About the HBNU Fogarty Global Health Program

The HBNU Fogarty Global Health Training Program provides mentored research opportunities to train and prepare a new cadre of health professionals in the United States (U.S.) and low and middle-income countries (LMICs) dedicated to research, health services, and academic careers. The Program aims to enhance the trainees’ ability to independently plan, implement, and assess innovative clinical or operations research addressing major global health challenges. Fellows in the Program must spend at least 11 months at their research site. Collaborating research sites include 21 sites across 15 countries in Africa, Asia, and South America. For more information, please visit the HBNU website.

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2019-2020 Cohort Update

The current cohort of HBNU trainees has made great progress on their research projects. Spread across nine research sites in eight countries, this cohort has faced unprecedented challenges during their fellowship year. Since COVID-19 has spread throughout the globe, these trainees have adopted creative methods to advance their research projects. This is detailed further in the following sections.
Caleb Figge, PhD, MA

As a Fogarty fellow, I am fortunate to work alongside a remarkable group of researchers, clinicians, and students at both Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences and Muhimbili National Hospital, the national referral hospital of Tanzania. Their expertise has been invaluable in my Fogarty project to explore contextually and culturally sensitive psychological trauma events and expressions of posttraumatic stress in urban Tanzanian youth to create a novel, transdiagnostic assessment of trauma-related stress. Together, we are also validating a wide battery of psychosocial and mental health diagnostic measures for youth in Dar es Salaam to be directly integrated into assessment processes at the child and adolescent psychiatry clinic at Muhimbili National Hospital. Measures will improve the contextual sensitivity of mental health assessment, the time- and cost-effectiveness of mental health screening and triage, and inform intervention development and monitoring.

Although actively engaged in a range of research projects, I quickly learned that for many of my colleagues in Tanzania, disseminating research findings posed a major challenge. A number of manuscripts and conference presentations were in-progress with available data but were "stuck" due to a variety of practical and cognitive barriers, including low confidence in scientific writing skills in a second language, limited know-how of publication submission processes, and minimal access to journal databases and statistical software. In hopes of supporting capacity in this regard, I created and led a weekly workshop series for scientific writing and publication attended by a group of clinicians, research staff, and students.

Workshops focused on practical barriers (i.e., access to journals and statistical software, using citation software, access to computers), writing mechanics (i.e., manuscript structure and formatting, citations, how to elicit and incorporate feedback), the publication process (i.e., how to select a journal, submission and revision processes, working with multiple authors), and empowerment as researchers (i.e., writing confidence, resource-seeking, and advocacy). Each week, members of the group set a one-week goal for advancing their manuscript or presentation. Together, we submitted five manuscripts for publication (one accepted!), three presentations were accepted at international conferences, and students have successfully defended two theses and one dissertation, with several other projects still underway. In return, I've learned a great deal about supporting research dissemination in limited resource contexts through effective teaching and collaboration with international colleagues, and I am fortunate to have formed many lasting personal and professional relationships.
Olanrewaju Oladimeji, MBBS, MSc, MPA, PhD

Olanrewaju Oladimeji is an HBNU fellow hosted by the University of Jos in Nigeria. His research titled, Drug-resistant tuberculosis treatment outcome and transmission risk among patients with and without HIV infection in Nigeria (DR-TB RISK STUDY), aims to provide a comprehensive assessment and generate new knowledge of programmatic outcomes of multi-drug resistant tuberculosis treatment in Nigeria. In addition to his research, Olanrewaju has worked with his site mentor to submit two grant applications and is preparing an application for the NIH K43 Emerging Global Leader Award. Olanrewaju has recently become a Fellow of the African Scientific Institute (ASI), and he is also a member of the editorial board of PLOS ONE and Biomedical Central journals.

Recent Trainee Publications


The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically changed the world around us. Widespread uncertainty about the nature, spread, and impact of the disease can create stress and anxiety. Attending to our emotional well-being and mental health is key in times like this. We have compiled some tips to help maintain mental and emotional well-being during these uncertain times.

- **Take care of your body**—try to eat nutritious, balanced meals, get some exercise, and get plenty of sleep
- **Connect with others**—while we may not be able to see our friends and family in person, technology enables us to stay connected through video chats, emails, and messaging. Share how you are feeling with those who are important to you and build a strong support system.
- **Make time to unwind and relax**—do activities you enjoy and remind yourself that the stress will fade.
- **Stay informed**—Keep up to date with trustworthy news sources but be wary of rumors or unsubstantiated reports, especially on social media. Avoid over-exposure to the news.
- **Stick to a routine**—maintaining a sense of normalcy can help to keep feelings of stress and anxiety at bay.
- **Tend to your mental health**—try out these grounding strategies, brought to you by HBNU alumnus Kristina Korte.

People around the world are confronting the new normal and everyone will react to this situation in a different way. It is important to stay connected, healthy, and strong. Below are some resources for supporting mental health during this crisis.

- [http://www.sprc.org/covid19](http://www.sprc.org/covid19)
- [https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/selfcare.asp](https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/selfcare.asp)
**Roxanna Garcia, MD, MP**

HBNU postdoctoral fellow Roxanna Garcia was based at Universidad Peruana de Cayetano Heredia in Peru focusing on “Evaluating the Neurosurgical Capacity for Traumatic Brain Injury in Peru, a Mixed-Methods Proposal”. Over the course of the fellowship, she completed 36 site visits throughout the country to estimate the burden of neurosurgical disease and patient outcomes. In mid-March, Roxanna returned to the United States from her research site in Lima, Peru. Within 72 hours, the Peruvian president declared a state of emergency and prohibited all international and domestic travel. Upon her return to the US, Roxanna adapted her research plan to conduct the qualitative analysis with 23 neurosurgeons remotely through video conferencing. As she works to complete preliminary data analysis, she is planning for the next phase of the project, which has been funded by a Northwestern Catalyzer Grant.

As multiple US states implemented “Shelter-in-Place” orders, Roxanna considered ways to contribute to the scientific community in this unprecedented time. She worked with mentors and colleagues to develop a national survey for medical students pursuing neurosurgery to identify the impact of the pandemic on students. In mid-April, her team launched a 28-item online anonymous survey, and received responses from 315 participants from over 54 medical schools within one week. With the data collected from the survey, Roxanna’s team aims to provide neurosurgery leadership with insight on the experiences of medical students and help to prioritize issues for those anticipating a career in neurosurgery.

**Andrew Kim, MA**

Andrew Kim is a PhD Candidate based at Health Economics and Epidemiology Research Office (HE2RO) in South Africa. His research project titled “Biological memories of apartheid: Integrated effects of apartheid-based trauma on birth outcomes, mental illness risk, and stress physiology in Soweto, South Africa” focuses on the intergenerational mental health effects of apartheid-based trauma in Soweto, South Africa. Andrew made the decision to remain at his research site during the COVID-19 pandemic. Not long after the first cases of COVID-19 were diagnosed, South Africa went into a lockdown, one of the swiftest and strictest in the world. Andrew’s research unit shut down in-person data collection and transitioned to remote work. While in-person data collection is on hold, Andrew has transitioned to conducting telephonic interviews for certain survey measures.

Andrew’s research team has used this opportunity to conduct novel research examining the mental health impacts, perceptions, and experiences of COVID-19 among families in Soweto. He is also conducting ethnographic research through electronic means to understand how people are responding to the pandemic and its effects on daily living. In addition, Andrew and his research staff have created an impromptu surveillance system to identify immediate mental health and other household needs and refer to appropriate resources, done in conjunction with South Africa’s largest mental health organization. They have been able to identify individuals with pressing concerns and provided referrals to appropriate organizations to address their needs, as well as psychological support over the phone. Finally, Andrew has developed an informal emotional debriefing program to provide basic psychoeducation and mental health resources for research staff.
FGHF PI Council Leadership

HBNU was selected to lead the PI Council for all Fogarty Global Health Fellowship (FGHF) consortia this year. The role of the Council is to oversee the management of the FGHF program across all six consortia. As head of the PI Council, HBNU is leading the following activities:

- **2020 Orientation**: HBNU is organizing the FGHF orientation for the 2020-2021 cohort. During recent emergency COVID-19 PI council meetings, PIs and FIC made a collective decision for the safety of trainees, faculty, and staff to hold the orientation for 2020-2021 trainees virtually via Zoom. HBNU is working with remote education experts to develop novel approaches to ensure the success of this first-of-a-kind virtual orientation.

- **2020 CUGH conference**: Three members of the HBNU leadership team were slated to attend the 2020 Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH) conference in Washington, DC, which was cancelled due to COVID-19. As head of the PI council, the HBNU consortium was responsible for leading and coordinating the FGHF alumni panel. HBNU alumnus Bonigwe Ndlovu was selected to represent HBNU on the panel. In addition, Dr. David Hamer, PI, Boston University School of Public Health, was accepted to host a satellite session titled, "How to be a successful mentor: review of mentorship competencies and institutional strategies." Both activities will resume as circumstances allow.

Incoming Cohort: July 2020

The incoming cohort is composed of seven US fellows and six LMIC fellows, who proposed to conduct their research in the following countries: Ethiopia, Rwanda, Mali, Botswana, Ghana, South Africa, Zambia, Tanzania and Bangladesh. Six fellows’ research are related to HIV/AIDS, one is related to mental health, and four are non-HIV related. We are looking forward to getting to know these trainees and seeing the important findings that come from their research. Please stay tuned for our Fall 2020 newsletter in which we will be introducing our newest cohort!