



# All Things Ignatian



## Project CURA

*A student run Creighton University School of Medicine organization that sends Medical Students both abroad and locally to work, treat, and help the underserved*

### History

Project CURA was established in 2001 by Dr. Kumar Desai, who at the time was a current Creighton Medical student. At that time, Dr. Desai felt that we, as a medical school, should embrace our Jesuit ideals and strive to do more in the world. CURA stands for **Creighton Medical United in Relief Assistance** Through his hard work and efforts, Project CURA now sends medical service trips consisting of medical students, who have finished their first year, and some Creighton University Medical Center physicians to six different countries internationally as well as locally to Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. Since 2001, each year there has been a greater number of students from each M1 class participating in Project CURA. This year, fifty percent of the M1 class is participating in Project CURA and voluntarily spending the first half of their summer on a medical service trip. We have 9 total trips representing Project CURA this year. The average cost of each trip runs around \$3,000 per student and the medical students actively try to raise as much money as possible to purchase medications and supplies to take along with them



### The 3 Pillars of CURA

#### Simple Living

To become aware of the choices that the poor are forced to make as you consciously journey with them.

#### Cultural Sensitivity

Immerse yourself in a community with values and ideas different from those that you are accustomed to. To be exposed to ways of accomplishing day-to-day tasks as well as living by doing it along side the local people.

#### Service and Community

To serve and live together as members of the project as well as members of the community you are serving.

### Special Events

#### Savor the Flavor Silent Auction

Every Spring, Project CURA holds a silent auction where CUMC Physicians, friends, classmates, and family are invited to come and learn about our trips, sample some of the local cuisine of the countries we will be visiting, and bid on a wide variety of items.

#### Project CURA Omaha

Project CURA-Omaha does volunteer work in the greater Omaha area throughout the school year. We are involved in a number of different community organizations and send CURA members to elementary schools throughout the area to talk about helping the underserved.

### Our Trips

**Pine Ridge, SD** - The spring break immersion trip is focused on learning the history and culture of the Lakota Sioux Native Americans. Students experience a traditional sweat lodge ceremony, various cultural speakers and visits to important Lakota historical sites. Educational activities include mentoring at local elementary/high schools.

**India** – In Pune, students worked in pediatric, surgical, glaucoma, and out patient departments shadowing doctors. The group worked with Mother Teresa's Organization. The majority of the groups' work consisted of organizing and running free health camps for underserved, rural and tribal populations distributing medicines and being exposed to diseases seen in that part of the world.

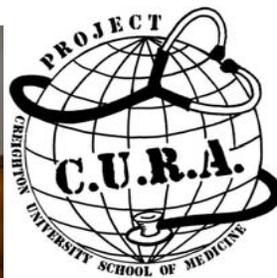
**Romania** - Students traveled to some of the smaller villages and held health clinics for the townspeople. Also we put on hygiene workshops for the kids. In some of the bigger cities we toured hospitals, comparing Romanian healthcare to our own. Additionally in some of the bigger cities we were able to shadow a few doctors as they rounded, they even set up patient scenarios for students to tackle.

**Peru** – In Cusco, students worked in local orphanages and childcare centers in and around Cusco with a Peruvian doctor who helped students perform basic physical exams on the children. Additionally, blood samples were taken from each child as a screening. Hygiene presentations were given, and healthy eating practices were encouraged. Finally, the group helped clean and paint a home for women and girls.

**Ghana** –Students volunteered in the village of Akrade with local construction projects, taught conversational English to children, helped with the national polio eradication efforts, and provided basic medical supplies and services with the area health clinic.

**Southeast Asia: The Philippines, Cambodia, and Vietnam** – In The Philippines, students worked in community healthcare centers dressing wounds and treating skin diseases. In Cambodia, they worked with a mobile clinic, delivering care to underserved and rural areas. In Vietnam, students built a house for a family and assisted with mobile clinics to provide healthcare to rural areas.

**Nicaragua** – This summer will be our first time sending a team that will extend our organization to Central America! The medical students will be working with Atraves, a non-profit international organization.



### Mission Statement

The organization provides health education/primary prevention to the underserved and minority populations of greater Omaha/eastern Nebraska area throughout the year and enable students to travel abroad to underserved countries and utilize preliminary medical skills, to realize the Creighton Ideals of Magis, Cura Personalis, and Men and Women For and With Others and appreciate the value and satisfaction of helping others by providing service learning opportunities to Creighton medical students.