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Alpha Sigma Foundation

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Summer Final Report

The summer of 2018 has been an experience filled with everything from board rooms to blood pressures. My times spent in Spain and Ecuador helped solidify my interest in the multiple intersections of healthcare and business. I have been able to see how my interests play out in different fields across the world. To avoid redundancy from my prior write-up I will focus mostly on my time spent in Ecuador and a summary of my summer experience overall.

I recently returned home from a 12-day medical brigade to Quito, Ecuador. Our brigade was organized through a UNC campus organization called TIMMY Global Health, which I am the treasurer of. TIMMY's premise to sending recurring medical groups to different communities across Central and South America to set up 1-day urgent care and check-in clinics. Ecuador, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic are the three major locations of TIMMY. At Chapel Hill, our club performs different service tasks and I run a local trivia night to raise money for the club.

A typical day during our trek started with an early wake up and packing the bus with different medications and supplies after breakfast. We would pick up a few Ecuadorian doctors to complement the American ones we had brought along with us. The communities we served were usually small and nascent on the outskirts of Quito. Each day we would see around 100 patients at the clinic. The basic setup of our clinics was a 5-step process that flowed surprisingly well considering it run by mostly college students.

Patients would enter the clinic at the registration and history desks where they signed in with their government ID and reported any major medical history they had and their current ailments. Next, they would move over to the vitals station. I worked here for several days because of my ability to speak and translate Spanish. In vitals, we would take their blood pressure, height and weight, and their pulse while the nurses did any blood work or tests they needed. From here they would move up to the waiting room to see the physicians. I helped scribe for two days with the physicians to record the visit of the patients and to write down the prescriptions that the physicians chose. We saw endless cases of diabetes and hypertension along with some very interesting cases of diseases and hernias that fascinated me. Lastly, patients would wait for the pharmacy to fill the prescriptions with the medicines that TIMMY brought from the US. When I worked in the pharmacy, I translated all the labels from English to Spanish so that the patients could understand the proper dosage and timing of their meds.

Other than medical work, we were able to learn about Ecuadorian culture too. I tripped over my toes as Ecuadorians taught me to salsa and I traveled to the Equator and stood in two hemispheres at once. The six volcanoes that surround Quito are breathtaking snow-capped 18,000 giants that make the city an unbelievable sight to visitors. Interacting with the locals was an amazing opportunity to learn about a place that I had little knowledge about, and I was able to master my Spanish in another setting with a medical focus.

The combination of Spain and Ecuador did wonders for my knowledge in medicine, business, and Spanish. My vision for what I want to do in the future is now much more clear. Being able to work internationally and also in a hands-on medical environment made me realize I really enjoy the policy and management side of healthcare. This summer was an unforgettable experience and will undoubtedly contribute to my future in healthcare. All this would not have

been possible without the scholarship from the Alpha Sigma Foundation. I can't wait to communicate to other brothers this fall how much those funds benefitted me this summer and the massive impact that they are going to have on my future.