



Perspective/Opinion

Transforming Today's Medical Learners Into Tomorrow's Global Health Leaders

By Lee Ann Lau, MD, FACS

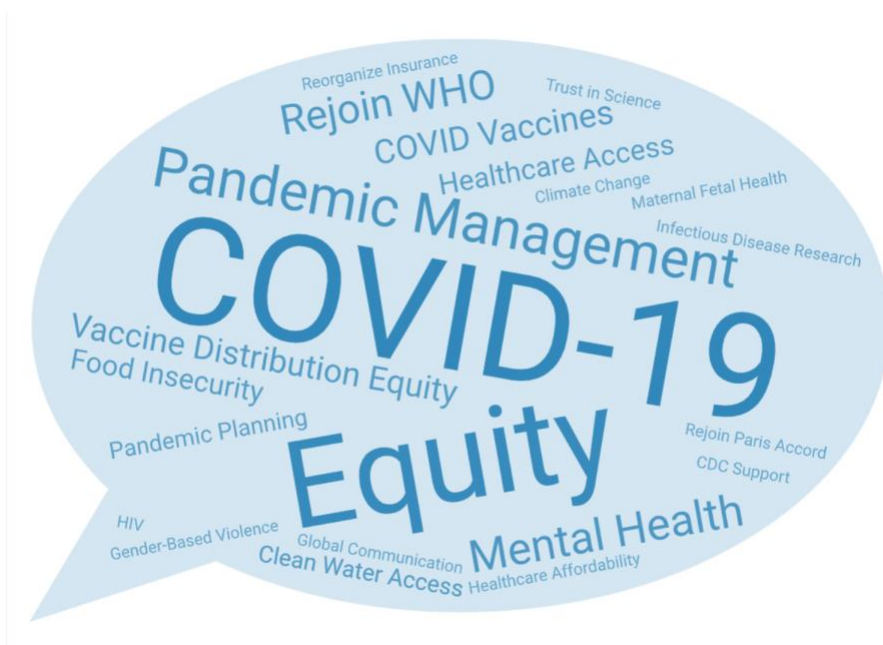
We have all witnessed the global nature of health through the lens of the current pandemic. It is timely that our globally engaged faculty along with the Medical College of Wisconsin Office of Global Health have started a new training program for residents and fellows to build character and competencies to enhance care for patients and their communities.

Reviewed and supported by MCWAH's GME Committee, the *GME Scholars in Global Health* program is a two-year curriculum created to teach global health principles and concepts to residents and fellows. It is designed to cultivate cultural sensitivity, allowing the Scholars to appreciate the global burden of disease and understand how they can use their specialty training to collaborate to address health care inequities and improve access to care from neighborhoods to nations. With multi-disciplinary interactive didactics and biannual deeper dive seminars, the program will emphasize leadership and networking while developing global health skills and knowledge.

The inaugural cohort includes thirty-seven residents and fellows from twelve medical and surgical specialties. Many Scholars are new to the field of global health, but some already have extensive experience they wish to strengthen. During the application process, GME Scholars expressed a desire to incorporate global health skills and knowledge into their future careers. Gaining a broader perspective on how cultural, psychosocial, and economic factors impact the illness and injury experience and outcomes was noted as a priority to provide better care, both locally and globally. Scholars also noted interest in research and obtaining a better understanding of how environment and infrastructure impact care delivery.

The Scholars are invited to compliment the core curriculum with other experiential learning activities during MCW's Global Health Week and by participating in the Consortium of Universities for Global Health Virtual Capitol Hill Day, which includes teaching for how to effectively engage legislators.

To launch the new training program in January 2021, the Scholars participated in a discussion about the definition of global health, led by Dr. Stephen Hargarten, Associate Dean for Global Health; and Tiffany Frazer, Office of Global Health Manager. The group reviewed the Biden–Harris Administration's [Statement on Global Health Security](#) and considered what recommendations they would make if given the opportunity to influence the new administration's global health agenda. Not surprisingly, the cohort's main priority was COVID–19 treatment, pandemic management, and vaccine distribution. However, they raised many other important issues including health care equity, rejoining the World Health Organization, addressing climate change, promoting maternal fetal health, and infectious disease research, as noted in their combined word cloud.



The curriculum is co-lead by Drs. Mac Longo, Radiation Oncology; and Ashley Pavlik, Emergency Medicine. Evaluation lead is Dr. Stephen Humphrey, Dermatology; and scholar development lead is Dr. Steve Hargarten, Associate Dean for Global Health. The program receives input from eighteen faculty members from more than ten specialties who have dedicated their content expertise to the training program. The didactic lectures and discussions will include a wide range of topics with a global health focus, including non-communicable diseases, travel medicine, global EMS and disaster medicine, tropical dermatology, private/public partnerships, trauma care, imaging considerations, and eye disease. This rich learning environment will foster the passion and creativity needed for tomorrow's global health leaders, strengthening their competence, care, and character.

For questions about the program or to apply, please contact the Office of Global Health Manager, Tiffany Frazer at tfrazer@mcw.edu.

Lee Ann Lau, MD, FACS, is currently completing the Hospice and Palliative Medicine Fellowship at MCW after spending 13 years in private-practice general surgery. After graduation, she is planning to start a faculty position with MCW in the Department of Medicine's Division of Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine.