

**Thoughts from some of our volunteers
from our mission trip to Jamaica
July 9-17th, 2011**

“This CAMEO trip to Jamaica was AMAZING. It exceeded my expectations. As a first year medical student I thought I would help the doctors by doing vitals or taking history. On day 1, I was terrified... I was told to do the whole ‘SOAP’ note. That means taking the history, doing the physical exams, assessing the patients and then diagnosing. I had interviewed patients only a few times my whole first year, and I had never diagnosed before, haven’t studied pharmacology or pathology in school yet and here I was on Day 1, seeing patients one-on-one. Dr. Keen was extremely patient, he helped me out in all the areas I had trouble in and made sure I was on the right track. I came on this trip with ZERO confidence, and after four unbelievable days of clinic, I know I am a step ahead of my classmates. This trip gave me first-hand experience at interacting with patients, it built my confidence, I gained new skills and I practiced my skills on lots and lots of patients. Each team almost saw 100 patients each day and sometimes more.

*On the other hand, I got to see a side of Jamaica no regular tourist ever gets to see; the vibrant culture, the amazing people, the bounty of fruits and vegetables are **magnificent**. Definitely try the breadfruit; you won’t believe your eyes and the texture. The avocado here is called plum and it’s more than two times the size in US. The ocean, the river and the waterfalls are a few sites I can’t even begin to describe in words, just **stunning**. The warm, sweet hearts of the Jamaican people who we helped as much as we could, taught us in return about how to be truly grateful for our lives, our homes and our families. Even though it sounds like a cliché, this part of Jamaica, especially our experience through CAMEO was a true eye-opener I cherish.*

*Definitely recommended for people with all skill levels, for undergrad students or soon-to-be second year medical student like me. We all have something special to give, and together we can **make a difference** for this community. The experience you will have, the friendships you will make, and the lessons you will learn, are all an invaluable experience that you will never forget.”*

Sonia Arneja

“The trip this year was definitely one for the books. I had the chance to lead a group of students from FSU through all the preparation and training necessary for the mission trip. I definitely was stressed while preparing for the mission trip because I wanted to make sure everything went according to plan. I should know better; things usually never go the way they are planned. That is not necessarily a bad thing. Unplanned events and surprises give people the chance to grow and succeed in ways they did not think possible. IMO was very fortunate to be a part of such a diverse team this year. We had medical students from Howard University and one medical student from UCF. I think it was such a valuable experience because everyone was able to share with each other and I am proud to say that by the end of the trip, friendships were formed and I know that everyone had something to learn from each other. Because this was my second year on a CAMEO mission trip, I already knew the general way things were run. Even with this previous knowledge, I had such a different experience than the first time I went on a medical mission with CAMEO last year. I learned so much and I was able to talk to the practitioners about different

aspects of the medical field. I feel like there are so many opportunities that I had no idea existed. Everything in Jamaica is such an eye opening experience. You cannot come on a CAMEO mission trip without it changing your life in some aspect or another. Mostly I am just so proud of the students that I brought here. I knew that they would do an amazing job and I couldn't have asked for a more dedicated team. Every time I come on a mission trip it fuels my drive to continue to medical school and coming on more medical missions. I don't want to get lost in practicing medicine in the US and never come back. So many people depend on our help and we cannot ignore that. Since I have already been twice as an undergraduate, I would like to wait until I am in medical school to come again. I want to give other undergraduates the experience that I have had. As I progress, I hope that I will always be able to have Dr. Keen as a resource and guide through my journey in medicine. He has taught so many students and his information is invaluable. CAMEO is such a wonderful organization and I just want to be able to come back as a MD someday so that I can help more. I will always remember my experiences here in Jamaica and I would never have had them if it weren't for CAMEO. I thank the Lord every day for the opportunities I have had. Everything happens for a reason and I know that I was a part of this to help others in need."

Kristina

"I had the privilege of traveling with IMO to Buff Bay, Jamaica this summer. Having the opportunity to serve the underserved was a life changing experience. Dispensing medicine and providing education to those who have little to no access to health care was so rewarding. The gratitude and hospitality from the people of Buff Bay was overwhelming. Having direct patient contact and working alongside a set of scholarly doctors was an invaluable opportunity that allowed me to gain the knowledge and confidence required to survive the medical field. I am beyond grateful for the experiences gained and I look forward to traveling with CAMEO again soon!"

Allison Blinder

"Traveling to Jamaica with IMO was an unforgettable experience. Putting it into words is nearly impossible. In such a short amount of time we were able to touch so many lives. The hospitality and cheerful spirits encompassed almost every patient we saw. My favorite part of each clinic was when we first arrived. The people were already lined up waiting anxiously for our arrival. At each clinic we were able to experience multiple aspects of healthcare. I was able to practice many skills I had previously acquired in nursing school. In addition, I was challenged to grow both as a nurse and as a person. I feel blessed to have been part of such an amazing organization. "

Cassidy Jacobs