

# Hubert-Yeargan Center Happenings

Spring 2026

## Our mission is...

to train globally minded, socially responsible clinician-educators and scientists who are dedicated to advancing human health and reducing health disparities both domestically and globally.

## What we do:

**Inspire** young professionals by exposing them to potentially life changing experiences in resource constrained environments around the world

**Develop** mutually beneficial, collaborative relationships which address the needs of local communities

**Support** global health research efforts while providing clinical care for disadvantaged and vulnerable populations

## HYC Leadership



Executive Director  
Chris Woods,  
MD, MPH



Associate Director & GHP Program Director  
Nathan Thielman,  
MD, MPH

## Inside This Issue:

Resident Reflections	2
Global Health Pathway	2
How to Donate	2

## 2026 Recipients of the Ralph Corey Legacy Award

The Hubert-Yeargan Center is proud to announce the selection of two outstanding 2026 recipients for the Dr. G. Ralph Corey Legacy Awards—both are graduates of the Duke Global Health Pathway.

**Dr. Sofia Zavala**, an Assistant Professor of Infectious Diseases and Global Health, has been selected for her innovative project, *Integrated Strategies for Leptospirosis Surveillance in Iquitos, Peru: From Mapping to Capacity Building (GeoLepto)*.

When seasonal rains flood the streets of Iquitos, Peru, they carry more than water. They also spread leptospirosis—a potentially deadly bacterial disease long under-detected in the Amazon. Zavala’s RC Legacy-funded project, *GeoLepto*, aims to change that.

The study blends mapping technology, laboratory science, and close collaboration with Peruvian partners to better understand how leptospirosis spreads through the city. By linking confirmed cases to rainfall, flooding, and nearby water sources, the team will identify high-risk neighborhoods and environmental reservoirs driving transmission.

*GeoLepto* also addresses a critical gap: limited and inconsistent diagnostic capacity. The project will assess barriers in local laboratories and help guide sustainable improvements in testing and surveillance. Working alongside regional health authorities, the team will sample rivers and standing water near disease hotspots, generating data to inform targeted public health action.

For Zavala, who trained in Peru and now teaches at Duke, the award supports a deeply personal mission—turning local knowledge into practical tools communities can use.

**Dr. Julian Hertz**, an Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine and Global Health, has been selected for his impactful project, *A multisite study of acute myocardial infarction care in Tanzania: identifying opportunities for a quality improvement intervention*.

His study aims to improve emergency cardiac care in Tanzania by examining how patients with acute myocardial infarction (heart attack) are diagnosed and treated in Tanzanian emergency departments—where lifesaving, evidence-based care is often delayed or missed. His work builds on years of research showing that heart attacks in Tanzania are frequently underdiagnosed and associated with some of the highest mortality rates reported globally.

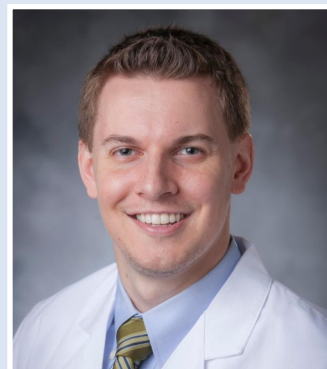
The project will expand evaluation of emergency care practices across multiple hospitals and identify barriers to timely diagnosis and treatment. The findings will help refine and scale MIMIC—a multicomponent intervention co-designed with Tanzanian clinicians that includes triage tools, clinical decision aids, provider training, and patient education.

Early pilot data show MIMIC dramatically increased use of key interventions such as ECG testing and aspirin, with promising reductions in short-term mortality. If scaled nationally, the approach could help prevent thousands of deaths each year.

For Hertz, who has conducted research in Tanzania for more than 15 years and is fluent in Swahili, the award supports a long-term commitment to building sustainable, locally-led solutions to emergency care gaps.



Dr. Sofia Zavala



Dr. Julian Hertz

## Resident Reflections on Impact of Their Global Health Clinical Electives

### Donations

The Hubert-Yeargan Center for Global Health is sustained by generous donations from our donors. We value the collaborations we've built with individuals, organizations, and other academic medical centers dedicated to dramatically improving the healthcare and lives of people around the world.

Your donations directly support our training programs. On behalf of our trainees, and everyone whose lives their work has touched, thank you for supporting our programs!

To donate directly to the Hubert-Yeargan Center, visit [hyc.globalhealth.duke.edu/giving-back/](http://hyc.globalhealth.duke.edu/giving-back/) or scan the QR code below.

To mail a donation, please contact us at [Hubert-Yeargan@duke.edu](mailto:Hubert-Yeargan@duke.edu) for more information and to ensure the check is received by our office.



### Core Team

**Managing Director**  
Tim Veldman, PhD

**Director of Clinical Education**  
Rebecca Lumsden, MD, MS-GH

**Administrative Manager**  
GHP Program Coordinator  
Tara Pemble

**Administrative Coordinator**  
Jessie Hardison, MIS

**Administrative Support**  
Rhonda Bartley

**Clinical Research Coordinator**  
Veronica Carrion

**Research Analyst**  
Armstrong Mbi Obale

In Memory of our  
Founding Director  
G. Ralph Corey, MD

A total of 16 residents from six different residency programs at Duke completed global health clinical elective rotations this academic year. These global health electives have fostered meaningful personal and professional growth, through exposure to a wide range of diseases, diverse healthcare delivery systems, and innovative models developed in resource-limited settings. Most impactfully, these experiences have deepened their understanding of different cultural perspectives while strengthening the adaptability required to provide effective, compassionate care across varied clinical environments, both locally and globally, and creating a lasting impact as they progress on to the next steps of their professional careers.

**Dr. Joseph Goddu, a PGY4 resident in Medicine-Pediatrics** completed his rotation at Hospital Regional de Loreto in Iquitos, Peru together with Dr. Noah Hellerman (MedPeds). "Words can hardly express how grateful I am for the opportunity to participate in Duke's Peruvian global health clinical rotation at Hospital Regional de Loreto in Iquitos. It was one of the most formative experiences of my residency. One lesson consistently proved true: the differences between cultures often appear large on the surface, but the common values beneath them (family, community, dignity, and the desire to care for one another) are remarkably universal. The rotation in Iquitos reinforced that global health experiences are not simply opportunities to observe medicine in another setting. They challenge us to rethink our assumptions, deepen our clinical reasoning, and broaden our understanding of the social, cultural, and environmental forces that shape health. The lessons I learned there will influence the way I practice medicine for the rest of my career.." Dr. Goddu will be starting his new role as a primary care physician, taking care of underserved patients, at a federally qualified health center in New Orleans.



From left to right: Sofi Zavala, Courtney Welch, Noah Hellermann, Joseph Goddu in Iquitos, Peru

**Dr. Wesley Gregory, a PGY3 resident in Pediatrics**, spent eight weeks at Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre in Moshi, Tanzania. "As a pediatric resident at Duke, this experience was both humbling and transformative. I was able to explore the beauty and brokenness of healthcare on a global scale, care for high-risk children in the hospital and share knowledge across cultures.. As Dr. Paul Farmer once said, "The essence of global health equity is the idea that something so precious as health might be viewed as a right." That belief now guides my path forward." Dr. Gregory will start his role as a Chief Resident in Pediatrics at Duke in July.

**Dr. Best Uchehara, PGY3 resident in Internal Medicine**, completed his elective rotation, together with Drs. Neha Pal (IM) and Mfoniso Ekpo (Neurology) at Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital in Eldoret, Kenya this spring. Dr. Uchehara reflected: "This experience has left an indelible mark on me and will undoubtedly shape my future work, both domestically and abroad. Above all, I have gained enduring insights into human-centered design thinking, lessons that will accompany me throughout my career. I am deeply grateful for this opportunity and strongly believe it will stand as one of the hallmark experiences of my professional journey, particularly in my pursuit of global health work." Dr. Uchehara will be starting his Cardiology fellowship at University of Texas Southwestern this fall.

### Global Health Pathway Trainee Highlight

Last month, Dr. Megan Badejo, one of Duke's Orthopaedic Surgery residents in the Global Health Leadership Pathway, partnered with the GREAT Alliance to engage leaders and staff Capitol Hill in global health discussions. Joining a national group of residents, fellows, and the Student National Medical Association of Global Health Fellows, Megan met with policymakers to engage in discussions about current global health policy challenges and the role of residency training in strengthening the health workforce. She was among a dedicated group of health professionals who met with more than 50 congressional offices to share perspectives on the importance of global health education as a formal, high-impact component of residency training. The experience provided valuable exposure to the policy environment, highlighting residents' roles as future health leaders and diplomats while underscoring how global health training can contribute to improved quality of care in the United States.



Megan Badejo (front) pictured with medical trainees at Capitol Hill.