

Program Description: GPSA for Health

GPSA for Health is a summer experience targeted at high school sophomores and juniors. The GPSA for Health program is aimed at students who self-identify as being interested in health careers. Health careers include medical doctor (MD), nurse (RN, LRN), Pharmacy, biomedical engineering (BME), dentistry and related fields.

For GPSA for Health in 2010, the educational collaborators will be The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Edgerton Center in Boston, Massachusetts and The Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) in Ft. Meyers, Florida. Additional faculty may come from Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. Faculty and students from MIT and FGCU are among the best in the country, perhaps the world. High school student participants will have daily contact with the faculty. In some cases, students form lasting relationships with their faculty.

The Experience.

The program starts with a few days on the campus of FGCU. Participants will meet their team and faculty. Language and technical instruction will begin while in Florida. Then, everyone will depart for Calhuitz, Guatemala.

Participants will spend just over three weeks in Guatemala, living together, sharing with a host family and working in a health clinic or hospital. During this time, students will take language classes in the morning as well as technical classes with MIT and FGCU faculty. In the afternoons, students will be divided into teams of five. The teams are assigned, with an adult leader, to either 1) health screenings, 2) shadow a health professionals, 3) disabled needs identification (FGCU), 4) conduct research (MIT) or 5) perform routine volunteer tasks, including physical labor. Teams rotate every few days so that every participant experiences every activity by the end of the time in country.

Finally, students return home. After returning home, students have the option of obtaining additional hours of essay and application coaching for college. Some university faculty may opt to continue to work with selected high school students to complete aspects of their research program, including solving an identified need for a disabled person in the community. University faculty are available to write recommendations on a case-by-case basis.

The Benefits

GPSA participants will get a deeper and more meaningful experience because students are working in a developing world to make a difference. Participants will also get a chance to see if a health career is right for them.

Students will tangibly improving healthcare conditions in the developing world.

Students Making a Difference

GPSA
for Health

www.gpsa.us

Students will have an adventure experience as well as get a chance to “try-out” their future career. Students live with host families during the experience furthering their language training. They will find living with a host family, visiting a college campus and working in a developing world clinic exciting, stimulating and challenging.

GPSA will select up to 30 high school students per site per cycle. Participants should be juniors who have identified themselves as interested in health care careers. Seniors are fully eligible. Sophomores will be occasionally accepted. Freshman in college may be accepted under particularly compelling reasons.