

THE ECHO FOUNDATION

presents

ECHO ABROAD: Footsteps in Rwanda



Photo © Partners in Health

In collaboration with

**Dr. Paul Farmer and
Partners in Health**

Summer 2008

ECHO ABROAD: Footsteps in Rwanda

In this age of globalization, it is vital that young people expand their knowledge, heighten their sensitivity, and broaden their awareness of critical world issues so that they develop into compassionate adults. Travel and hands-on experiences have the capacity to transform students in a way that transcends classroom learning; only by “doing” can young people fully appreciate the challenges that face them as future leaders.

This unique travel and leadership initiative offers high school students and nursing students the exceptional opportunity to travel to Rwanda, which serves as a striking example both of the consequences of indifference and the power of individual initiative in service to humanity.

Through an extensive application and interview process, diverse students from across our region have been chosen to participate. Each student demonstrates eager curiosity, a passion for justice, and an innate sense of responsibility for humankind. Their experience with *ECHO ABROAD: Footsteps in Rwanda* will further develop these traits, making these students better equipped to take their place in the world as respectful adults dedicated to compassionate and ethical action.



Program Components

Inspired by former Echo students, ECHO ABROAD was created to provide Charlotte-area students the opportunity to explore personal responsibility and global citizenship through intensive study and international travel. As Echo's *Voices Against Indifference* initiative focuses this year on the ongoing genocide in Darfur, the Student Ambassadors of ECHO ABROAD will be examining lessons we might apply to this humanitarian disaster from Rwanda. Struggling in the throes of genocide just 13 years ago, today Rwanda stands as an outstanding example of reconciliation and hope.

Preparatory Educational Seminars:

Ambassadors will participate in a series of pre-departure seminars in preparation for their travel to Rwanda in summer 2008. Combining curriculum study and group dialogue with speakers, readings, films, and more, students will study topics as varied as Rwandan history, current events, genocide and culture.



Group Travel: In summer 2008, Ambassadors will travel to Rwanda to learn about the country, its people, and how the development of economic, educational and healthcare infrastructures is fueling tremendous social progress in this tiny nation.

Partners in Health Observational Study: In partnership with Dr. Paul Farmer's Partners in Health, students will spend several days at the Inshuti Mu Buzima clinic and hospital in Rwinkwavu, Rwanda to gain exposure to the challenges of delivering health care in the third world.



Rhondo Primary School #1 Partnership: In keeping with Partners in Health's holistic approach to community wellness, students will work with Rhondo Primary School #1 in Rwinkwavu to enhance the school's educational capacity in the community. Prior to their departure, Ambassadors will raise funding here in Charlotte for the improvements.

Nursing Student Exchange: Nursing students from Charlotte-area schools will participate in the program. After our visit, three Rwanda nurses will have the opportunity to come to Charlotte to learn from the best in United States health care delivery.

The Charlotte Observer

www.charlotte.com

Wednesday, October 31, 2007
By Tim Funk

Foundation invites students to apply for trip to Rwanda

Charlotte's Echo Foundation, the educational group that brought Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel to town this year, is looking for local high school students who'd like to travel to Rwanda next July.

Students from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area who are now in grades 9-11 are invited to apply for the chance to see how that African country is dealing with the devastation of genocide and the reconciliation that began 13 years ago.

"**Echo Abroad: Footsteps in Rwanda**" is part of a travel and leadership initiative launched by the Echo Foundation to give student "ambassadors" a chance to walk in the footsteps of Wiesel, a Holocaust survivor who has worked to end genocide worldwide. This year, a group of students traveled to Europe -- including Romania, where Wiesel was born, and Auschwitz,



the Nazi death camp in Poland where he and members of his Jewish family were taken.

Applications for the Rwanda trip are available online at www.EchoFoundation.org or by calling 704-347-3844. The deadline for turning in applications is Nov. 12.

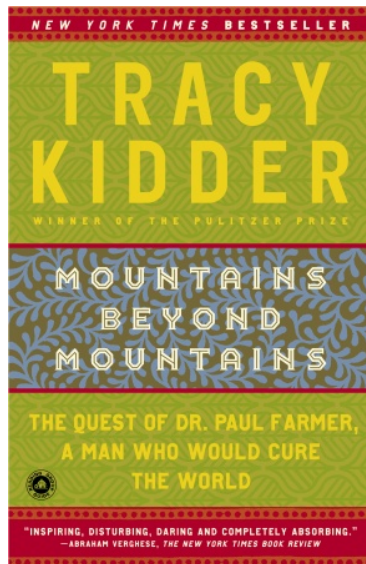
The Echo Foundation is also sponsoring art, photography, essay and poetry contests for local high school students. That deadline is Nov. 14. For details, go to the Web site.



Charlotte Students to Travel to Rwanda

Charlotte, N.C., Oct. 25, 2007 – The Echo Foundation is currently accepting applications for its second annual travel and leadership initiative for Charlotte-area high school students. Footsteps Ambassadors for “ECHO ABROAD: Footsteps in Rwanda” will travel to Rwanda with The Echo Foundation in July 2008.

This unique program offers students the exceptional opportunity to witness first-hand a country and its people who have experienced the devastation of genocide and the hopeful process of reconciliation.



Once synonymous with cruelty, violence, and injustice, the Rwanda of today is a place of hope and optimism.

In the thirteen years since genocide ceased, the Rwandan government has been dedicated to promoting democracy, an improved standard of living, economic stability, and safety and peace for all citizens. To this end, the Rwandan Ministry of Health collaborates with Boston-based Partners in Health, established by Dr. Paul Farmer, in eastern Rwanda to promote health and long-term positive changes in the rural community.

As chronicled in the *New York Times* bestseller *Mountains beyond Mountains*, Dr. Farmer and his colleagues at Partners in Health are passionately devoted to the advancement of worldwide equality in healthcare. The Echo Foundation’s Footsteps Ambassadors will join this partnership, as Charlotte students learn about genocide, personal responsibility, and the profound impact one person can have in the life of another.



Biography - Dr. Paul Farmer

From Brigham and Women's Hospital



Medical anthropologist and physician Paul Farmer has dedicated his life to treating some of the world's poorest populations, in the process helping to raise the standard of health care in underdeveloped areas of the world. A founding director of Partners In Health, an international charity organization that provides direct health care services and undertakes research and advocacy activities on behalf of those who are sick and living in poverty, Dr. Farmer and his colleagues have successfully challenged the policymakers and critics who claim that quality health care is impossible to deliver in resource-poor areas.

Paul Farmer has worked in infectious-disease control in the Americas for nearly two decades and is a world-renowned authority on tuberculosis treatment and control. Along with his colleagues at the Brigham and in the Program in Infectious Disease and Social Change at Harvard Medical School, Dr. Farmer has pioneered novel, community-based treatment strategies for infectious diseases (including HIV/AIDS and multidrug-resistant tuberculosis) in resource-poor settings. He has also written extensively about health and human rights, and about the role of social inequalities in the distribution and outcomes of readily treatable diseases.

Author or co-author of over 100 scholarly publications, his research and writing stem in large part from work in Haiti and Peru, and from clinical and teaching activities.

Currently Presley Professor of Medical Anthropology in the Department of Social Medicine at the Harvard Medical School, Dr. Farmer has both taught in and served as a course director for social-medicine courses in the Department. He has been a visiting professor at institutions throughout the U.S. as well as in France, Canada, Peru, the Netherlands, Russia, and Central Asia.



Photo courtesy of Brigham and Women's Hospital.

Among the numerous awards Dr. Farmer has received in the last decade are the Duke University Humanitarian Award, the Margaret Mead Award from the American Anthropological Association, and the American Medical

Association's International Physician (Nathan Davis) Award. In 1993, he was awarded a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation "genius award" in recognition of his work. Perhaps no award so typifies Paul Farmer's life and accomplishments, however, as the Heinz Award for the Human Condition, which he received in 2003.

Dr. Farmer received his Bachelor's degree in 1982 from Duke University, and his M.D. and Ph.D. (in Anthropology) simultaneously in 1990 from Harvard University. He and his wife, anthropologist Didi Bertrand, live in Paris and in Haiti. They have a five-year-old daughter, Catherine.

The PIH model of care

From Partners in Health

The world is focused as never before on averting millions of preventable deaths among poor people living in the developing world. For the first time, substantial funding is available to treat infectious diseases in impoverished settings. Funding alone, though, won't be enough. For this massive investment to make a real impact on the twin epidemics of poverty and disease, a comprehensive and community-based approach is key.

Partners In Health's success has helped prove that allegedly "untreatable" health problems can be addressed effectively, even in poor settings. Until very recently, it was conventional wisdom that neither multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR TB) nor AIDS could be treated in such settings.

PIH proved otherwise, developing a model of community-based care used successfully to treat MDR TB in the slums of Lima, Peru, and deliver antiretroviral therapy for AIDS in a squatter settlement in rural Haiti. National health authorities in both countries have now significantly expanded these pilot projects. Today, PIH has transplanted and adapted its model of care to the epicenter of the HIV pandemic in Africa, launching projects in Rwanda in 2005 and Lesotho in 2006. Elements of PIH's community-based approach have been disseminated to and adapted by other countries and programs throughout the world.



Patients waiting outside Rwinkwavu Hospital in Rwanda. Photo courtesy of Partners in Health.



President Bill Clinton visits the Partners in Health clinic in Rwanda in 2006.

The five fundamental principles of our work are:

1. Access to primary health care

A strong foundation of primary care is critical to successfully treating specific diseases, such as AIDS. People seek care because they feel sick, not because they have a particular disease. When quality primary health care is accessible, the community develops new faith in the health system, which results in increased use of general medical services as well as services for more complex diseases. Therefore, PIH integrates infectious disease interventions within a wide range of basic health and social services.

2. Free health care and education for the poor

The imposition of user fees has resulted in empty clinics and schools, especially in settings where the burden of poverty and disease are greatest. Because both health and education are fundamental routes to development, it is counterproductive (not to mention immoral) to charge user fees for health care and education to those who need these services most and can afford them least. PIH works to ensure that cost does not prevent access to primary health care and education for the poor.

3. Community partnerships

Health programs should involve community members at all levels of assessment, design, implementation, and evaluation. Community health workers may be family members, friends, or even patients who provide health education, refer people who are ill to a clinic, or deliver medicines and social support to patients in their homes. Community health workers do not supplant the work of doctors or nurses; rather, they are a vital interface between the clinic and the community. In recognition of the critical role they play, they should be compensated for their work. PIH doesn't tell the communities we serve what they need—they tell us.



Left: Joseph Jeune before treatment for HIV/AIDS/TB co-infection, March 2003, Right: Joseph Jeune after treatment, September 2003 (David Walton/PIH).

4. Addressing basic social and economic needs

Fighting disease in impoverished settings also means fighting the poverty at the root of poor health. Achieving good health outcomes requires attending to peoples' social and economic needs. Through community partners, PIH works to improve access to food, shelter, clean water, sanitation, education, and economic opportunities.

5. Serving the poor through the public sector

A vital public sector is the best way to bring health care to the poor. While nongovernmental organizations have a valuable role to play in developing new approaches to treating disease, successful models must be implemented and expanded through the public sector to assure universal and sustained access. Rather than establish parallel systems, PIH works to strengthen and complement existing public health infrastructure.

The work of PIH has three goals: to care for our patients, to alleviate the root causes of disease in their communities, and to share lessons learned around the world. Through long-term partnerships with our sister organizations, we bring the benefits of modern medical science to those most in need and work to alleviate the crushing economic and social burdens of poverty that exacerbate disease. PIH believes that health is a fundamental right, not a privilege.

Through service, training, advocacy, and research, we seek to raise the standard of care for the poor everywhere.

