

## Community for Children: At the Border and Beyond



**Community for Children (CfC)** is a signature program of the UTHSCSA Regional Academic Health Center (RAHC) in Texas' Lower Rio Grande Valley. It is designed to prepare future physicians to provide compassionate, effective leadership within community collaborations. Application is open to 4th year medical students and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year residents.

During this 4-week elective, participants explore the sources of health, disease and healing on the border. They study with international public health experts, physicians, community leaders and activists, migrant refugee health experts, promotoras (community health workers) and families. The CfC curriculum is addressed through didactics, community outreach, advocacy projects, tailored Spanish-language classes, guided reflection and individualized professional development counseling. CfC faculty mentor participants during the rotation and beyond.



Partners include UTHSCSA/RAHC and Department of Pediatrics, Brownsville Community Health Center, Harlingen Pediatrics Associates, UT School of Public Health-Brownsville, Hospital Infantil de Tamaulipas and Centro de Salud/Ciudad Victoria, Tamaulipas, Mexico, and community-based agencies in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

Housing is provided at no cost to UTHSCSA students and is \$600 for visiting students for the month.

For more details about the elective and applying, please visit <http://www.communityforchildren.org>.

### 4-WEEK ELECTIVE CURRICULUM

#### 1. Rights of the Child

- Workshops based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Meetings with attorneys and judges working in children's rights
- Interviews with child detainees and officials at U.S. federal detention centers

#### 2. Social Determinants of Disease and Health

- Lectures on social determinants from an international public health perspective
- Meetings with migrant clinicians, public health officials and promotoras

#### 3. Clinical Care in Resource-poor Regions

- Resource material and didactics on the challenges of providing ICU services where there is no ICU; a review of infectious and chronic diseases associated with poverty
- Direct patient care with faculty pediatricians
- Meetings with healers not schooled in allopathic Western medicine to discuss alternative health beliefs and practices

#### 4. The Impact of Poverty, Immigration and Violence

- Home visits with faculty and lay health educators
- Examination of roots of poverty through interaction with faculty, families, community leaders, organizations and literature review
- Reflective essays on observations and experiences

#### 5. Preparing for Advocacy

- Community-based advocacy project
- Meetings with community activists, policymakers and advocates

#### 6. Cultural Competency

- Review of current literature
- Daily opportunities to encounter people whose language, values, affect, economics, religion, norms and politics are personally foreign to participants.
- Individualized Spanish-language classes

#### 7. Fostering a Culture of Compassion

- Guided reflection to explore how medical training supports or undermines compassion for self and others
- Reflection on the meaning, causes and repercussions of poverty and our own emotional responses to the poor among us

#### 8. Professional Development

- Correspondence prior to attendance to encourage reflection on personal values, affinities, and the "heart" in medicine
- Private time for reflection on personal meaning, call to action, sense of direction
- Individualized professional development counseling; Post-elective mentoring

### Facilities

Classes are held at the RAHC, community sites and via videoconference with Hospital Infantil de Tamaulipas and Centro de Salud/Ciudad Victoria, Tamaulipas

*Experiential learning is through:*

- Community-based field work
- Brownsville Community Health Center and other clinics in LRGV

### Other Benefits

- 1-on-1 interaction with faculty
- Housing near the academic campus
- Travel Stipends
- Easy access to South Padre Island National Seashore

### Block Rotation Schedule:

- February 6-March 2, 2012 ONLY

Apply ► Please email:

**Marsha Griffin, MD**

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