Panelists: Global Health Career Opportunities

Mitra Afshari, MD, MPH, is a first-year resident at Northwestern Memorial Hospital who will be pursuing Neurology. She received her MD and Master’s in Public Health at the Feinberg School of Medicine and a Bachelor’s in Biomedical Engineering from Northwestern University. She has been working on multidisciplinary teams and competitions since her engineering days, primarily in the area of healthcare provision and biotechnologies. She has collaborated on projects with the Kellogg School of Management and traveled to Uganda for field work on the development of an infant HIV diagnostic tool, as well as participated in two healthcare/global health-related competitions including the Emory Global Health Case Competition.

Ramona Bhatia, MD, MS, is a third year fellow in the Division of Infectious Diseases in the Department of Medicine at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine. She attended medical school at Feinberg, followed by residency in Internal Medicine at the Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX. Dr. Bhatia's research interests include HIV-related outcomes, with specific focus on cancer treatment disparities in African-American HIV-infected patients. She is also actively engaged in projects on HIV global health and is currently reviewing tropical diseases and HIV co-infection.

Carol Ciesielski, MD, graduated from Indiana University School of Medicine, completed internal medicine residency at Mt. Sinai Medical Center in Milwaukee WI, and an infectious disease fellowship at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center in Denver. She joined the Centers for Disease Control and the US Public Health Service as an Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer in 1985 and remained at the agency for 25 years, working primarily in HIV/AIDS. She worked in Vietnam and South Africa before serving as the Director of the CDC Office in Phnom Penh Cambodia from 2007 through 2009, and has since worked at the CDC offices in India, Mali, Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan) and Botswana.

Ashti Doobay-Persaud, MD, is clinical instructor of medicine and precept medical students at NMH. She spends thirty percent of her time volunteering in clinical care in resource-limited settings and has been doing so as a preceptor since 2009. Dr. Doobay-Persaud is currently the Chair of the Faculty Development Committee at the Center for Global Health and coordinates a forum of Northwestern faculty involved or interested in global health to share experiences, best practices, and resources. She is also developing the global health network for Northwestern’s Hospital Medicine Division.

Mark Huffman, MD, MPH, underwent medical school and public health training at Tulane University in New Orleans and internal medicine training at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where he also served as chief medical resident. He then trained as a NIH Fogarty International Clinical Research Fellow at the Centre for Chronic Disease Control in New Delhi, India and as a NIH T32 cardiovascular epidemiology research fellow in the Department of Preventive Medicine at Northwestern. He is interested in global cardiovascular epidemiology, outcomes and prevention research with a particular focus on South Asia. He is an active member of the American Heart Association and is a member of the Statistics Committee for the AHA’s Council on Epidemiology and Prevention. He has published more than 15 research and review articles, has served as both chief medical resident and chief fellow during his training, and is on the editorial staff for the Cochrane Heart Group and Global Heart.
Robert L. Murphy, MD, is the Director of the Center for Global Health at Northwestern University where he holds his primary academic appointment as the John P. Phair Professor of Medicine. He also holds an appointment as Professeur Associé de Recherche at the Pierre et Marie Curie Université-Paris in France. Dr. Murphy’s primary research and clinical interest is in viral infections. His research includes drug development of new antiretroviral drugs and vaccines for HIV and viral hepatitis and the scale-up of therapy for AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in sub-Saharan Africa. Dr. Murphy is Special Advisor to the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) program in Nigeria and is currently the Principal Investigator on Northwestern’s NIH/Fogarty International AIDS Training Grant based in Nigeria and Mali and the Northwestern Fogarty Frameworks grant, among other research and training initiatives.

Michael Pitt, MD, is a Pediatric Hospitalist and the Director of Global Health Education for Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago. He oversees a bi-directional resident educational exchange with Bugando Medical Center in Tanzania where each year, he trains 15-20 Lurie Children’s residents to lead a low-tech simulation curriculum while. He also oversees the month-long visiting Medical Exchange Development curriculum which visiting residents from Tanzania matriculate in Chicago each year. His research interests include expanding and validating the use of non-traditional teaching methods including simulation and Game Based Learning.