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**Class of 2018
Mooreville, NC**

While attending the Health Humanities Exchange Conference at UNC Chapel Hill in the fall of 2016, I came across Performing Medicine, a unique London-based theatre arts program that uses methodologies from the arts and humanities to create innovative courses that focus on verbal and non-verbal communication, observation, teamwork, and reflective practice for healthcare professionals and medical students. At this conference, Performing Medicine presented its Circle of Care framework, which detailed how self-care and mindfulness are important not only for the patient, but also for the physician.

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**London,
England**

PRESCRIBING EMPATHY:

EXPLORING ARTS-BASED PEDAGOGY IN MEDICAL TRAINING



As a student who wants to enter the medical field, I was intrigued by this new concept, having never thought about such ideas before in relation to medicine, and wanted to learn more.

For the past year, I have examined the concept of clinical empathy and analyzed the theories and practices behind it. Through the Burch Fellowship, I had the incredible opportunity to conduct my own ethnographic research with Performing Medicine by experiencing their pedagogy first-hand and observing its effects on its participants. My Burch project was thus based in London, which was the perfect location to pursue my endeavors. It is home to rich medical cultural and historical resources,



such as the Wellcome Collection, Francis Crick Institute, and other museums, and is a growing center for the nascent discipline of medical humanities. Additionally, I had the chance to attend medical humanities conferences located in Swansea and Newcastle, which were more focused on general applications and advancements of medical

humanities and made me appreciate how diverse and far-reaching this interdisciplinary field is.

I spent most of my time in the vibrant neighborhood of London Fields, where the office of Performing Medicine is based. I observed workshops at local universities and sat in on daily operations at the office.

Additionally, I was able to interview the artistic director, research manager, and various artists, doctors, and students involved with the program to learn about their multifaceted roles and experiences. It was mesmerizing to watch

students and professionals partake in activities that required them to explore their roles and identities as clinicians and nurses through movement, role playing, and listening activities.

Another integral part of my research was my time spent in the Wellcome Collection. This unusual yet beautiful museum houses a mix of medical artifacts and artworks that explore the connections between medicine and art. The Wellcome quickly became my second home. The café served as a great workplace, the Reading Room solace from the busy streets of London, the Medicine Now and Medicine Man exhibitions a candy shop for my curious mind, and the Wellcome Library the powerhouse for my literature review.

Beyond research, London became my playground. I

had the opportunity to visit several museums. I even found a hidden treasure, the Old Operating Theatre Museum, in which I saw the oldest surviving surgical theater in all of the U.K. While I enjoyed touring the sights, my favorite area was East London. Whether it was exploring Brick Lane, strolling through Columbia Flower Market on Sunday morning, paying a visit to Hackney City Farm, dropping by Broadway Market, or taking a stroll through Victoria Park, living in London Fields was the perfect experience of

being a true Londoner.

The Burch Fellowship experience has changed me. Simply put, this experience has made me a better person. I now have a greater sense of

independence and confidence. The control I had over the direction of my work and life gave me a sense of liberation as I explored and learned about London. More importantly, through the experiences and interactions I had, I gained a better understanding of my goals and what I desire in life. As a student who aspires to attend medical school, this research helped me understand what it means to be an effective and empathetic healer. I am forever grateful for every moment and for all the everlasting relationships that I formed during my Burch Fellowship.

