

# Manchester

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Magazine



**Alumni  
docs,  
students  
in Nicaragua**

**INSIDE:**

The Fulbright: an MC tradition  
Living The Graduation Pledge  
in Peru, Ind.



# Practicum service

MC alumni, students take  
medical care, supplies  
deep into Nicaragua

By Jeri S. Kornegay



Front row, from left: Andrea Numbers '07, Flora Dibal '06, Abby Harper '07, Tia Harrison '08, Caitlin Haynes '07, Julie Garber '77 and Alice Lee Hopkins, R.N. Back: Dr. Kathy Driver '71 Long, Ben Leiter '06, Marcia Graybill '77 Leiter RPT, Dr. Bill Weybright '60, Ben Block, Amanda Patch '08, Emma Lowman '07, Shelby Lloyd '08, Kate Jastrzemski '07, Beth Grindstaff '08, James Samuels '06, Daniel Rodriguez '07, Taylor Vice '07, Joe Hoover '07, Dr. Bill Fike, Paul Fry-Miller PA '75 and Dr. Lois Shirky '52 Johnson.

**T**hey traveled deep, deep into Nicaragua – 11 bone-grinding, unsettling hours away from any connection with their families. 220 kilometers up into Nicaragua’s mountains, inching 5 kilometers per hour around true hairpin turns, jackknifing up and down ravines, scraping screeching metal underneath their too-long bus.

And so it began ... this 15th medical practicum deep, deep into Nicaragua. This dust-matted team of 24 students and medical practitioners had united just the day before in Houston, for the Manchester College medical practicum to Nicaragua. Two students were flying for the first time; five had never been out of the United States.

Their destination: the village of Santa Maria in Nuevo Segovia, where nobody speaks English. A few of the students had Spanish experience ... most did not, dependent on four hired translators and the hospitality of the Santa Marians. A lecture about Nicaragua’s cruel and violent political history lurked in the back of our minds, but all seemed cooler up in the mountains in so many ways.

Manchester College’s attention to Santa Maria over the past three years has brought remarkable change to the quality of life of its people. During the two weeks of this January residency, the practicum docs and students saw scabies, venereal disease, common colds, mouths filled with rotting teeth, dust-deafened ears, malnutrition and cramping – almost 1,100 patients in all. They delivered no babies; saw no horrifying diseases, no rubella, no dying children. (They did all gather to watch one of their docs stitch up a machete gash in a worker’s bloody, leathery leg.)

The MC team brings relief to the clinic medical team, brings recognition of diseases and health concerns, and critically important, brings drugs and medical supplies.

“Last year, the medicines and supplies you brought lasted us eight months,” said Dr. Jerald Lopez, director of the Santa Maria clinic. “Because of Manchester College, we are No. 1 in Nicaragua for administration of medical care. Before Manchester, we did not have surgical kits, braces, crutches, splints.”

*“I think I was meant to be here. I would like to do medical missions after medical school ... as often as I can.”*

*– Taylor Vice '07*

He’s talking about the medical kits for patient care, the medicines and equipment that the MC team brings and sends into Santa Maria. This Medical Practicum carried in 18 huge military duffle bags with \$9,000 in discounted donated medicines and equipment. (Terese Salupo-Bryant and husband Mark Bryant, both associate professors of chemistry, coordinated the trip from back home; Mark packed the bags.)

Team leader **Julie Garber '77** also purchased pharmaceuticals in Managua and Ocotal – medicines for hepatitis, diabetes, respiratory infections, pain, parasites, gastritis, VD, hypertension, scabies, eye irritants ... and

*Physician assistant Paul Fry-Miller '75 exams a child with asthma. The “docs” examined whole families at a time.*





*He's 78 years old, blind in one eye and was deaf from dust, dirt and who knows what else. It took two hours to irrigate his ears so he could hear again. He had hugs for, from left, Shelby Lloyd '08, Daniel Rodriguez '07 and Tia Harrison '08.*

of course, thousands of vitamins. This year, the practicum added \$12,350 US to the Nicaraguan economy with drug purchases, said Garber, associate dean and director of the Plowshares grant, which contributes to the practicum.

“Their health care is impressive because they make so much out of so little,” observed Taylor Vice '07 of Fremont, Ind.

Garber has led the practicum the past three years, relieving the Bryants, and before them, Professor Emeritus Ed Miller '56, who had taken the practicum to Nicaragua and other countries for almost 20 years. “It’s not how much you change the community; it’s how much you change the participation of the physicians in their care,” Garber noted.

When Dr. Lopez met with the American docs for the first time, he had a huge chart, displaying which of the seven outposts they would visit each day, saving as much as eight hours of walking time for the patients. The days were dusty, and punctuated with improvisation, frustration, exclamations of understanding, patience. Sanitation was a challenge, especially without running water in the clinic.

On the drive back to the clinic from Las Brisas outpost, the tiredness evaporated when Dr. Bill Weybright '60, on his fourth practicum, made a “house call” on a clinic heart patient. Loving the

spontaneity, all the students piled out of the cramped ambulance, all listened to her chest.

The students peppered the doctors with questions. “Dr. Bill Fike is an amazing teacher,” said James Samuels '06, who confessed, “I’d like to come back as a doctor. Dr. Fike lets you listen to lungs, to look into eyes and ears. He’s giving us hands-on experience that’s incredible for undergraduates.”

## MEDICAL PRACTICUM

2006

### BY THE NUMBERS

32	MEMBERS of the practicum
220	KILOMETERS Managua to Santa Maria
11	HOURS Managua to Santa Maria
0	SURGICAL KITS at Santa Maria clinic before MC
30-40	PATIENTS average MC doctor daily schedule
15	KILOMETERS how far 89-year-old man walked for treatment by U.S. “docs”
25	YEARS MC medical practicum to Central America
\$12,350	SPENT on medical supplies and drugs in Nicaragua
18	DUFFLE BAGS of medical supplies flown down
15	STUDENTS (10 bio-chem)
8	“DOCS” with practicum
6	MC ALUMNI
12	COB MEMBERS



What will haunt him, will bring him back someday? “An 81-year-old woman came in with two club feet. She was walking on the top of her foot. Her need to survive and to go through all of that was amazing.”



*Practicum teams provided entertainment as well as medical care at the tiny outposts.*

“This is a program that needs to continue, so students can experience another culture and to contrast our privilege,” said ER physician **Dr. Kathy Driver ’71 Long** of North Liberty, Ind. The students agree.

“I’ve done a lot of growing, just seeing what they don’t have in their lives,” said **Samuels**, of Rochester, Ind. He majored in athletic training at MC (with an internship with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers), but also is considering medical school.

“A 98-year-old walked 15 kilometers for treatment for arthritis that would have crippled me,” said **Physician Assistant Paul Fry-Miller ’75** of North Manchester. Fry-Miller, serving on his sixth practicum, treated a woman in her early 40s who “looked like a grandmother,” with gastritis and arthritis and five children. “A lot of the women we saw have seven or more children,” he noted. “That’s bothersome.”

“We’re affecting somebody’s life,” said **Abby Harper ’07**. “They are so thankful for what we can do – whatever it is, from eyeglasses so they can finally see to something for indigestion.”

All students did intake shifts outside under the Santa Maria clinic porch, recording the “vitals” of blood pressure, weight, height, pulse and temperature, and thus had personal contact with each patient. Children squirmed and crowded in, watching with wide eyes.

**Emma Lowman ’07** of Niagara Falls, formerly of Kokomo, was wired with the interaction with the practicum doctors: “**Kathy and Lois (Dr. Lois Shirky ’52 Johnson)** are my idols here because they are women and doctors and have children and are so successful! They prove it’s possible to be a career woman and have a family that is thriving. They are so passionate and so good at what they do.”

“I learned from **Bill Weybright** and **Kathy** about the sacrifices you must make to be a doctor. I saw the hustle that comes with medicine, and

the joy,” said **Flora Dibal ’06** of Nigeria. “I love it,” she said of her practicum experience.

“I love doing the vital signs (an assignment every student shared), I love working with the doctors. I know now that medicine is really where I want to be.”



*Dr. Bill Fike and Joe Hoover ’07 head out to an outpost.*

The days were long. Roosters began their hoarse calling and response chorus at 3:30 a.m. most days, providing menu suggestions among the docs and the students. Nature invaded the compound late one afternoon, as the pharmacy team of the day was doing its daily record-keeping: Thousands of teeny wasps hatched, sending the students scurrying to another veranda. The showers were heart-stopping, gasping-cold; those who had stuffed solar showers into their suitcases were befriended quickly.



*In the intake station of the Santa Maria clinic, Tia Harrison '08 takes vital signs on a mother and her child.*

The students literally danced into the local culture and were embraced in return. Several children were constant companions. The students joined the festival, shopped for native wear, found the tiny cantinas, sought out sunsets and salsa music.

“I am impressed by their hospitality,” said **Ben Leiter '06** of New Windsor, Md., who adeptly served as a translator for the doctors as well as the students. He shared the experience with his mother, **Marsha Graybill '77 Leiter**, now a licensed physical therapist who found much-appreciated work to do for the overburdened backs, necks and legs of the Nicaraguans.

*“The bottom line is: 20 years from now, nobody is going to know who Bill Fike was. But the difference I can make through a student here ... my legacy will live on.”*

*– Dr. Bill Fike*

Samuels, who had never flown, let alone visited another country, was at home, even in this place far from Rochester. When none of the festival goers could skinny up the greased pole, the linebacker eased through the crowd and placed his hands on the base of the pole, motioning for one of the youngsters to climb onto his shoulders. With a mighty shove, James sent the child flying up the pole, to the delight of the crowd. Up stepped tall Taylor Vice, but even his height atop James was not enough. **Joe Hoover '07** of Noblesville, Ind., conquered his fear of heights and climbed three tall, James planted firmly far below, not budging. The youngster scrambled up again. The crowd applauded and roared its approval.

## The American “docs”

Not all are medical doctors, but the Nicaraguan patients and their families who stood along the dusty road like sentries as the bus lumbered by their cramped adobe homes did not care about medical degrees.

**Dr. Lois Shirky '52 Johnson** of Harrisonburg, Va., a retired pediatrician, has joined all but one MC medical practicum to Nicaragua. (More about Lois on Page 26.)

**Dr. Bill Weybright '60** of Milford, Ind., a retired general practitioner on his fourth practicum, three times to Mulukuku. (Last year, his wife, Trustee **Susan Brubaker '62x Weybright**, joined him.)

**Dr. Kathy Driver '71 Long** of North Liberty, Ind., an emergency room physician for St. Joseph Regional Medical Center in South Bend. On her sixth practicum, this was her first trip without her husband, **Joe Long '69**.

**Dr. Bill Fike** of Willoughby Hills, Ohio, joined the MC medical practicum four years ago. Worried about what happens to patients the other 50 weeks of the year, Bill and Lois make additional trips to Nicaragua.

**Paul Fry-Miller, P.A. '75** of North Manchester, did his first Nicaragua medical practicum in 1996, to Mulukuku with his son when Eric was 16. In Nicaragua, Paul visits a sister congregation of Beacon Heights CoB, Fort Wayne.

**Alice Lee Hopkins, R.N.** of Bridgewater, Va., making her third trip to the Santa Maria clinic, serving as clinic “pharmacist.” She’s a nephrology nurse with DaVita Hemodialysis of Harrisburg.

**Marcia Graybill '77 Leiter** of New Windsor, Md., practiced for her new career as a licensed physical therapist in Santa Maria. Her son is **Ben Leiter '06**.

**Julie Garber '77** of North Manchester, who led the practicum, is associate dean at the College, and leads its Plowshares program, which helped fund the practicum. Fluent in Spanish, she introduced the College to the medical needs in Mulukuku and led the move to Santa Maria three years ago.

(The “docs” all pay their own way, and often contribute medical supplies and drugs.)

# TEACHER

THIS IS WHAT THE MEDICAL PRACTICUM IS ALL ABOUT

By Jeri S. Kornegay



She is covering her face, Brethren humble, as she reads this. But it is true:

**Dr. Lois Shirky '52 Johnson** is the stuff of legends in Santa Maria and Mulukuku, Nicaragua.

She's made nine practicum trips, and countless others to follow up on patients the retired pediatrician cannot put out of her mind when she returns

to her home in Harrisonburg, Va. She sends and brings in supplies, books, food – all carefully calculated to bring the absolute most good from her dollar.

The patient load seemed lighter this year, to the dismay of the 75-year-old. She usually sees 40 to 50 patients a day, said the young Dr. Jerald Lopez, director of the Santa Maria clinic. "When I get to 25 patients, I am tired," he admitted.

"I have told the doctors here that she is a great example to follow. Lois helps diagnose medical problems that would have gone unnoticed here."

Lois fills her down time in Nicaragua with studying – medical books and Spanish, to keep her mind alert for unusual diseases and medical challenges she might encounter in this doctor-poor country. During a 2004 trip, for example, she diagnosed conjunctive

heart disease in a girl – and raised money for the operation.

"But basically, what I do is teach," she said. She educates her patients (through favorite translator Marvin Garcia), the Nicaraguan clinic team ... and Manchester College students.

"This is a good group, they're interested, easy to inspire," she said of the 2006 practicum students.

"Lois is a huge motivating factor," said **James Samuels '06**. "She takes time to explain." The students enthused about the fascination Dr. Lois has with her patients.

**Emma Lowman '07** bonded with Dr. Lois, who predicts the student will thrive in medical school. "I was totally blown away. It was such a compliment!"

Two years ago, Lois saw a little boy who could hardly walk, his entire spine so curled, it was crushing his lungs and heart. Lois diagnosed the congenital deformity, arranged for an orthopedic surgeon and hospitalization ... and for the child's mother to remain close by through the surgery to place Harrington rods along his spine. "She saved that boy's life with her diagnosis and her attention," said Dr. Lopez.

"Come outside," we urged Lois, who was examining a baby in the clinic. "We have a patient you need to see." And there, running and grinning at her with great pride, was her reward.

Dr. Lois Johnson

