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Global Health Elective in Santiago Atitlan, Guatemala

Sarah Greenberg

Children's Mercy Hospital

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Global Health Elective in Santiago Atitlán, Guatemala

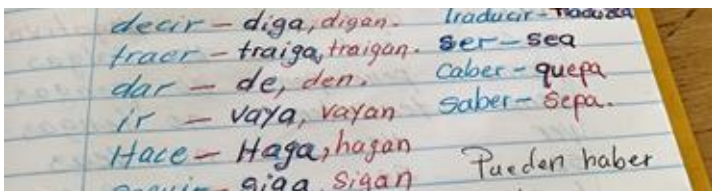


Sarah Greenberg, MD

Children's Mercy Kansas City, Kansas City, Mo.

Background

- Hospitalito Atitlán was founded in the 1960s to serve the indigenous population along the southern coast of Lake Atitlán
- Frequent host to international providers, offering an opportunity for language immersion



Objective

- Improve Spanish language skills
- Learn to adapt medical practice in a limited-resource setting
- Experience how cultural differences affect the practice of medicine



Preparation

- In coordination with Hospitalito Atitlán, a new elective specific to pediatrics was created that included outpatient, inpatient, and community outreach experiences
- Participation in the CHiCoS Spanish Language Program and Global Health Track
- Took Canopy Spanish Course

Experience

- Outpatient primary care clinic visits
- Inpatient rounding
- Rural medicine clinic on a plantation
- Surprise exit due to COVID-19 pandemic



Reflection

- Immersion in Spanish-speaking culture was instrumental in furthering language abilities
- Many similarities in healthcare needs between Guatemala and the United States
- Learned to optimize care in resource-limited settings



Future Directions

- Continue to practice my clinical Spanish
- Greater awareness of how my patient's background culture affects their medical decision-making
- Practice with a more global perspective

