, and laughed because we'd totally missed each other. Thus began my journey in Perú.

I used to think I could prepare for just about anything, but this month in Perú has shown me that no matter how prepared I think I am, there will always be challenges—personal, professional, serious, or downright comical. I didn't anticipate having to adjust so much, thinking that my dark hair and knowledge of Spanish would help me blend in just fine, and that my experience living "on my own" at college would have prepared me well. However, navigating college is about a million times easier than navigating life in Lima, Perú's capital city. While I can usually pass for Peruvian on the streets of Lima, my cover quickly blows the second I open my mouth.

The good news, though, I have a great support system to help me navigate this adventure—from my wonderful host family, to my mentor Sixto, to his sister Elena, to everyone that's given me advice on what places to visit and what foods I absolutely *must* try. From these people I have had the privilege of meeting and working (or living!) with, I have

I've learned that Perú is an incredibly diverse country, divided into three geographical regions—*la costa*, the coast; *la sierra*, the mountains; *la selva*, the jungle—and that every *departamento* of Perú has its own typical foods, music, and dances, as any Peruvian will be happy to tell you!

I've also gotten a taste of the political scene here—during my first week, I learned what a *paro* was—a transportation strike—and saw for myself what a difference it made when the roads were free of *combis* (public buses, more like super-packed vans, that travel a fixed route and stop whenever you yell). I've been so impressed with how aware my host siblings are about Perú's current political situation, international relations, even exports and imports. I know I've been stumped a few times during dinner when asked to describe different things about the U.S. and Puerto Rico (where my family is from)...the last time I learned about exports and imports, I must have been in eighth grade! It has definitely inspired me to become more informed, and to encourage my younger sisters to, as well.

During the week, my schedule includes some combination of shadowing Sixto at Hospital Nacional Dos De Mayo, taking a crash course on statistics and SPSS in order to analyze the data for my project, and learning about the middle stages of public health research—the data entry, coding, database-creation part—with Elena. Dos De Mayo is unlike any hospital I've ever visited—there are open-air wards, with patients lined up and down long rooms; a statue of the hero of Peruvian medicine, Daniel Alcides Carrión, perched above his marble tomb in the center courtyard; and real Peruvian dishes served in the cafeteria. Although it was initially tricky getting the hang of SPSS (and data analysis in general!) in Spanish, I've since become more comfortable with it, and it's made me realize how crucial it is to plan a study carefully, and how complex it must be to try to account for all the possible confounding variables before even beginning.

“After the cheers have died down and the stadium is empty, after the headlines have been written and after you are back in the quiet of your room and the championship ring has been placed on the dresser and all the pomp and fanfare has faded, the enduring things that are left are: the dedication to excellence, the dedication to victory, and the dedication to doing with our lives the very best we can to make the world a better place in which to live.”— Vincent Thomas Lombardi

Nicole Continued

The project I'm working on is titled, "Maternal Stress, Mood and Anxiety Disorders in Relation to Abruptio Placentae," and it's designed to explore the relationship between these three disorders and an obstetric condition called ***abruptio placentae, or placental abruption, which occurs in only 1% of all pregnancies worldwide but is responsible for 20% of maternal deaths.*** The study has already been completed, so my task this summer is to analyze the data and determine the results; I also have the opportunity to assist in a newer, related study, focused on exploring the triggers of placental abruption. It's been really great to meet the women involved in making these studies a reality—the women who recruit participants, interview them, and ensure that the protocol is followed exactly for each one. Although the research department in the hospital is tiny, the work that they do has great potential. I'm looking forward to seeing how it all turns out.

Aside from my work, I feel very lucky to have been able to travel a great deal in Perú so far, partly due to the coincidence of having several friends from my university working or volunteering here as well. In July, I made it over to Cusco and Machu Picchu, which were absolutely incredible! We climbed a mountain (Wayna Picchu) in the rain, just to see the ruins from up high. Unfortunately, it was still cloudy when we arrived at the top, but it sure was an adventure going up super steep stone stairs and looking directly out into clouds. Later that month, Damarys and I went hiking with Sixto near a small mountain town named Canta, where the views were gorgeous. After that trip, I've decided that I'm definitely living near mountains and water when I settle down! We recently returned from a trip to the north of Perú, to the colonial town of Trujillo and the coastal town of Piura, where Sixto and Elena, as well as my host dad, grew up. It was wonderful spending time with Sixto's family, as well as finally enjoying some sun and heat, a welcome break from Lima's cloudy winter skies. As of now, I don't know where August will take me, but I hope to see some more mountain towns near Lima, and explore the museums and parks within the city, as well as a Latin American film festival that's coming soon.

There is no shortage of things to do, sights to see, or foods to eat in Perú, and I hope to experience the most I can during my short time here. I'm crossing my fingers that I don't miss anything! It's been a great experience thus far, both with bumps in the road and small triumphs along the way, and ***I'm very thankful to the MIRT Program for this opportunity, as well as the truly supportive people I have met here. I know that the person flying back home at the end of August won't be the same one who arrived in July, and I think that's a good thing.***



Damarys and Nicole on one of many hiking adventures with Dr. Sixto Sanchez. Here they are rock climbing (literally!) along a river near Canta, a small Andean town northeast of Lima, Peru



Nicole at Machu Picchu

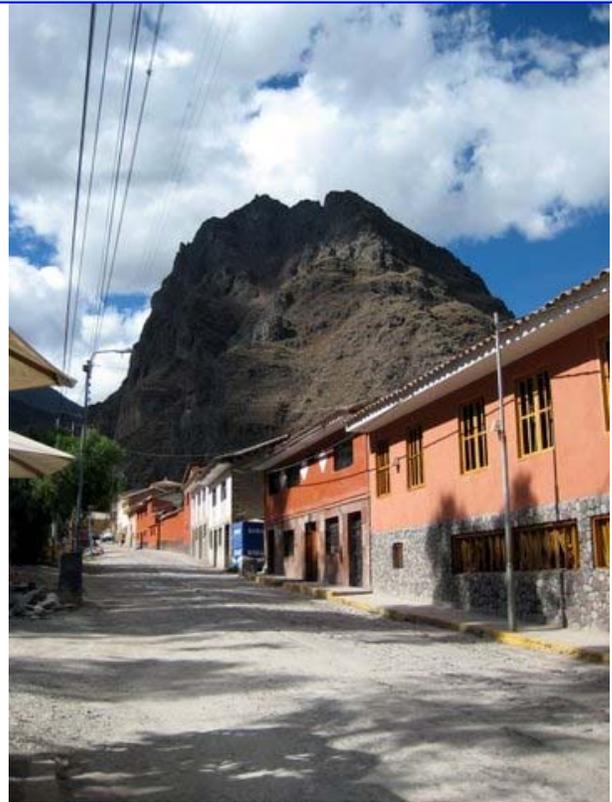


Damarys Espinoza
Graduate, UW
MIRT site: **PERU**

Ometeotl. I am grateful to be a MIRT fellow in Peru, Indigenous land, surrounded by people who invoke deep feelings of familiarity and shared history.

Nicole and I have just returned from Piura and Colan, coastal provinces some fourteen hours north of Lima. We were invited to travel to Piura and Colan with our colleagues and their extended family for Fiestas Patrias. I had long been anticipating traveling to Piura. Working with colleagues from Piura who are now living in Lima, I often hear beautiful stories about northern life where the sun always shines fire red, the ocean water is midnight black, and sky and ocean become one as the sun sets and the waves welcome a new moon. Having been born and raised in Southern California less than an hour and a half from the Pacific Ocean and having traveled south every summer as a little girl to my mother's land and to the beaches of Baja California, Mexico, I feel at home when I am at the ocean. I am deeply thankful to my colleagues and their family for welcoming me into their hearts and homes during Fiestas Patrias. One of the most important moments of my stay in Piura was meeting and spending time with my colleague's sweet, elderly parents who were incredibly kind and generous.

Having returned to Lima, I continue working on the intimate partner violence project. I have also asked my colleagues in Lima to help me find a community-based project or organization that works with Indigenous women, where I can volunteer my time, energy, and love. ***Working with the local community and allowing for a relationship of reciprocity to emerge where I learn from the community as much as I can offer my service to their needs has always been deeply important to me and I hope I can soon begin to work as a volunteer.***



A street in Ollantaytambo, a town located in the Sacred Valley of the Incas, in between Cusco and Machu Picchu Pueblo (also known as Aguas Calientes)



An example of the intricate Spanish architecture (especially the beautiful balconies!) present in many towns throughout Peru. Here, a shot in Cusco's Plaza de Armas, a beautiful city center



Alyssa Vivas
Undergraduate, UW
MIRT site: **ETHIOPIA**

“Selam” (‘hello’ in Amharic)! MIRT Ethiopia has thus far been a truly amazing experience. I was a bit apprehensive at first when I knew I would be spending two months away from my family, but I’ve transitioned rather smoothly to life here in Ethiopia. First of all, our host family has been extremely kind and welcoming. I remember getting a taste of Ethiopian life on the very first day—the delicious injera and wat, the frequent power outages, and the strong “bunna” (coffee). I am also especially thankful to the three girls in the family, my Ethiopian sisters, who have been wonderful guides and Amharic tutors. They show me places around town, help me walk through the “chika” (mud), and bargain good prices when we shop.

Another aspect of MIRT that I love is my workplace, Addis Continental Institute of Public Health (ACIPH). The staff there have been very friendly and knowledgeable. The “shai-bunna” (tea-coffee) break is the perfect opportunity to learn more about Ethiopia and get to know the professors at the Institute.

The first few days, I started to get accustomed to city life in Addis Ababa. While driving around the streets of the city, I began to compare Addis with Manila (Philippines), the city where I was born. I could see many commonalities between the two places—streets crowded with taxis and buses, car exhaust, the unavoidable beggars walking up and down the street, rough and bumpy roads, and the vast disparity between the poor and wealthy. My first two weeks in Ethiopia were spent in the city. The first two places outside of Addis that we traveled to were Angolela and Ankober, two rural areas of Ethiopia.

We visited the Angolela Primary School where my project’s data were collected. Angolela was my first real taste of Ethiopian rural life. ***The things I take for granted in life such as quick transportation to school, big, clean classrooms, running water, flushing toilets, and even soap to wash your hands were unfathomable in this rural school setting.*** Some students even trek through the muddy roads for three hours each day get to school. I also learned about the realities of an agrarian life: The school day is split into two shifts (morning and afternoon); students only attend one shift because the rest of the day, they are needed at home to work on the family’s farm. It seemed that the benefits of education for these children were far outweighed by the need for labor on the farm. We later traveled to Ankober, a highly elevated area of Ethiopia, where the views were gorgeous and the weather was cold.



L to R: Nigusu, Ashenafi,
Alyssa, Nam, Dr. Abera and
Alemnesh in Angolela, Ethiopia

**"Make one person happy each day, and in forty years you will have made 14,600 human beings happy for a little time, at least."—
Charley Willey**

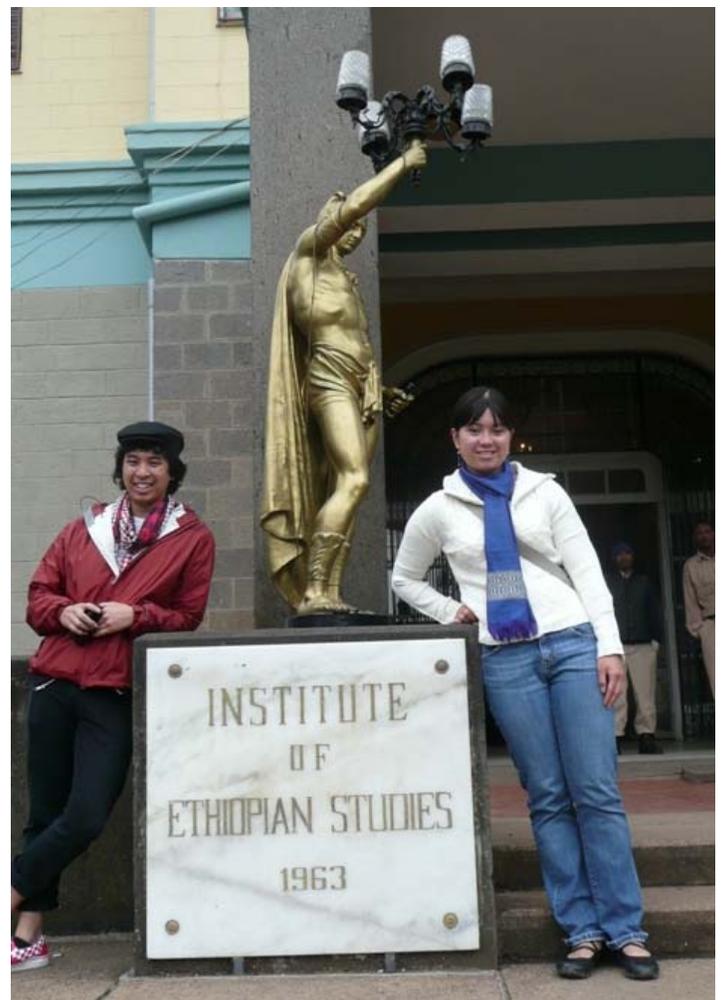
Alyssa Continued

The following weekend, we traveled to Hosanna, another rural area of the country. This trip was definitely an experience to remember. Our original purpose was to meet with data collectors and help them collect anthropometric measurements and interview the families, but unfortunately, we were unable to catch up with them. That day we hiked close to 34 kilometers (21 miles) through the muddy, mountainous terrain of Soro Woreda. This was definitely the most difficult hike I have ever been on, but the views and the people we met along the way were worth it. Half way through our excursion, we were all very tired. Luckily, we met a hospitable family during our hike and they invited us inside their tukul (home). Even though they did not have much, they managed to give us homemade honey (complete with the beeswax!), bunna, and kolo (a traditional Ethiopian snack) to give us more energy. During our trip we also visited two hospitals serving the rural community. Touring these hospitals and talking with the medical directors were both eye-opening. Diseases that can be prevented by simple things such as eating the proper diet or having proper hygiene are very rampant in Ethiopia (and other developing countries for that matter). The things that are expected in American hospitals—enough doctors and beds, medical technology, proper medicines and equipment—are uncommon commodities in rural hospitals.

Walking through the villages made me realize that rural Ethiopians are strong and resilient. They walk tens of kilometers through the mud and rocks every day to get to the nearest town. We even met an 8th grade boy who walks close to 50 kilometers a day (more than four hours) to and from school. After seeing what the rural lifestyle is like, I'm never going to complain about the little inconveniences in life.

I also had the chance to reflect on what I want to accomplish later in life as a physician. I've always had the goal of working in underserved communities in Washington, but this trip has helped me realize my obligation to also serve my home country of the Philippines.

I want to reflect back on the main purpose of MIRT: the public health experience. Bizu's amazing guidance through the paper writing process and during the one-on-one lectures about epidemiology and biostatistics has helped me become more knowledgeable about epidemiologic research. Before his lectures, I didn't know how to fully comprehend public health research articles or analyze data, but now all those statistics make sense! Before MIRT, I was considering an MPH, but now I KNOW that I want that degree. The professors at ACIPH (many of whom have at least three degrees behind their name) have inspired me to broaden my future career in clinical medicine and public health so that I can do more than just helping one patient at a time. I learned from Bizu that as a physician, I'll be able to help each patient individually, but as an epidemiologist, I can help an entire population. As I write this, I haven't yet had the opportunity to go to AHOPE or the fistula hospital, but I hear great things about them and look forward to visiting those places soon. I feel extremely lucky for getting this once in a lifetime opportunity. Every single aspect of MIRT is incredible and this is definitely a summer I will never forget!



Nam and Alyssa in front of Ethiopian Studies Museum, Addis Ababa University



Hau Do
Undergraduate, UW
MIRT site: **THAILAND**

It was on my first days in Thailand that I learned my first Thai sentence, “Mai phut Thai” or “Do not speak Thai” because many local people mistook me as Thai and started to talk to me in Thai. Thanks to the Thai language classes, I was able to start some basic conversation with local people. I really had fun learning (and making mistakes when speaking) Thai. Being Vietnamese, I had the advantage of being familiar with the tonal languages. However, I also had the disadvantage of not knowing that similar sounding words in Vietnamese have different meanings in Thai. For example, “chin” means a bunch in Thai, but it means number nine in Vietnamese.

I was fortunate to have two great mentors, Professor Williams and Dr. Vitool, to teach me about Epidemiology. I enjoyed learning about epidemiological analytical methods. I am excited to see that I can implement what I learned immediately in my work. ***I have learned many invaluable research skills as well as paper writing skills that I know will be useful for my future career.***

The people here were very friendly, especially our host family. They were among the nicest and most graceful people that I have ever met. I was blessed to get to know them. They took us around to many exciting places and engaged us in a variety of fantastic activities. They also introduced us to the delicious (aroy in Thai) Thai cuisine. I was very thankful to having been invited to their wedding. I learned so much about Thai culture that day, not only about the ceremonies in the wedding but about Thai culture and family values in general. I am looking forward to many more great experiences here in Thailand.



Hau and Andrew-floating lotus (floating of suffering) in the Erawan Museum, Thailand



Why float lotus around the basement of the building ?

The lotus floating tradition represents the floating away of suffering and bad things. This practice is similar to Sri Lanka's belief called “Pumaghata”[vase of plenty] where they floated flowers in water pots. They believed that when people in the house had a quarrel, the wife should bring many kinds of flowers to float in pots in order to bring peacefulness back to the home. The water represents peacefulness and flowers represent happiness. Both water and flower bring happiness, good work, and safe and sound journey.

Hau has been accepted in to medical school. He is now attending medical school at Oregon Health Sciences University. Congratulations, Hau!

Alumni Update

Let US Know How You're Doing

Do you have an update to share with us?

We would love to hear from you!

Name: _____

Update: _____

E-mail Address: _____

NB: We have made it easier for our Alumni to send updates directly online. Please go to the MIRT Web Page: www.depts.washington.edu/mirt/ and click on Alumni Update

Response to Photo Quiz

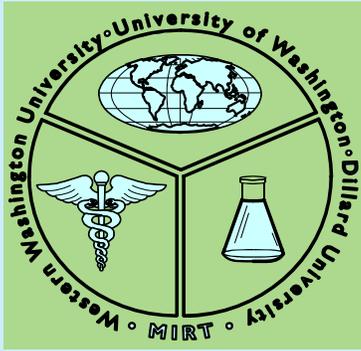


Thank you for all who participated in our Spring issue photo quiz. Barb Simon, Administrator in the Department of Epidemiology, was the winner of this photo quiz. Congratulations, Barb!

Marian Anderson is a gifted artist and a figure of quasi-political power. In 1939 she sang on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. The Daughters of the American Revolution had refused to let her appear at Constitution Hall, Washington's largest concert venue, because of the color of her skin. In response, Eleanor Roosevelt resigned for the D.A.R. and President Roosevelt gave permission for a concert on the mall. A 10-year-old Martin Luther King Jr. talked about her performance in a speaking contest : "She sang as never before, with tears in her eyes. When the words of 'America' and 'Nobody knows de Trouble I see' rang out over that gathering, there was a hush on the sea of uplifted faces, black and white, and a new baptism of liberty, equality, and fraternity. That was a touching tribute..." Throughout her life, she preferred not to make a scene. She is quoted as saying "My music was dedicated to a purpose more important than classical music's pursuit of excellence; it was dedicated to the fight for freedom and the historical destiny of my people."

[source: The New Yorker]

http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/atlarge/2009/04/13/090413crat_atlarge_ross



Striving to Eliminate Health Disparities

University of Washington
MIRT Program, Box 357236
1959 Pacific St. NE
Seattle, WA 98195
Phone: (206) 543-7559
Fax: (206) 543-8525
E-Mail: mirt@u.washington.edu

MIRT is a national program designed to encourage students to pursue careers in biomedical and behavioral research. This program provides support for undergraduates and graduate students to receive research training in an international setting. MIRT is funded by the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NCMHD) and Fogarty International Center (FIC) of the National Institutes for Health; the UW MIRT Program has been developed in collaboration with Dillard University, Xavier University and Western Washington University. The program focuses on population-based health research in developing countries and builds on established linkages with academic institutions in Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Vietnam, Thailand, Republic of Georgia, Australia, Peru, Mexico, Ecuador, Chile, Brazil, and Argentina.

Visit Our Website

www.depts.washington.edu/mirt



Yemrehanna Kirstos Church in Lalibela, Ethiopia. The church, built in the late 11th century, stands beneath a natural roof of a cave