



**Weill Cornell Medicine**  
International Medical  
Student Education



**NEWSLETTER**  
**Winter 2025**

# Notes from the Directors

As 2026 approaches, we are delighted to reflect on the incredible accomplishments of our Weill Cornell medical students and the continued engagement of our global health community—including faculty mentors, partner institutions, and our generous donors. This fall, the Class of 2029 demonstrated outstanding enthusiasm during the Introduction to Global Health Seminar Series, and we look forward to their participation in the Introduction to Global/Local Health Equity offering this spring.

In October, we hosted the Fall International Reception and Faculty/Student Meet and Greet, celebrating the inspiring work of four students who completed mentored international summer projects over June-August 2025. Two students worked at Weill Bugando Medical Center in Tanzania under the dual mentorship of Dr. Robert Peck and Dr. Grace Ruselu, while two others contributed to projects at Aga Khan University in Pakistan under the guidance of Dr. Junaid Razzak. The event also provided an opportunity for first-year students to learn about future global health opportunities and connect with faculty mentors. Dr. Mickey Stewart, the Senior Dean of the Office of International Affairs and Affiliations provided opening remarks and we were honored to have Center for Global Health faculty, Dr. Robert Peck, Associate Professor of Medicine and Pediatrics share his experiences as a long-standing global health mentor for medical students participating in projects at Weill Bugando Medical Center in Mwanza, Tanzania. We were thrilled by the strong turnout and the vibrant conversations that took place—an encouraging sign of the continued interest in global health across all classes.

Although current times have presented challenges, we remain fully dedicated to our international collaborations. Facilitating student exchange is central to everything we do at the IMSE Office. We look forward to continuing to welcome international students to Weill Cornell Medicine and our partner hospitals for clinical electives rotations.

Looking ahead, we are excited to share that 21 students from our fourth-year class are scheduled to participate in funded international clinical electives between January and April 2026. These rotations will take place at partner institutions in Peru, France, England, Ecuador, Germany, Thailand, Austria, Singapore, Taiwan, Spain, Qatar, and Tanzania, offering students invaluable exposure to diverse health care systems and practices. In addition, two students will be traveling to Pakistan this Spring to complete their Area of Concentration (AOC) longitudinal research projects under the continued mentorship of Dr. Junaid Razzak and members of the Aga Khan University faculty of medicine.

As always, we extend our deepest gratitude to our donors and faculty mentors. Your support makes these transformative experiences possible and helps us prepare the next generation of globally minded physician leaders. Wishing you all a safe, joyful, and healthy holiday season. We look forward to an inspiring year ahead!

Warm regards and wishing everyone a prosperous year ahead filled with continued health and success!

Laura and Radhika



# Global Health Grand Rounds

We were delighted to host Dr. Radhika Sundararajan and medical student Kingsley Osei-Karikari this fall for a compelling Global Health Grand Rounds presentation titled, 'Integrating Traditional Healers into Formal Health Systems: Examples from Uganda and Ghana'.

Their talk thoughtfully explored the intersection of modern Western medicine and traditional healing practices. Rather than viewing traditional healers as barriers, the speakers shared inspiring data illustrating how partnership with these trusted community members can profoundly benefit patients in low-resource settings.

Dr. Sundararajan highlighted how her team trained traditional healers to perform HIV testing and counseling. This initiative resulted in a 100% acceptance rate among patients offered a test—a striking contrast to control groups referring patients to distant clinics—demonstrating the power of decentralized care.

Similarly, Mr. Osei-Karikari discussed a curriculum designed to teach bone setters anatomy, hygiene, and safe splinting techniques using locally sourced materials. This effort successfully fostered a collaborative network of over 250 healers who now have a referral pathway to hospitals for complex cases. Ultimately, the presentation provided a hopeful blueprint for leveraging existing community trust. By treating traditional healers as valued colleagues rather than competitors, the speakers outlined a path toward a truly inclusive health system.

IMSE's Global Health Grand Rounds are held via ZOOM and are offered for 1 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)<sup>™</sup>. Please visit the events page on our website for upcoming lectures and the link to permitted recorded lectures:



Radhika Sundararajan, MD, Ph.D.



Kingsley Osei-Karikari, BS





# More about Kingsley



Kingsley Osei-Karikari, a Weill Cornell Medical College student and Holcomb-Riggio Scholar, represents the future of physician-scientists dedicated to global health equity. With a strong academic background in Neuroscience from Dartmouth College, Kingsley has consistently sought to bridge the gap between clinical intervention and systemic implementation.

Most recently, Kingsley has taken a significant step toward his goal of becoming a physician scientist as a fellow at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). He describes his motivation for this new chapter:

"Toward the end of my clerkship year, it became increasingly clear to me that I wanted to pursue a career that accommodates both clinical practice and research expertise. Although I had a strong interest in research, I also recognized that I lacked the robust foundational training needed to independently design, initiate, and lead impactful research projects in the future. This awareness prompted me to seek mentorship and training opportunities that would enable me to take ownership of research projects while developing the technical and organizational skills essential for leading future research investigations.

With the guidance of my mentor, Dr. Radhika Sundararajan, I was encouraged to apply for a research fellowship at the NIH. The period of uncertainty following my application submission was challenging, but the excitement and gratitude I felt upon receiving my acceptance was immense. Through this fellowship, I hope to gain the tools and experience needed to bring evidence-based treatments to underserved communities around the world."

This fellowship is a natural progression for Kingsley, who has already demonstrated a remarkable ability to affect change in underserved communities. As a Global Health Research Lead, he facilitated partnerships between Weill Cornell and Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital (KATH) in Ghana. His work there was transformative; he helped develop a curriculum on bone and soft tissue healing and trained over 250 traditional bone healers in safe trauma management techniques. Furthermore, he established a groundbreaking referral system between these traditional healers and orthopedic surgeons to reduce complications such as gangrene and amputation.

Kingsley's commitment to data-driven health solutions is evident in his work with the Hospital for Special Surgery, where he spearheaded the development of a trauma registry at KATH that has captured over 12,000 unique patient entries to date.

Beyond his global research, Kingsley is a dedicated leader in his local community. As Vice President of Black and Latino Men in Medicine (BLMiM), he organized the 2024 Science Leadership in Medicine conference, hosting over 350 students to expose them to careers in healthcare. He also served on the frontlines of the pandemic as a Team Leader for a COVID vaccination unit in the South Bronx, overseeing the vaccination of more than 3,200 residents.

A published novelist and vice-president for the Gold Humanism Honor Society, Kingsley continues to blend compassion with scientific rigor as he advances on his NIH fellowship.



# Summer 2025 International Fellows

Students from the class of 2028 participated in an international mentored research project during summer 2025. These projects took place in Pakistan and Tanzania under the mentors of Drs. Junaid Razzak, Mirza Noor Ali Baig, Rob Peck, and Sarah Matuja. In October 2025, these students presented their findings at IMSE's Fall 2025 Global Health Reception Meet & Greet. Many thanks to our international faculty mentors for helping to facilitate the placement of these students and for providing supervision of their projects. Students from this past summer were funded by the Barbara Slifka International Fellows and the Dr. Robert C. and Veronica Atkins Foundation Curriculum. Thank you to our donors for their continued support!



**Daniel Bolotin**  
Tanzania

## **Mentor(s)**

### **Rob Peck, MD**

Associate Professor of Medicine and Pediatrics  
Weill Cornell Medicine

### **Sarah Matuja, PhD**

Staff Neurologist  
Weill Bugando

## **Transthoracic Echocardiographic Abnormalities and Short-term Outcomes in Adults with Stroke in Tanzania**

This study describes transthoracic echocardiography (TTE) abnormalities and associations with demographics, 30-day mortality, and disability in 266 adults admitted with stroke at Weill Bugando Medical Center (WBMC) in Mwanza, Tanzania from November 2023 to July 2025.



**Julia Garaffa**  
Pakistan

## **Mentor(s)**

### **Junaid Razzak, MD, PhD, FACEP**

Professor of Emergency Medicine  
Weill Cornell Medicine

### **Mirza Noor Ali Baig, MD**

Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine  
The Aga Khan University

## **Lifesaving Insights: Analyzing the Impact of a Large National CPR Training Program on Bystander Intervention**

The Pakistan Life Savers Programme was founded with the aim of training Pakistani citizens in the basic life-saving skills of CPR and bleeding control. One of the largest programs of its kind in LMICs, the PLSP has trained over 450,000 individuals to date through more than 5,000 trainers nationally. My study aimed to investigate the impact of the PLSP by quantifying the proportion of program trainees that have intervened in out-of-hospital emergencies.

# Summer 2025 International Fellows



**Shazain Khan**  
Pakistan

## Mentor(s)

**Junaid Razzak, MD, PhD, FACEP**

Professor of Emergency Medicine  
Weill Cornell Medicine

**Mirza Noor Ali Baig, MD**

Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine  
The Aga Khan University

## **Health Realities for the Khwaja Sira/Hijra Community in Karachi, Pakistan**

The transgender (khwaja sira, also known as hijra) community in Pakistan is a community with ancient roots in the Indian Subcontinent. However, since British colonialism and independence, their status in Pakistani society has become increasingly marginalized. Such marginalization has led to several salient social determinants of health for this community which have been poorly explored. Furthermore, research hasn't sought to understand the individual perspectives of the khwaja sira and their leaders or investigated tangible future directions to improve health in this community. This project aimed to elucidate the social determinants of health pertinent to the hijra population in Karachi, Pakistan and assess their health literacy through a qualitative research approach.



**Ezra Shimabenga**  
Tanzania

## Mentor(s)

**Rob Peck, MD**

Associate Professor of Medicine and Pediatrics  
Weill Cornell Medicine

## **Clinical Utility of Inter-Arm Pressure Difference in CVD Risk Stratification in The BMC HIV and Sleep Cohort**

The project aimed to investigate the prognostic value of inter-arm pressure (IAD) difference in predicting cardiovascular disease burden in HIV patients. Meta analysis of cohort studies have shown that an IAD >10 mmHg is associated with increased CVD burden in the general population. HIV patients have are at increased risk for cardiovascular disease not exhaustively explains by traditional risk factors. Establishing a relationship between CVD outcomes in HIV patients and pathologic IAD could allow for an inexpensive evaluation and triaging of HIV patients with higher CVD risk.



# Snaps from the Fall 2025 GH Reception





# Global Health Seminar Series



The Global Health Seminar Series remains a highlight for our first-year class. This Fall, the 10-week curriculum covered a diverse range of topics, including non-communicable diseases in LMICs, settler colonialism as a social determinant of health, Hansen's disease, medical pluralism, and the intersection of climate change and health. Other key sessions explored decolonization, the right to sight, women's health, and global pediatric issues.

To maintain high engagement, we prioritized interactivity through group discussions and case-based learning. A standout session was Dr. Thanakorn Jirasevijinda's presentation, which was delivered in a 'Jeopardy' game format and continues to be a favorite among students.

Feedback was enthusiastic, with students specifically praising the dynamic format and engaging presenters. As one student noted, 'I really enjoyed this session... I felt like it was at a good level for us to understand what we have learned so far.'

This high level of engagement fostered deeper learning. Students gained a nuanced appreciation for the uniqueness of the patient population, recognizing that interventions must be 'tailored' rather than applied broadly. Whether discussing maternal health or rural care settings, the cohort understood that 'traditional models of care must be modified' to fit the local context. Perhaps most importantly, the group reflected on the macro-level factors of global health, recognizing that effective care requires an understanding of history, including the lingering 'effects of colonialism and exploitation.'

Many thanks to Drs. Chebrolu, Ghosh, Hau, Dupnik, Sadigh, Scales, Sun, Sundararajan, TJ and Yan for making the Fall 2025 iteration of the Introduction to Global Health Seminar Series a success.





# Visiting International Student Program

We are proud to welcome international medical students in their penultimate year to join us at Weill Cornell for clinical electives. Our Visiting International Student Program provides these students with the experience of a lifetime, exposing them to the world-class care standards at Weill Cornell-NY Presbyterian and WCM affiliate partners.

While navigating the complexities of international travel, IMSE continues to host students from our long-standing partners, as well as independent international students from around the world. During the fall 2025 semester, we had 30 placements of international students in Anesthesia, Emergency Medicine, Internal Medicine, Neurological Surgery, Neurology, Obstetrics & Gynecology, Ophthalmology, Otorhinolaryngology, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, Radiology and Surgery at Weill Cornell-NYPH and Brooklyn Methodist.

In close collaboration with the Office of International Affairs and Affiliations, we are actively cultivating new global partnerships. Our goal is to broaden WCMC's legacy of fostering sustainable, equitable, and bidirectional student exchange.

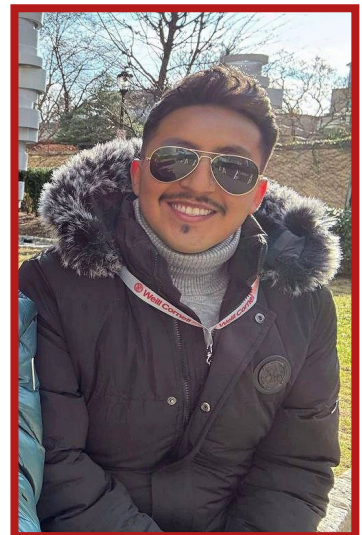


## Visiting International Student Highlights

My name is Kerry Levis Quezada Cornejo, a medical student at the National Major University of San Marcos in Peru. I chose Weill Cornell for my elective because of its global reputation for excellence in medical education, research, and patient care.

During my Clinical Pulmonary Medicine rotation, I had the opportunity to engage with a diverse range of respiratory cases, work alongside expert faculty, and experience a high-level academic environment. What truly stood out to me, however, was the kindness and respect shown by the fellows and attendings. Their guidance, patience, and willingness to share their expertise created an incredibly supportive learning environment, which made me feel valued and motivated to perform at my best.

This elective not only expanded my clinical knowledge but also strengthened my critical thinking and patient-centered approach to medicine. Beyond the medical skills I gained, this experience has deepened my appreciation for the importance of empathy and collaboration in healthcare. I am truly grateful to Weill Cornell and the IMSE team for this enriching opportunity.



# Visiting International Student Highlights



My name is Sharvi Bansal, a medical student from Dayanand Medical College in India. I had the opportunity to complete a four-week clinical rotation in the Endocrinology Department at NewYork-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital. This rotation marked my first clinical experience in the United States and was a significant milestone in my medical training. While I initially approached the experience with apprehension due to it being my first rotation abroad, the supportive environment created by the faculty and residents quickly alleviated my concerns. Their approachability and encouragement made me feel welcomed and allowed me to focus fully on learning and contributing to patient care.

My responsibilities included pre-rounding, independently working up patients, presenting cases during rounds, participating in bedside discussions, and documenting progress notes in the electronic medical record, all of which were reviewed by the attendings with regular and constructive feedback. This hands-on involvement provided me with a comprehensive understanding of inpatient consult-based endocrinology and helped strengthen my clinical reasoning and presentation skills.

One of the most enriching aspects of this rotation was exposure to a diverse patient population and a wide spectrum of endocrine pathologies, including diabetes management, thyroid disorders, adrenal and pituitary diseases, electrolyte abnormalities, and complex metabolic conditions. Caring for patients from varied socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds deepened my appreciation for individualized, patient-centered care within the American healthcare system. I particularly enjoyed my time in the outpatient clinics, where I was encouraged to take initiative in interviewing patients, formulating assessment plans, and presenting cases. The residents and fellows consistently took time to teach, motivate, and involve me actively in clinical decision-making.

I am especially grateful to Dr. Silver, Chief of Endocrinology, for his mentorship and for the opportunity to present and discuss academic topics under his guidance, as well as to my preceptor, Dr. Rafii, whose clinical insight, teaching, and support played a pivotal role in my learning experience. Overall, this rotation was academically rigorous, professionally fulfilling, and personally transformative, and it significantly contributed to my growth as a future physician.



My name is Krisztina Kiss, a final-year medical student from Pécs, Hungary, with a long-standing dream of coming to New York and pursuing a career in Ophthalmology. Rotating at Weill Cornell Medicine was a deeply inspiring experience that not only fulfilled this dream but also strengthened my determination to become an ophthalmologist. I truly enjoyed every single day of the rotation and went in each morning with genuine excitement and curiosity. Thanks to a thoughtfully structured schedule, I was exposed to a wide variety of clinical and surgical cases and had the privilege of learning from world-class physicians and healthcare professionals. Beyond the outstanding academic experience, I felt sincerely welcomed as part of the community, which made this rotation especially meaningful.

I am profoundly grateful for this opportunity and would like to thank IMSE and my university for making this unforgettable experience possible.





# *Happy Holidays*

*and warmest wishes for a joyful New Year!*

From the Office of  
International Medical Student Education

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**Under the leadership of the department of Medical Education of Weill Cornell Medicine College, The Office of International Medical Student Education (IMSE) oversees global health education for WCM students and visiting International medical students at WCM.**

**Laura Greisman, MD, DTM&H  
Radhika Sundararajan, MD, PhD  
Savita Birbal, MA**



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