

From the almost endless drug list to the numerous lab and radiology tests coupled with the complexity of the ten human body systems, the profession of nursing is indeed a convoluted one. Aside from this scholastic facet of nursing, what's more incredible is the diversity of the world's patient population nurses have the opportunity to care for. It's this very unique aspect I desired to further explore. Belize provided a huge melting pot of different ethnic groups: Mayan, Mestizo, Creole, Garifuna, Indian, Chinese, and German to name a few. However, what began as a trip to enhance my nursing skills quickly became more.

In the rural Georgeville health clinic where I volunteered, I had the great pleasure to work with a small number of this nation's population. I found the patients to be more under-privileged and the medical services to be more primitive compared to what I had been used to in the United States. However, in this rudimentary atmosphere, seamless team work and exchange of knowledge came into fruition which created an incredibly nurturing environment. Working closely with the compassionate Dr. Maria Goncalvez, we tackled a variety of cases: ER, outpatient, OB/GYN, and pediatrics. Together, we formed a very dynamic relationship; she entrusted me to embark on home visits to those who needed home IV medication administration. Furthermore, I led pre-medicine and nursing students on health screenings in neighboring villages where we provided blood pressure and sugar checks while performing focused physical assessments and distributed over the counter medications appropriately. One of the most rewarding experiences came with the weekly mobile clinics in which a local nurse and I visited surrounding villages. We provided wellness check-ups, vaccinations, medication, and nutrition for infants while supplying mothers with birth control.

Volunteering abroad provided me with more than just the opportunity to share and learn clinical skills, but also allowed me to explore a new area of the world. During weekends, I had the freedom to explore beautiful Belize. I visited the picturesque beaches of San Pedro and dove to witness the glamor of the Belize Barrier Reef, the second largest in the world. I jumped into the icy waters of Big Rock Falls and crawled the dark crevices of the Mayan sacrilegious cave, Actun Tunichil Muknal (listed by National Geographic as the world's most sacred cave) and on land, I awed at the ruins of the ancient Mayan civilizations of Caracol and Cahal Pech.

Upon completion of my one month abroad, I garnered a much worldlier view on cultural diversity while experiencing, first hand, the vastness the field of nursing has to offer. This invaluable experience has accelerated many intangible skills which I certainly will bring forth professionally and in everyday life: adaptability, open-mindedness, team work, confidence, and communication.

On conclusion, I would like to thank the Marin family for being more than I could have asked for in a homestay family, Dr. Maria Goncalvez for all the learning opportunities, and Nurse Flores, Nurse Garden, and Nurse Nadine for trusting in me. I will forever cherish the relationships I have made on this trip.

