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# A 10-Year Glance at the Global Health Scholars Program

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In sunny Lusaka, the capital city of landlocked African country Zambia, lies the only radiation therapy facility for Zambia's population of approximately 19 million people. At Cancer Diseases Hospital, there is 1 CT simulator, 2 cobalt machines, 2 brachytherapy suites, and 1 linear accelerator to treat cancer patients from the entire country. Megan Kassick, MD, PhD, a recipient of the 2021 Global Health Scholars Program (GHSP) scholarship, spent 6 weeks at Cancer Diseases Hospital conducting research with her local mentor to identify factors that contribute to delayed patient presentation for treatment of cervical cancer. She is currently preparing a manuscript for publication with local collaborators on the work she did during her GHSP experience. At the end of the experience, Dr. Kassick expressed gratitude towards the GHSP for supporting a unique opportunity that allows residents to pursue hands-on experience and research in global oncology. Dr. Kassick's project highlights one of several experiences that the GHSP has helped support.

This year marks the 10th year of resident experiences under the GHSP. This scholarship, which is organized by the Association of Residents in Radiation Oncology (ARRO) and supported by the American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO), was created to encourage resident-led global health exposure and efforts. Since its creation, the GHSP has funded 3 residents per year for a total of 30 scholars to date. Due to its success and popularity, the funding for this program was increased from \$1500 to \$2500 per person in 2015. To date, the GHSP has awarded \$51,000 to help residents gain experience in global health and global oncology. So far, resident experiences have taken place in 17 countries. About

half of them occurred in Sub-Saharan Africa, while others took place across Asia, the Caribbean, and Central/South America. Experiences have ranged from observerships, where residents learned about the delivery of radiation therapy in other countries while shadowing different clinicians, to the completion of resident-initiated research projects. Upon their return, residents presented their experiences at ARRO Global Health Subcommittee meetings and ASTRO Annual Meetings. Many of these residents have strived to incorporate global health into their careers. In the upcoming year, Dr. Kassick will be joining an academic institution in a research-track faculty position focused on global oncology and women's health.

This program has been an invaluable resource for residents with interests in global cancer care. Former scholars have expressed that this opportunity was vital in their growth as a globally minded radiation oncologist, and these sentiments have been reciprocated by their colleagues at host institutions. As global health interest of trainees grows and careers with a global focus are becoming increasingly supported by academic institutions, this program continues to grow in popularity as demonstrated by recent increases in the number of applicants applying for the GHSP. Therefore, we believe that now is the time to increase funding to allow more residents to participate in this great experience. Looking forward, we hope this program will see continued expansion through increased financial assistance from ASTRO to support more residents interested in pursuing this enriching experience and thus supporting their future careers as part of the international oncology community.

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