Global Health Experience
Ethiopia – Addis Ababa
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A little bit about the country

- Ethiopia is landlocked between Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, and Kenya
- Our summer is their winter - be ready for rain and chilly temperatures
- Home to the first human on earth “Lucy” ~3 million years old
- Invaded by Italy in 1935, but never colonized
- Current WHO Director (Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus) is Ethiopian
A little bit about the country

- One of the fastest growing economies in the world
- Significant infrastructure and business investment from China
- One of the highest poverty rates in the world
A little bit about the country

- Over 80 languages spoken within the country
- Strong connections to religion and patriotism
- With the exception of Addis much of the country is rural with poor access to transportation, food, and water
Site Info

- Black Lion Hospital (Tikkur Anbessa)
- Zweditu Hospital
Rotations

- Most preceptors can speak English well
- Many opportunities for learning and participation
- Require you to take initiative dealing with faculty and staff members to optimize your learning
- Can do 1-4 different selectives in the 4 weeks you are there
- Generally days are 8-4 Monday to Friday but there are opportunities to be involved in private health care hospitals and procedure “campaigns” on weekends
Neurosurgery

- Addis has the only neurosurgery center in Ethiopia, it’s a fairly new program there
- Opportunities to participate in clinic and OR
- Participation in round and introduction to reading radiographs of tumors and other relevant medical conditions
- Observation of neurosurgery operations in low resource settings
- Preceptors are very willing to teach
Neurology

- Patients present with quite severe and interesting findings on physical exam
- Atypical diseases that are extremely rare in North America
- Exposure includes general outpatient clinics, Parkinson’s clinics, EMG/EEG clinics
- Less access to diagnostic imaging, so clinical exam matters more!
Emergency Department

- Frequently overcrowded with family members and new patients
- Morning teachings and rounds with staff and residents
- Opportunities to help with simple procedures and physical exams
- High rates of trauma and complex infectious disease cases
- Divided into triage, intake, medicine, resuscitation, procedures room and orthopedic surgery preparation areas
- Very low-resource even compared to other areas of the hospital
Obstetrics/Gynecology

- Opportunities to participate in overnight call
- Midwives are abundant and heavily involved in patient care
- Separate wings for NICU, gynecology and obstetrical inpatients, and labor ward
- Opportunities for hands on learning
- Mornings begin with teaching rounds and lectures
Survival Tips

- Look up and try the food before you go so you know what it’s like- if you don’t like it consider bringing comfort foods, it’s hard to find foreign
- Only drink bottled water
- Bole and Kazanchis neighborhoods are the most tourist/expat friendly
- Talk to the residents and ask questions - the learning is very self directed and you need to take initiative
- Bargain- taxis are cheap, as are items in the market areas but you have to ask around to get a feel for how much things will cost
What we learned from our trip...

- Appreciation for socio-economic determinants of health
- Appreciation for challenges of accessing health care from patients from underprivileged backgrounds in terms of transportation, health literacy, and monetary restrictions
- Understanding how to communication through translators
- Learning realistic ways that foreign intervention can improve healthcare in developing countries