“The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education.” — Martin Luther King, Jr.

POST-TRIP REFLECTION OF MIRT 2011 FELLOWS

“I entered the MIRT program and Ethiopia not quite sure of what I wanted and I now return knowing that I would like to pursue a career in the medical field... I feel honored to have been a part of a study contributing to a growing body of epidemiological research examining the means of early detection of metabolic syndrome. I hope the findings of my and other studies do enable the accurate and early detection of an increasing cardiovascular condition in developing countries.” — Kelsey Nebeck, MIRT 2011 Ethiopia

“My learning of Aboriginal culture is one of the strongest memories I will take from this experience. The Indigenous Australians I met and talked to truly defined what culture is to me—a way of life of a people... the epidemiological analysis knowledge I gained from MIRT has helped me tremendously in my current internship with the Arizona State Department of Health on editing the questionnaires—I have seen what happens after the survey ends, and this has made my work before the analyses a lot clearer.” — Onome Uwhuba, MIRT 2011 Australia
Gabriella Puente
Undergraduate, Yale U
MIRT site: Peru

**Gabriella’s post-trip reflection**

Being the type of person I am, I always make plans and have clear outlines of what I will be doing before participating in most activities. This is probably best exemplified this summer in Peru when on a mini trip from Lima to Cusco, 600 miles to the southeast, I had prepared a color coded itinerary of our trip: plans for what hostel we were staying in and hour outlines of what museums and archeological sites we should visit. My on-site mentor, Dr. Sixto Sanchez saw this itinerary the night before our trip and burst into laughter. “You Americans,” he said “always need to have everything planned. You need to be like Peruvians just show up to a place and make it work out.”

Well, taking his advice of dropping my habits of knowing what to expect is not easy. So many times in my Peruvian experience, I was surprised. Surprised that understanding the world of statistics, was actually very fun. Surprised that my hospital shadowing experience with Dr. Sanchez could be so rewarding. Surprised to find that only 5% of Peruvians I encountered looked like the Quechuan images that appear when you google image search “peru people.” Surprised at each little unique custom and tradition that differed from American ways and similarly surprised at each part of Peru that was indistinguishable from America. Although these experiences all were new and challenged my ideas and expectations of my summer, none of them were ever greeted without a smile on my face.

I can say I have been nothing but grateful for this summer I have been given: enhanced by the MIRT friends I have made in Washington and in Peru. I have learned countless things about paper writing and epidemiology.

This type of research was previously unknown to me, however **now that I have understood just a small portion of what it is like to be an epidemiologist or biostatistician, I am truly fascinated by the field of Public Health and want to look into careers that will include this!** I also really understand study designs now and I actually think about study validity when I hear people say “new research shows...” Besides this major outcome of a new love for Public Health, the MIRT program has taught me simpler things in life such as the importance of really reading the news and being aware of the larger global picture. I am also proud to say I have picked up a little of the Peruvian bargaining skills that are required everywhere in Peru: from getting a taxi to going shopping.

Lastly, I have also gained a new sense of how privileged and lucky I am. Even when I get stressed at school, all I need to do is think of all the other people out there in the world and how there are much larger problems than my physics exam. This mentality might be best exemplified by an experience in a mountainous village called Pisac where Andrea and I were visiting some Incan ruins. I somehow dropped my expensive photography camera and was in such a state of shock I actually teared up. However, as much self pity and anger I felt, these emotions quickly vanished when stepping outside the ruins. Among all the people who tried to sell their crafts to the tourists, we met Juanita, an old woman who was selling her trinkets and hand-woven tapestries while taking care of an orphan child named Violeta. It only took a little time talking to her for my tears to dry and be replaced by awe for this woman.

The people I met and places I went were truly unforgettable. So to conclude, I merely want to say “Muchisimas Gracias” to MIRT and my mentors. Every single part of this trip was extremely rewarding. I know that even as I continue to go abroad and engage in research, I will still remember this summer indefinitely.
My time in Peru this summer can be summarized as an exceptional learning experience that has broadened my horizon in the medical field. Before this fellowship, I only thought on becoming a medical doctor, but now I see epidemiology and research as another vehicle in which I can also make a difference in society.

The MIRT program has definitely surpassed all my academic and personal expectations. Although I was born in Peru and have made various trips in the past, I knew that this trip would be much more different and challenging than my previous ones. During the eight weeks I spent in Peru conducting research and experiencing first-hand the reality of Peru’s public health system, I learned a lot about population-based research, Peru’s public health issues, and myself.

At the beginning of this program, I didn’t know much about what research was all about; however, now I have a better understanding thanks to Dr. Yanez and Dr. Sanchez, who were excellent in explaining to us every aspect of it from how the data was gathered to how to compose a research manuscript. I truly enjoyed every part of it, especially when Gabriella and I took part in a three day biostatistics workshop at the Hospital Dos de Mayo for Peruvian doctors who were interested in conducting research.

Also at the Hospital Dos de Mayo, I was able to shadow Dr. Sanchez during prenatal care appointments and C-section surgeries. This opportunity made the research much more personal since I was likely interacting with some women who were experiencing intimate partner violence during their pregnancy.

In addition to observing and learning an overview of the interesting world of OB/GYN, I learned about other aspects of Peru’s health issues such as the high TB incidence rate and the recent outbreak of dengue fever in the Amazon region. Unfortunately, I was also able to witness the apparent insufficiency of funds in Peru’s public healthcare system despite the country’s current growing economy. For instance, one day a premature newborn showed signs of hydrocephalus (“water on the brain”) and needed to have a CAT scan to confirm its severity and complications, but had to be transported to another hospital due to the lack of equipment at this one. Given the insufficient funding at many public hospitals in Peru, I was told that doctors have to rely mainly on their clinical knowledge in order to diagnose patients especially when medical equipments are not readily available or are out-dated.

Personally this experience has strengthened my desire to one day make a difference locally or globally. With my new outlook on public health care, I see myself incorporating what I’ve learned this past summer in the future whether as a researcher or a doctor. My personal growth can be summed up with a quote from Danny Thomas, founder of St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, “Success has nothing to do with what you gain in life or accomplish for yourself. It’s what you do for others.”

Thank you so much MIRT program for the opportunity you have given me. I hope the results of our research study can one day be used to support future interventions in order to decrease women’s exposure to intimate partner violence during pregnancy.
My experience with the MIRT program this summer has been truly exceptional and I still cannot believe how lucky I am to have been chosen as a student sent to Ethiopia. I believe I got the best introduction to public health research possible and I only wish I had taken a course in epidemiology earlier in my college career! The parts of research writing I understood entering the program were tested and improved while the parts I did not understand as well were built from the ground up. Bizu’s patience and mentorship was another gift of the program that I won’t soon forget.

In addition, I also enjoyed expanding my knowledge of cardiovascular disease and type II diabetes. My research project focused on how specific characteristics of blood count are related to increasing severity of metabolic syndrome (MetS). Prior to this experience I had not heard of metabolic syndrome nor the specific methods used to diagnose cardiovascular conditions. I feel honored to have been a part of a study contributing to a growing body of epidemiological research examining this means of early detection of metabolic syndrome. I hope the findings of my and other studies do enable the accurate and early detection of an increasing cardiovascular condition in developing countries. The implications of this kind of study have the potential to change lives for the better.

Aside from learning about public health research, I furthered my historical understandings of Ethiopia with our trips to the ancient cities of Axum, Lalibela, and Gondar. My favorite was our trip to Lalibela where we walked and sometimes climbed and scrambled through the intricate tunnel systems that were built amongst the eleven churches carved out of stone centuries ago. The rural scenery in the surrounding area with its rolling green hills and occasional

Observing data collection for a childhood malnutrition study in the southern region of Wolayta renewed my appreciation for the difficult job of data collectors. Accuracy in recording data is key to a meaningful study but achieving this is much easier said than done (especially when your 2-year old subject won’t stand still for her measurements). Also in the Wolayta region was the next largest hospital outside of the capital in the town of Hosanna. The dedication of the 5 physicians working to serve hundreds of patients a day still astounds me.

Perhaps some of the best lessons learned were during average days at home or walking around the city with our host family. They helped us bargain out at market, provided us with homemade coffee and shiro with injera (theirs is the best in the city!), helped us do laundry by hand, went on much needed evening walks after sitting at the office all day and generally did a wonderful job providing us with a home away from home. I will never forget their generosity and hope to stay in contact and visit them someday when I return to Ethiopia. I still miss the camaraderie amongst total strangers and I even miss laughing when people innocently point out your flaws (“what’s wrong with your face?” - asked on a day I had a few blemishes).

During our last week, we visited AHOPE, an orphanage for HIV-positive children, where we were asked to give talks to the younger kids, older kids, and staff at their three compounds about sanitation and responsibility. While teaching both groups of kids was fun and hopefully helpful to them, I found speaking with the staff the most rewarding as they actually had a lot of questions for us which I am not sure they would have asked outside of the open discussion setting we created. The five days of teaching ended and left me thinking if I can have a positive impact as a student now, then there is no limit to the positive impacts I can have as an educated professional.

Now back home in Seattle, as I look forward to continuing my education at the UW, I know there will be some modifications to my plans for this next quarter. I entered the MIRT program and Ethiopia not quite sure of what I wanted and I return now knowing that I would like to pursue a career in the medical field. Whichever specific pathway I choose, I know I plan to shape my future career around improving the lives of those with which I work. I am grateful to have been chosen for the program and for the direction it has given me.

“Don’t gain the world and lose your soul, wisdom is better than silver or gold.” — Bob Marley
Now that I’m home, I wish I could go back to Ethiopia. I had a great time in Addis Ababa and I would really love to go back some day. My MIRT experience was very positive and I learned more than I could have imagined.

The last portion of our trip was intense. We were able to travel south of Addis to Wolita and observe the data collection process for a malnutrition study. We finished our project and presented our findings to the Addis Continental Institute of Public Health (ACIPH) staff. We were also fortunate to volunteer at AHOPE for our last week in Ethiopia. Observing data collection in Wolita taught me that the process can take a large amount of time and energy. It was truly hard work. Being in a rural area we were also able to see how different their way of life was compared to that of people in the city.

The family we met in Wolita was very large and lived in a one room house. They made a living from growing kidney beans. We had a lot of fun joking and trying to communicate with the kids even though we couldn’t speak their language. The experience really forced me to consider how the lives and health issues of people living in rural areas differs from those who live in the city.

This striking difference in lifestyle and health care needs made me more curious about rural areas in the United States. I have never lived in any rural areas of the U.S. I would assume it’s very different from rural life in Ethiopia. Nonetheless, I’m sure the health issues and needs of rural communities vary from that of cities and suburban areas. This is a new interest for me and something that I have the opportunity to learn more about now that I’m back home.

On our way back from Wolita we were able to visit Hosana Hospital, which is a small, resource poor facility. It was a single hospital that is somehow meant to serve millions of people. Touring the facility made a huge impression on me. In many ways it was very heartbreaking to see. People in that general area have almost no access to health care. I also thought about how strong the staff and doctors must be to take on such a huge burden. If we never left the city we would have completely missed out on learning how such a large proportion of Ethiopians live in the countryside. Volunteering at AHOPE was really the best way to end our internship. The organization is truly amazing. AHOPE houses a number of orphaned children who are HIV positive. One house had younger children, another had older children, and the community center was designed for children in need who were not orphaned. To see what people at AHOPE were accomplishing for the children in the community was very inspiring.

Our volunteer work included meetings with the staff and children to discuss concepts of sanitation, infectious disease, and chronic disease. We also informed the staff about hypertension and diabetes prevalence as it related to our project. We encouraged staff members to get there blood pressure and blood glucose checked. We also had a great time with the children. We played games that reiterate basic but important concepts of hygiene. The small children were very outgoing and playful. It was really a joy to see them when we came to the facilities every day. I will definitely give to the AHOPE foundation so I can help to support the children.

Now that I’m home I am energized and motivated to take full advantage of opportunities I have here in the United States. I am still eager to contribute to the well being of others who cannot help themselves. I am also left with a strong desire to travel and live abroad again. I am really excited about graduate school and all the plans I have laid out for the next few years.
Dina’s post-trip reflection

I was able to fulfill all my academic and personal expectations set prior to the MIRT fellowship. Personally, I wanted to discover Africa and visit as many regions as I can. Ethiopia has an interesting ancient history and contained sites that I wanted to explore. Academically, my main goal was to gain experience in research in a public health settings followed by writing a publishable article. Furthermore, I wanted to be exposed to public health practice combined with medicine. The Fistula hospital, the data collection site at Wolaita Sodo and Hosaena hospital visits were all a great system to have a first look at the practice of both public health and medicine. Overall, I was able to picture myself working in underserved areas and fighting to reduce health disparities around the world as part of my career.

As a graduate student, I already know the program of study that I want to continue pursuing. With few conversation exchanges between the staff at the organization and me, I obtained some great advice that will help me make better choice about few areas of research that I have in mind. I must admit that it was not easy at first being away from the things that I am used to in my daily life. I have travelled in few different countries and I thought that I would adjust quickly. But the changes seemed to have happened in a later time than when I had expected. Few cultural exchanges that I faced involved trying to buy things on my own without being able to bargain and many other things that could not be done due to language barriers. During my stay, I spent much time talking to my family and friends to tell them about Ethiopia. By doing so, I realized that I was also getting to know more and more about the history of the country in addition to observing the culture as well. Thus, it helped me make the most of my stay.

Internet was definitely the biggest challenge. I wished I could surf the web as often as I wanted but it was a hobby that I could live without for two months. My teammates and I realized on a short notice that we had to train non-professional staff at AHOPE. The sessions were beneficial, but I wished that I could have answer all the questions that were asked on HIV/AIDS, and quick internet access would have served to our advantage. But one should always learn to work with little materials and resources and having mentioned that, this challenge became my most rewarding moment.

My expectation was to spend one week at AHOPE uniquely playing with the kids. However, the bulk of our time was spent training the non-professional staff who did not know much about HIV/AIDS. I realized that with the little that I knew about HIV/AIDS, we were able to teach them a lot. The staff was very grateful that we took time to have discussion with them and give them information. These sessions were for me a realization of that I have always wanted to have health discussion with various communities, knowing what their needs and concerns are and being able to find solutions.

In sum, I was able to observe the reality that is associated with doing research. Following my first two years of public health study, I was certain that it was a field that I was passionate about, but it was the challenges of completing a research project that I needed experience in.

Dina ‘trying’ to grind dried red pepper with mortar and pestle in Wolaita Sodo, Ethiopia
Diana Trinh's post-trip reflection

The MIRT program was a fantastic experience for me and I have learned so much on this trip. At first I had thought that the MIRT program was a hard-core research project and we would not get much of a chance to experience what our host country is really about. After the orientation, when talking to alumni of the program, and especially those who have gone to the same country that I was assigned to, I realized that MIRT is a program that teaches the importance of immersing oneself into a culture other than our own. Learning about a culture is as important as doing this research project that was assigned to us. I had learned about the Indigenous groups of Australia, the Aboriginais and the Torres Straight Islanders, about their history and the challenges that they face in present day, politically, socially, and physically. Being in a program that is focused on Public Health, I had learned through the example of the Aboriginais history of how they were treated and comparing their lifestyles from how they were traditionally, to how they are today, explains many of the chronic health issues that arises within the population of a nation.

Some cultural challenges that I had faced when I was in Australia: the issue of racism in Australia compared to America. Although racism does exist in America today, it feels as if it is more subtle, especially in the Northwest of America. In Australia, racist jokes, comments or behaviors are displayed a little more bluntly (especially in North Queensland) compared to what I am used to in America. I had learned to not be offended, but to understand that not all places in the world has such a progression on acceptance or has the capacity set to educate the public on cultural diversity, especially if a place does not have the characteristic of being culturally diverse.

Every day while I was in Australia, I woke up asking, “How could I make today great?” or “How could I make today a memorable day for this trip?”, and so I would embrace the day with an open mind, and take in the adventure that was waiting for me starting off just before sunrise. I found myself hiking, diving into the Great Barrier Reef even though I didn’t know how to swim, and eating a kangaroo for dinner by just being open, and it is now an experience that I would never trade. Since there was research work to do during the trip, my partner and I had worked hard to finish our assignments during the week days so that we had all the time in the world to explore the city on weekends.

Picking out the most rewarding aspect of this experience is definitely a challenge, but the fact that I had even said, “yes”, to push hard to try to get into this program in the first place, had opened up a beautiful door. I feel great having to learn how to do SPSS, how to write a research paper (which is a useful skill for future academic and professional work), how to cooperate with colleagues that are complete strangers to me, letting go of my fears so that I gained another life skill on how to swim, and definitely making new friends and networks are all part of the my wonderful experience. From this trip, I take with me more people, research, cooperation, survival, budgeting, presentation, and writing skills that will for sure come in handy throughout the rest of my academic and professional careers. Personally I have felt that I’ve grown, sharing our stories and getting to know my colleagues, as well as learning to be more open minded in order to unlock new ideas and inspirations, including learning to be more tolerable and cooperative during challenging situations.

“Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life. Don’t be trapped by dogma—which is living with the results of other people’s thinking. Don’t let the noise of others’ opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most importantly, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary.” — Steve Jobs
From AUIP travels in North Queensland, a tour guide/bus driver/hostel owner, Paul, inspired me to throw the old handbook out the window and really get detached from the world I have known. Paul, himself, backpacked through Europe for two years doing whatever he can to stay alive but learned survival, communicational, and cultural skills on the way. His life story about how he dove into the travel business showed me that the only thing that matters in life is PASSION. I have a passion for helping people, and then I will do whatever, wherever, and however I can to accomplish that. All the negativities along the way just do not matter because there is always an alternative solution. All the necessities in life just do not seem all that important either. And lastly, from Maggie and Dong at Northcott community center, I realized how important community means to me. I have taken for granted the wonderful family and friend support around me. But living in a whole new environment for two months without all the people I know and seeing how a community can form with people without similar back-grounds, I appreciate even more the community that I live in. I also would like to help create that sense for people without this luxury.

Australia has truly changed my mind set. I feel more connected to my family, community, country, and even the world. If my life was played on a tape recorder, I would keep this trip on loop. Because each time that it is repeated, I would learn more things about myself and the world that I live in.

Tina’s post-trip reflection

During the MIRT orientation in May, Karlota Rosebaugh taught me and my fellow researcher a lesson on cultural competency. She told us not only to be culturally aware of our surroundings but also to examine everything to the finest detail. “The unexamined life is NOT worth living.” At the moment we learned about this idea, I was confused at how I am going to learn more about myself than about Australia or epidemiology.

Prior to this program, I have always done my studies during the day at school and lived at home. I was the center of my little world: eat, sleep, study, work….eat, sleep, study, work. Never have I thought that my life was mundane or unfulfilling. When I came back to the routine of studying endlessly in my piles of medical books, I realized that there are certain things in life that my career and achievements just cannot satisfy. I missed the silly conversations with the MIRT girls, the leisure knitting at Northcott, wandering around Sydney, and the provocative Inner Sydney Governmental conferences with Charmaine Jones. My old world could no longer contain the passion I acquired from Australia. I thirst for more social and cultural knowledge that could never be obtained from books or personal stories alone. Thus, I have set aside all the breaks during the next four years of school for travels and medical missions.

In these treasured seven weeks, I have met so many new people who have given me new perspectives in life and academic knowledge. Our mentors, Dr. Christy McKinney and Dr. Annette Fitzpatrick, taught me more in few weeks about epidemiology than in my past four years of undergraduate such as valuable skills in analysis with SPSS, logics behind statistical modeling and data interpretation, and the art of scientific, concise writing.
Onome’s post-trip reflection

I found that, like MIRT fellows of previous years, the hardest question to answer is: “How was Australia?” I can only say that despite the relative brevity of my experience, the number of things I managed to experience remains mind-boggling to me. I alone have a dedicated MIRT album of almost a thousand pictures, and with all the girls combined, we have more than 5000 pictures. But these pictures tell only a very small part of our experience. They represent the times when something struck us enough that we took the time to draw out a camera. They do not represent the times when we were so struck that even the thought of a camera was forgotten.

When first accepted to the program, I wanted to go back to Africa, and then I ended up in Australia. Not exactly the same thing, but as I discovered, you can always find and learn if you are willing to. The afternoons we spent at the Northcott community center taught me more about Aboriginal culture than any other place. I would have ever gleaned by walking down Bondi beach and admiring the scenery. While not always a part of the conversation, the times I was able to listen and observe informed me of the politics of the country, definitions of social standings, racial and gender relations, and what exactly Australian sounds like—it sounds like gibberish by the way.

For 3-5 hours almost every day, Tina and I analyzed and wrote our research paper on Gait, Balance and Stroke in Vietnamese adults. This experience of learning to do epidemiological research is the reason I applied for this program, and I can definitely say that Drs. Fitzpatrick and McKinney taught me exceptionally well.

My learning of Aboriginal culture is one of the strongest memories I will take from this experience. The Indigenous Australians I met and talked to truly defined what culture is to me—a way of life of a people. But more than that, they define family and belonging, and that is what their culture was to me—one that took their own and made sure that everyone who was Aboriginal, truly belonged—whether they were wholly Indigenous Australian or 1/16th Indigenous.

Now I’m back home in Arizona, and in the throes of a second internship with the State Department of Health. I am learning a different side of epidemiology—the everyday tracking of diseases, the daily conference calls to report minor outbreaks and clusters and hospital visits to collect medical records for epidemiological studies. But the epidemiological analysis knowledge I gained from MIRT has helped me tremendously in editing the questionnaires—I have seen what happens after the survey ends, and this has made my work before the analyses a lot clearer. I start school in 6 weeks, and the cycle of academia and learning continues, but I will always have my memories, both those captured on film and those too amazing to be on film. I have met and spent 8 weeks with an amazing group of women, both my fellow MIRT fellows and the professors who chose to spend their summers teaching us.

...we are ready to swim with sea turtles!
My participation in the MIRT program located in Australia was more than rich! I learned so much about the social, civil, and health issues that occur internationally. There were so many things that I was unaware of, and many thing that I often took for granted that others simply don’t have the ability to do. This was a grand opportunity to learn about another culture while being surrounded by the culture. MIRT was truly a blessing, in more ways than one. It truly expanded my scope of my life, different lifestyles around the world, and made things clearer for me.

One cultural difference that I immediately realized was openness and lack of censorship of conversation. This was always interesting because they always addressed what Americans have a tendency to avoid. I was working with some amazing young ladies and terrific mentors that only enhanced my experience, becoming my family away from home. The research was an excellent opportunity for me to receive some constructive criticism and analyze worthwhile data on important issues. The entire experience helped me to strengthen what I want to do in life and realize more of what I am not interested in. I just feel more open to the world as a whole and interested in how other countries survive differently from ours. Now looking back at what I used to be, and what I am now, I totally owe the MIRT program experience some credit for my personal and academic development.

Sarita Sharp
Undergraduate, Benedict College
MIRT site: Australia

Sarita’s post-trip reflection

“There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, learning from failure.” — Colin Powell

Alumni Update

Do you have an update or new photo to share with us?
Help us keep you informed and let us know how you’re doing!
We would love to hear from you!

Application Deadline

The application deadline for the Harvard MIRT/MHIRT Program is on February 3, 2012. Please visit our program website for application procedures.

www.hsph.harvard.edu/mirt

2011 Photo Contest Winners

The selection committee members are happy to announce the winners of the MIRT 2011 photo contest and to present you samples of their outstanding photos (page 12). Congratulations to the MIRT 2011 Peru group. Please contact Mr. Bizu Gelaye to collect your prize.
Our MIRT fellows in Australia were featured in the South Sydney Herald News Paper while volunteering at the Northcott community center! Below we share excerpts of the Newspaper. They reflect on the meaning of community. Enjoy!

The meaning of community

Sarita Sharp

Community means a family, a home, and unity within a relaxed lifestyle. Those that contribute to the makeup of a community are essential for the type of community one would live in. An individual provides character and personal strengths and weaknesses. These qualities help to shape the environment into what it is for all others to live in and enjoy.

A community may not just be a neighborhood, but a home to many people with similar interests and qualities, such as economic and health status or the ideal location for individuals of a particular age group, ethnic group, or religious practice. A community should be comfortable for everyone to live in; getting to know one another in your surrounding is important to the success of a community. If there is no communication, then the atmosphere just feels unwelcoming and dreary. There would be no sense of unity and togetherness. To add a more inviting feeling to the surroundings, one should make another feel as comfortable as possible. This would provide optimal comfort, making what used to be just a neighborhood, or apartments, into a home for many individuals to live and prosper.

Onome Uwhuba

There is an African proverb that says, “It takes a village to raise a child”. As a Nigerian, living in America, those words could not prove more true to me. And that is what community means to me. Community is the people that surround you willingly whom you trust implicitly to provide for you what you need, tell you the hard facts and help you get through life in easy and hard times. At Northcott my experiences with community have been very different from what I experience at home. Community here is the willful collaboration of strangers to make a place for everyone regardless of their affiliation with Northcott. Community at Northcott is the welcoming of strangers – albeit cautiously until further acquaintance, which as my grandmother says, is good commonsense. There is no one definition of community. To one, community might mean a single person to another, community is an entire nation...
MIRT is a national program designed to encourage students to pursue careers in biomedical and behavioral research. This program provides support for undergraduates and graduate students to receive research training in an international setting. MIRT is funded by the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) and Fogarty International Center (FIC) of the National Institutes of Health. The HSPH MIRT (formerly UW MIRT) Program was developed in collaboration with Dillard University, Xavier University, and Western Washington University. The program focuses on population-based health research in developing countries and builds on established linkages with academic institutions in Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Vietnam, Thailand, Republic of Georgia, Australia, Peru, Mexico, and Chile.