



GLOBAL SURGERY
STUDENT ALLIANCE

HUNTER COLLEGE CHAPTER

What is global surgery?

For a very long time, surgery was not included in the discussion of how healthcare could be improved worldwide, especially in the most remote corners of the earth. Only recently has surgery been brought to the table, being called the “forgotten step-child” of global health by Paul Farmer and others.

At the very core, global surgery is “a field that aims to improve health and health equity for all who are affected by surgical conditions or have a need for surgical care, with a particular focus on underserved populations in countries of all income levels, as well as populations in crisis, such as those experiencing conflict, displacement, and disaster.” Important to this effort is all aspects of surgery, including anesthesia, OB/Gyn, and nursing.

Currently, 5 billion people around the world do not have adequate access to basic surgical care. The poorest 30% of the world receives only 3-6% of operations, whereas the richest 30% receives almost 75%. 17 million people die and 77 million disability-adjusted life years are lost each year. These numbers are greater than HIV/AIDS, malaria, and TB deaths/year combined. It is estimated that approximately 143 million additional surgical procedures per year and 2.2 million more surgical healthcare providers are needed to reach the WHO’s goal of 80% essential surgical care coverage by 2030.

How can you get involved?

The Global Surgery Student Alliance (GSSA) is the national global surgery working group for the U.S. which launched in January 2017 with the purpose of bringing together students who are interested in global surgery and who have a desire to contribute to the field. Since starting, GSSA has helped 40+ schools around the country create their own local global surgery working groups. Through their affiliation with the International Student Surgical Network (InciSioN), GSSA is connected with similar national working groups around the world who are working towards the same goal of increasing access to safe and affordable surgical care for all people.

Whether you are interested in surgery/anesthesia/OBGyn, public health, economics, finance, policy, engineering, education, statistics, or any combination of these, you have a very significant contribution to make to this growing field. And no matter how little or how much you can contribute, your involvement in global surgery is incredibly necessary and valuable.

If you want to learn more about global surgery and want to join the club at Hunter College, you can email us at huntergssa@gmail.com and follow us on Instagram at @huntergssa to learn more about our events throughout the semester. Our meetings will be held on Fridays 3-4pm!