



Global Health Education Student Experiences

Kevin Priddy

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"This past month in Cape Town has been the most incredible experience I have ever had in my life. From the moment I arrived in Cape Town, I felt welcomed and excited for what was to come (thanks to our amazing coordinators Marion and Avril, as well as my host family). I went straight from the airport to meet my host family. I spent the next month living with Carol and George, their son Justin, his wife Lindsay, and their baby girl Chloe. They immediately took me in and treated me as one of their own. Getting to know them was one of the most rewarding aspects of the trip. It gave us an authentic South African experience as I learned a lot about South African culture. They taught us about South African history, their language Afrikaans, their professions, food, healthcare, education, sports, things to do, and so much more. They were very accommodating, supportive, genuine, and friendly. This experience would not have been the same had I not lived with them. I think it is a critical part in immersing oneself in another culture and truly learning about another country's way of life. I plan on staying in touch with them and will miss them very much.



Drexel medical student Kevin Priddy in South Africa.

"In addition, I really liked staying in the homestay with the other two guys in our program, Sean and Will. We immediately got along and became close friends. I think having them around helped ease the transition into living in South Africa. It also gave me two people to go out with and do things when the whole group was not interested or had other plans. We stuck together and had a lot of fun. I will also be staying in touch with them and will miss them very much as well.



Drexel medical student Kevin Priddy in South Africa.

"Working at a local hospital was one of the main reasons for going to Cape Town, and my time at Victoria Hospital certainly gave me a firsthand experience in the South African healthcare system. Upon arriving at the hospital, I was assigned to a team of doctors and students to follow. The team consisted of Dr. Nyirenda (registrar), Dr. Kroukamp (intern), and Angel (6th year student). Kristine, another student in our group, was also assigned to this team, so we shadowed them together. I only have endless praise for this team of healthcare professionals. They took us under their wing and taught us so much about medicine and caring for patients. They quizzed us often on a wide range of topics, including general information about diseases like diabetes, how to treat a patient who comes in with chest pain, and how to properly conduct a patient history and physical examination. I enjoyed interacting with their unique patient population. We saw a lot of TB, COPD, hypertension, diabetes, heart attacks, heart failure, and kidney failure, among other things. Our doctors taught us the importance of educating patients, because a lot of their problems could be improved or solved just by taking the time to explain their conditions and treatments. A lot of times it seemed easy to fall through the cracks in their healthcare system, so it was inspiring to see our doctors slow down, get to know their patients and connect with them, and thoroughly interview and examine them. This made it easier to come up with a treatment plan that their patients understood and that worked for them. I thoroughly enjoyed working with this team because they always had positive attitudes and they never left us behind. They always made opportunities to teach us and ensured we were having a beneficial experience. Even though they were busy and stressed, they always

made an effort to make sure we were included. And when appropriate, they gave us the opportunity to interview patients, take a history, and conduct a basic physical exam. We then reported back to them and they gave us great feedback. This was great practice for me and I could tell my skills had improved. I am very thankful for having the opportunity to work with this team and I will remember this experience when I make it to their level and find myself teaching other students.

"The trip would not have been complete without taking the time to explore Cape Town and everything South Africa has to offer. I quickly learned South Africa is a beautiful, unique, and fun place to visit. There are endless things to do and I am glad that I was able to see a lot while I was there. I thoroughly enjoyed the Garden Route because we were able to do and see so much. We explored caves, rode ostriches, went bungee jumping off of a beautiful 216 meter bridge, went zip lining in the canopy of a forest, enjoyed a sunset cruise, fed elephants, and went on a game drive. These were all incredible experiences that I will never forget. And just driving to all of these places was an experience; I thought the mountainous landscapes and ocean views were absolutely stunning. This really allowed me to realize South Africa is a beautiful place outside of Cape Town too. But the adventure did not end with the Garden Route. Everything else we did around Cape Town from climbing Lion's Head and Table Mountain, to visiting Cape Point and the penguins at Boulder's Beach, to shark cage diving, to wine tastings, to trying out many restaurants and bars was so much fun and provided the perfect balance to the medical part of the trip.



"I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to visit Cape Town. I met extraordinary people in our program and made friendships that will last a lifetime. I am humbled to have met a loving, beautiful family that so graciously took me in and gave me a home for a month. I am blessed to have visited a country different from mine, with different people and cultures, and to have learned about all of the things that make them unique. I learned to see life from

a different perspective. I saw everything from the wealthiest in Camps Bay to the real poverty in the townships. Visiting the townships and working with some of the patients at Victoria showed me how very little some people have and the struggles they face daily. I find it inspiring that despite their hardships many of these people were very friendly, thankful for what they did have, and just happy to be alive. I learned to really appreciate life and to always find ways to smile, to laugh, to love and help others, to have fun, and to just live. I cherish even more what I have and the opportunities I have been given, and I will never take any of it for granted. I am excited to continue to work hard in medical school, knowing there is so much good I can do as a doctor both at home and abroad for those less fortunate than myself."





