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learn...
explore!

➤ Mercyhurst University pre-med student gets hands-on experience in Kenya

Deciding to sign-up with the Medical Project in Kenya with Projects Abroad was the right choice for 20-year-old Shauna Novobilsky, a biochemistry student at Mercyhurst University in Pennsylvania. Shauna spent one month volunteering in a Kenyan public clinic with Projects Abroad where she was able to gain practical experience: "I have always wanted to learn more about medicine and I saw this as an opportunity to learn and, at the same time, do something worthwhile."

Based at Langalanga Health Center, a small clinic which serves patients from poorer communities, Shauna's helping hand was very much appreciated: "The clinic is understaffed and there is a lack of resources. There are large numbers of patients on a daily basis; so this is where the volunteers offer much needed help by providing an extra hand. I have been

rotating between different departments; shadowing and assisting the clinical officers and nurses, but after I gained their trust they allowed me to practice what I had learned from them by letting me run a department on my own."

Shauna has had the opportunity to observe and assist in various wards; from weighing babies, giving injections and vitamin A in the Child Care department. In Family Planning, she helped administer injections, remove implants and take vitals. At the pharmacy and the TB clinic Shauna supplied the patients with their prescribed medicine. Shauna has also worked in the lab where she has run TB and other tests "This experience has taught me a lot about the basics of medicine: how to do charting, stitches, give injections and much more; but the most important lesson has been about the patient-doctor relationship, an experience I am sure will come in handy in the future."

Although things are quite different from the USA, it has not been difficult for Shauna to adapt. "It was a shock at first, when we had to improvise due to the lack of equipment, however I believe this was a positive lesson that will make me a better doctor," she adds.

Shauna's host mother, Mama Jane, has contributed hugely in helping Shauna adapt to the Kenyan culture. She has introduced her to Kenyan food and encouraged her to go out and meet the locals. "I love it here! Kenya has been the most rewarding experience of my life, I am returning home to get my medical degree but I am sure to come back to Kenya after medical school."



We hope great stories like these inspire others to help Projects Abroad continue to make a difference, and by doing so, learn something themselves along the way.