2023
Emory Morningside Global Health Case Competition
Preventing Maternal Death in Haiti’s Central Plateau
The Emory Morningside Global Health Case Competition (EMGHCC) is an experiential program that brings together students from multiple disciplines to address a critical global health challenge. The competitive case competition environment requires student teams to work collaboratively to develop solutions designed for health impact and present a business case to an expert panel of judges.

Now in its 15th year, Emory Global Health Institute (EGHI) hosts teams from around the world at Emory University to compete in the largest global health case competition in the world.
“I was told this program would be one of the highlights of medical school, and it absolutely lived up to the expectations. I have a new appreciation for the intense research and planning it takes to implement similar health intervention programs in the real world.”

ANDREW YEICH
University of Pennsylvania Team Captain

PREVENTING MATERNAL DEATH IN HAITI’S CENTRAL PLATEAU

The 2023 case challenged teams to develop a three-year pilot grant proposal for the Maternal and Newborn Health Thematic Fund supported by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Teams were encouraged to incorporate strategies across the five domains of the social determinants of health (economic stability, education access and quality, health care access and quality, neighborhood and built environment, and social and community context).

Proposals and interventions were judged on the following criteria:

• Potential to reduce the maternal mortality rate in Haiti’s Central Plateau
• Innovative by expanding on existing initiatives or creating a new approach
• Feasible and culturally competent
• Sustainable by building on local capacity and community-owned
• Targeted during one phase of the pre- or postnatal period
MATERNAL MORTALITY IS A GLOBAL HEALTH CRISIS

Every two minutes, a woman dies from a pregnancy-related cause. While most maternal deaths occur in low and lower middle-income countries, the number of women who die during or shortly after childbirth in the United States is higher than any other high-income country in the world. Georgia, Emory’s home, had the seventh-highest maternal mortality rate (MMR) in the nation from 2018 to 2021, with black mothers at highest risk.

Haiti has the highest MMR in the Western hemisphere (480 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births), and it continues to trend upward. Multiple factors contribute to rising maternal deaths in Haiti including economic and political turmoil, a fragile health system, and the cholera epidemic.

"[I learned about the importance of] reaching out to those with insight on the ground, and truly understanding the culture, beliefs, and values of the people we are aiming to help."

STUDENT PARTICIPANT
THE COMPETITION

DIVERSE STUDENT TEAMS COLLABORATE TO DEVELOP LIFE-SAVING INTERVENTIONS

Teams from 29 universities around the world were challenged to address the high burden of maternal mortality facing the Central Plateau region in Haiti. Working across disciplines, each team developed their solutions and presented to expert panels of judges during two rounds of competition.

“We know we have some troubling rates of maternal and child mortality across the Western Hemisphere, but for Haiti, it’s particularly poignant. This case study is a narrative that you’re hearing every day in Haiti. I’m excited to see the innovation and what the teams come up with in their proposals.”

DR. YORAN GRANT-GREENE
Country Director, CDC-Haiti & Final Round Judge
EXPERTS SHARE KNOWLEDGE WITH THE NEXT GENERATION OF GLOBAL HEALTH LEADERS

Emory Global Health Institute (EGHI) invited global health experts, public health practitioners, maternal health clinicians and advocates, professors of gynecology and obstetrics, and business leaders from around the world to serve as 2023 EMGHCC advisors and judges. These distinguished volunteers consulted with teams, evaluated solutions, asked clarifying and tough questions, scored, deliberated, and provided feedback to 160 students during a week of competition.

First-round judges worked in pairs, with each pair assigned to evaluate the same group of team case solutions. The five teams with the highest first-round scores advanced to the final round of the competition.

“Our team was left with a sense of appreciation of the complexity involved in tackling a global health issue and gratitude for the many giants and experts in the field who labour tirelessly in hope of more equitable health outcomes in parts of the world where attention is less given.”

JONAS LIM
Graduate student, Public Health Policy & Management
University of Melbourne
“It’s hard to judge one team against another. There is consistency of talent across the teams, and the hard part is how to pick the winners when every team that comes here is a winner… and to watch them compete, the level at which they present, it’s incredible.”

PHIL JACOBS
Founding Partner, The Pendleton Consulting Group & Final Round Judge

SERVING THE UNFPA GLOBAL HEALTH CASE

The top 5 student teams advancing to the final round of competition were given an extra hour to consider a late-breaking request from UNFPA and incorporate new information into their presentations. This “case twist” required teams to introduce mitigation measures to reduce the risk of mis- and disinformation on decision-making at country level and maintain confidence in community-level interventions. First and final-round deliverables included a 12-minute presentation and eight minutes of questions and answers.
BY THE NUMBERS

160 Participants, including students from 6 countries, across 4 continents

29 Teams competed

36% Of competitors were undergraduates

100% Of teams included 3 or more disciplines

ALBERT EINSTEIN COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
BROWN UNIVERSITY
CLAREMONT GRADUATE UNIVERSITY
EMORY UNIVERSITY
GEORGIA TECH
HARVARD UNIVERSITY
MAKERERE UNIVERSITY
MCMASTER UNIVERSITY
MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK, DOWNSTATE
ST. GEORGE’S UNIVERSITY
UNIFORMED SERVICES UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES
UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY
UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY
WEILL CORNELL MEDICAL COLLEGE
YALE UNIVERSITY

Check out highlights from the competition: Uniformed Services University Wins Competition Focused on Preventing Maternal Deaths in Haiti

Anonymous (Amy) Van Pett, PhD, MPH @amileanvanpett - Mar 19

Highly enjoyable the 24 hour challenge! Loved how the teams have been involved since 2014 - competing as a student 3 years at Emory and serving as a mentor for teams at 2 different universities. It’s truly such an incredible applied learning opportunity.
For more information about the Emory Morningside Global Health Case Competition and to subscribe for updates about future events, visit globalhealth.emory.edu