

GLOBAL HEALTH

Middlebury College
Global Health Newsletter
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Greetings,

We hope this finds you healthy and well during these difficult times. This issue was intended to be the “West Coast Issue” but, like everything else, that goal was eclipsed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This issue features more people profiles than usual, because we miss seeing each other.

On March 10, 2020, President Laurie Patton notified the Middlebury College community that, in three days, spring break would begin one week earlier than scheduled, and that students should remain home and prepare for classes to resume remotely on March 30. Students, faculty, and staff left the comfort and support of their campus work and study spaces. Some went home to challenging environments. Some lost friends and relatives to the novel coronavirus.

Public health is more important than ever, and Middlebury College is proud to have alumni and students working to improve population health and health care equity; Read on to learn more about a recent alum and the Global Health student advisory committee members, and hear how their lives have been impacted by the pandemic.

To the left: Global Health Program Director Pam Berenbaum (top) and Project Assistant Kristine Su (bottom) on a Zoom call, May 2020



Quan Pham '12

currently works at Kaiser Permanente as a Senior Consultant; his primary responsibilities are the development and execution of a new medical facility. He manages details, like the artwork and locations of sharps bins, to the overall objectives, such as patient flow and operational efficiency.

When asked about how his role has changed, he stated, “**All hands are on deck for COVID-19.**” Quan’s recent work contributes to the logistical coordination of testing and monitoring of patients and the maintenance of the data. He has created workflows of ‘patients under investigation’ to assess the triggers and endpoints of COVID-19 cases.

Quan loves working in health management and administration as he believes his interests and strengths greatly complement the field. He is passionate about eliminating all inefficiencies to better serve patients and the community. Quan holds a Master of Health Services Administration with specialization in Global Health

Management from the University of Michigan. He described his degree to be similar to a Master of Business Administration, but with a lens unique to healthcare.

After obtaining his graduate degree, Quan was selected as an Administrative Fellow for Kaiser Permanente in Northern California. He was mentored by chief executives and provided the opportunity to experience a variety of operational and functional departments, from the frontlines to the national offices. “**To be effective, you must understand something at all levels,**” he said, learning tremendously about the company’s organizational structure at this time. Quan was also able to interact with many of his coworkers, an experience that made it easier for him to mobilize teams across departments with a common objective when he became a Senior Consultant.

At Middlebury, Quan was a Molecular Biology and Biochemistry major. He was initially on the pre-medical track and had never heard of public health until enrolling



in an anthropology course taught by Professor Svea Closser, now a professor at Johns Hopkins. **He admired that public health directly changed systems, having a wider impact on communities.** Fittingly, the global health minor was introduced the following year which Quan pursued instead of the pre-med track. “I feel like global health is my calling,” he said.

He recalled that the experiences he had gave him valuable skills and background knowledge that he still uses today. As a research assistant for Professor Closser, he developed robust **critical thinking skills** when analyzing the healthcare system in Nigeria. Quan was also a

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(Quan's profile continued from p. 1)

Global Impact Fellow at Unite for Sight in Ghana. Living in Accra for two months exposed him to Ghana's culture and **the role that nonprofits play in global health**. Additionally, Quan piloted the concept of the Service Cluster Board under the Center for Community Engagement with the goal of pooling resources for service organizations and initiatives. It is evident that his **passion for high-level organization towards a social good** was present even during his undergraduate years.

Since graduating from Middlebury, Quan was also a Fulbright recipient in Vietnam, an Implementation Consultant at Epic (an electronic medical records company), an Outbreaks and Health Emergencies Intern at the World Health Organization, and a member of the Board of Directors at the International Children Assistance Network in Silicon Valley.

Reflecting on his extensive global health career, Quan has learned that he is a strategic leader with strengths in collaboration and empathy. He emphasized **the importance of approaching solutions from different perspectives and increasing diversity**. Wherever he works, he is focused on fostering relationships, improving the workplace culture, and fostering livelier discussions.

His advice is to gain self-awareness, "What is it that excites you? What are your skills? How can this match with what organizations are looking for?" Quan stated that knowing this will make you be your **best self** and elevate all the work you do.

If you have any questions for Quan, please feel free to contact him at [linkedin.com/in/qpham](https://www.linkedin.com/in/qpham).

Student Advisory Committee

How can we bring Global Health minors together for connection, ideas, resource sharing, and curricular improvement? These were questions that Pam Berenbaum (Director of the Global Health Program) and Kristine Su '20 (Global Health Project Assistant) considered at the start of the 2019-2020 academic year. The answer: a Student Advisory Committee. Students applied to serve on this committee and the four students featured below were chosen to serve. Although COVID-19 cancelled many of our plans for the spring, the SAC will go forward (with new members replacing graduates) and will provide valuable student insight and input for enriching the experience of GH minors.

Current Members: Caroline Arthaud '20, Corinne Bintz '20.5, Ansley Harralson '20.5, and Megan Job '21 (not profiled)

Caroline's interest in nutritional health led her to serve as the president of Nutrition Outreach and Mentoring (NOM), a student organization that is **partnered with the V.T. Department of Health** and works with local schools and organizations. At Middlebury,

Caroline Arthaud '20

grew increasingly interested in creating a larger impact on health beyond nutrition and began studying global health. She appreciated that Middlebury emphasizes **global health's interdisciplinary nature**, engendering Caroline to draw connections in her coursework as a psychology major with minors in global health and anthropology. "It is an enlightening experience to come to this on your own," she explained, "Various applications [from different disciplines] are really big in global health."

Caroline's professional experience integrated both her passions in nutrition and global health. She interned at Save the Children International in London, U.K. under the Health and Nutrition Global Theme and in Washington, D.C. as a USDA Knowledge Management Intern. Caroline was inspired by her time there. She assisted with briefs, participated in



meetings, and communicated with colleagues in multiple countries, exposing her to the policy work of nutrition and global health.

Additionally, she learned about the role of research in global health. Caroline's research contributed to Sustainable Health Enterprises' initiative to achieve **opportunity equality for women in Rwanda** through feminine hygiene products. As an intern with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine through the Global Health Mentorship, Caroline conducted research to create literature reviews and presentations.

She was motivated to join the Student Advisory Committee to make Middlebury's global health program more academically and experientially extensive. "After my internships, I saw how much breadth

there was in global health,” she reflected. Some of her ideas include having a monthly meeting to share experiences and creating a mentorship between minors. Although she is not able to implement her ideas due to the nation’s health crisis, the pandemic has made her appreciate her career path even more. She realized just how critical interdisciplinary approaches are to respond to this crisis.

In the fall, Caroline will be pursuing a dual masters in public health (MPH) and nutrition science (MS) at Tufts University. Her advice to those who are interested in learning more about the field is to talk to professors about your interests, try to meet other global health minors, and participate in student organizations. She also recommends **being open-minded to engaging in opportunities that may not seem health-related on the surface** because more connections can be made than often presumed.

If you have any questions for Caroline, please feel free to contact her at [linkedin.com/in/carolinearthaud/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/carolinearthaud/).

Passionate about **science, medicine, and social justice,**

Corinne Bintz ‘20.5

researched online for careers that integrated her interests. She stumbled upon the field of public health in which she learned how health differed at the population level compared to the individual level. Corinne was fascinated by the factors of inequities in health, **applying to Middlebury because of its global health program.**

Her first-year seminar taught by Professor Myers from the economics department was her first



exposure to the interdisciplinary nature of global health. She learned how to utilize microeconomic practices and tools to analyze sexual health, preparing her to work as a research assistant with Professor Myers the next semester.

Corinne enjoys the variety of academic disciplines she has taken for the minor because it has taught her to consider global health issues from numerous perspectives: **“How would a historian or economist approach this?”** When she is assigned final research projects in her classes, she always selects a global health-related topic, giving her experience **approaching problems with multiple informed perspectives.**

Having a broad interdisciplinary view allowed Corinne to identify the role she wanted to partake in to address health disparities. After enrolling in a computer science course on a whim, she discovered an **interest and passion for coding.** Corinne was able to explore connections between global health and computer science through her internships at myStrength, a teletherapy app, and at the Universi-

ty of Washington the next summer, Corinne gained practice collecting, cleaning, and analyzing data. Her work contributed to the development of an **algorithmic equity toolkit** that promotes community oversight of public sector surveillance. Additionally, Corinne created a demo that displayed **flaws in facial recognition technology such as racial and gender biases.**

In her junior year, Corinne studied abroad in Stockholm, Sweden where she predominantly enrolled in global health classes which were able to count towards the minor. She enjoyed learning and engaging in experiential opportunities about health policy, noting that her visits to the headquarters of the World Health Organization and Doctors Without Borders were the highlight of her time abroad.

Corinne applied to be on the SAC because she wanted to encourage incorporation of data science and be involved with any future changes into the minor. This summer, she will be interning at Harvard University working on **bioinformatics algorithms.** The pandemic has made her internship remote, but she is very grateful that it was not cancelled. The national health crisis has been stress-provoking and has placed some challenges on her educational resources and work management. However, she feels fortunate overall because she and her family are safe and healthy.

Her advice to students who are passionate about global health is to consider how its interdisciplinary nature readily allows for intersection of your interests. **“What skills are interesting to me and what do I want to do with that? How can I bring that to global health?”**

If you have any questions for Corinne, please feel free to contact her at [linkedin.com/in/corinne-bintz/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/corinne-bintz/).



Ansley Harralson '20.5

came to Middlebury with the intention of pursuing global health opportunities for a more holistic perspective on her pre-medical studies. She is a molecular biology and biochemistry major with a minor in global health. She described the minor as refreshing because it broadened her horizons to incorporate more disciplines.

Ansley took a deep dive into public health in Chile on the health professions track in her semester abroad. She was a Public Health Intern at Valparaíso Public Health & Primary Care Clinic, an opportunity that exposed her to the issues surrounding female sexual health internationally. Her experiences have encouraged her to **keep a local mindset when thinking about global health**, “It is not always true that people farther from me need more help than people closer to me.” At Middlebury, she has pursued local connections to global health by volunteering at the Open Door Clinic as a Spanish translator and EMT and interning with Vermont’s Head of Healthcare Reform through Economics Professor Jessica Holmes’ Health Policy in Action course.

She is the Co-President and was the Director of Fundraising Cam-

paigns for **GlobeMed**, a student organization that raises awareness for and works to improve upon the health issues that affect those living in poverty across the world. GlobeMed is partnered with Gardens for Health International, a non-profit that fosters sustainable solutions to end chronic childhood malnutrition in Rwanda. Ansley gained further experience in her role as an on-site summer intern. “It was really cool to intern there because I had a connection to the organization for several years,” she added.

During the pandemic, the student organization has made efforts to continue meetings remotely. For the majority of the spring semester, GlobeMed’s weekly meetings discussed the development of the novel coronavirus. The members had considered **how COVID-19 would interact with the country’s current allocation of resources and inflexible healthcare system**. “I felt more prepared,” Ansley reflected.

This summer, she had plans to continue her work in Chemistry and Biochemistry Professor Bob Cluss’ lab on the metabolism of a causative agent of Lyme Disease. Ansley was grateful that efforts are being made to transition into remote work.

Her advice to anyone who is trying to gain global health experi-

ence is to participate in activities around campus. She recalled looking through the weekly events calendar and attending random events that interested her. Ansley also recommended **asking for guidance and advice from professors**, even if their discipline does not appear to be related to global health, “You never know what the professors know or have done [that would interest you].”

If you have any questions for Ansley, please feel free to contact her at [linkedin.com/in/ansley-harralson](https://www.linkedin.com/in/ansley-harralson).



We are pleased to announce that the Experiential Learning Lifecycle Hub web site has won the 2020 NACE Technology Excellence Award from the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). The award letter noted that the site “provides a hub for students to prepare for and engage in experiential learning, including internships, research, service-learning, or self-directed projects. It supports students’ growth and learning, encourages reflection and processing of experience, and supports integration of learning into academic life and future plans.” Congratulations, team!

Announcements

In addition to the Student Advisory Committee, the Global Health minor has a new Canvas-based interactive web site for resource-sharing and discussion. All Global Health minors will receive an invitation to join the site, where they can learn about on- and off-campus opportunities, participate in discussions, and get book and film recommendations.

Like every other academic institution, Middlebury is struggling with how to reconcile social distancing with our usual model of in-person, collaborative education. Equity and safety are top priorities. For information on Middlebury’s decisions related to the pandemic, visit the College’s COVID-19 community announcements page at middlebury.edu/office/announcements.