



# HEALTH ALLIANCE INTERNATIONAL

## Global Connections

### Spotlight: UW Connections

University of Washington faculty, staff, students, and alumni flow constantly between Seattle and Mozambique. It's a river that feeds and nurtures both the UW and Health Alliance International (HAI), strengthening the bonds between the university and the international NGO.

A principal goal of HAI is to enable individuals and groups from the university and the wider community to develop projects and activities consistent with HAI's mission. HAI technical resources include senior faculty at the University of Washington School of Public Health and Community Medicine.

Senior HAI staff Steve Gloyd, Mary Ann Mercer, James Pfeiffer

and Mark Micek, are also International Health Program (IHP) faculty.

Former UW students, graduates from various schools, are currently HAI staff members: Kenny Gimbel-Sherr, Sarah Gimbel-Sherr, Mark Micek, Loreen Lee, and Tom Martin currently work in Seattle. UW alumni Wendy Prosser and Felipe Berho are based in Mozambique, while Nadine Hoekman is HAI's Country Director for Timor-Leste.

Wendy Johnson holds a clinical faculty position in Health Services at the UW while serving as the current Central Mozambique Field Director. IHP-graduate Pablo Montoya will take the reins as Field Director on May 1, 2006.

HAI also benefits from collaboration with various groups and centers within the UW. The Center for AIDS Research (CFAR), under the direction of Dr. King Holmes, is one such entity. Currently HAI and CFAR are planning a series of operations research meetings to bring together major stakeholders in both Africa and the U.S. These meetings will occur over three months beginning in April 2006 and will be hosted in both Seattle and in Maputo, Mozambique. More information on these meetings and other events can be found on our website,

[www.HealthAllianceInternational.org](http://www.HealthAllianceInternational.org).

In addition, the university has supported the enrollment of senior officials in the Mozambican

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Ministry of Health in MPH programs. Nine Mozambicans have received graduate degrees and returned to Mozambique to influence regional and national policies.

In addition, Steve Gloyd has been very involved in the development of the new Department of Global Health, which is a marriage between the Schools of Medicine and Public Health. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation gave an endowment of \$30 million late last year to support the creation of the new department, which will likely open for student enrollment in Fall 2007. The possibilities for UW-HAI collaboration are only growing!

### Perspectives: Student Research in the Field

*Ana Judith Blanco, Andrew Bryant and Ben Stubbs have a lot in common. All three are students in the International Health Program or IH-Certificate Program, all work for HAI in some capacity, and all three are completing a thesis or capstone project based on fieldwork completed at HAI overseas locations.*

*Ana Judith:* Having the opportunity to combine field experience with my MPH program has allowed me to actively apply what I have learned at the UW.

I worked with HAI initially as an advisor for a study of syphilis during pregnancy in Mozambique. This great experience broadened my knowledge of the health problems affecting under-

served populations of the region, and the way the Mozambican national health system was facing such problems. Later as a consultant, I participated in the planning and implementation of studies of malaria prevention during pregnancy. However, logistics of team organization, laboratory quality control and data management were my main duties.

After identifying many areas for improvement in laboratory function, and building strong relationships with laboratory technicians and managers at the local and national level, I was invited to work as a full-time laboratory technical advisor for HAI. In a region where the HIV/AIDS epidemic is devastating the popula-

tion, improving laboratory infrastructure is critical to expanding HIV treatment.

Over the last 18 months I oversaw the installation of a new flow cytometry machine to expand the capacity for CD4 testing in Manica Province. This has been a successful experience and the performance of this laboratory is one of the best in the country. Currently I am the advisor for a plan to scale up the laboratories in the context of HIV treatment expansion in the region.

Gaining expertise in research and monitoring & evaluation has been a priority for me during my MPH. Designing simple research protocols to answer relevant



Ana Judith, Ben, and Andrew

questions about health systems is very important in order to improve the effectiveness of services. HAI is currently supporting an Operations Research Center in partnership with the Ministry of Health to carry out this type of applied research and build local research capacities.

It's been great to participate in research and strengthen my knowledge in these important areas and a great opportunity to contribute to the development of these processes.

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## Traveling to the Other Side of the World

I admit I loved the movie “Out of Africa.” It’s a love story starring Meryl Streep and Robert Redford with a lush musical score and the lavish, sweeping landscape of South Africa in colonial days. It was a romanticized depiction, something Hollywood knows how to do well—privileged people in a foreign culture packaged to appeal to other privileged people.

Still, I didn’t have any romantic notions embarking on my first trip to Africa. This was a working trip to one of the poorest countries in the world: Mozambique. But I couldn’t help thinking about the contrast of what the movie portrayed, how it represented Africa, and the stark reality of contemporary, post-colonial Mozambican life: poverty, disease, and still-present scars from the civil war.

It’s a long journey from Seattle to Mozambique. I flew 10 hours from here to Amsterdam, 2 hours in Schipol Airport, then 11 hours to Johannesburg where I stayed overnight at the Transit Hotel in the airport—Yipee, a hot bath and real bed! The next day I took a 2-hour flight to Beira, the second largest city in Mozambique.

This was an important trip for me as HAI’s Human Resources (HR) Administrator, an opportunity for me to meet many staff I was involved in hiring and to experience the challenges of working in a resource-poor setting. I also met the administrative staff in the three locations where HAI has offices: Chimoio, Beira, and Maputo. I spent time in each location, but we also had a meeting in Chimoio with the national administrator, provincial

administrators, and the Maputo office manager. This was the first time that everyone got to meet each other and, as HAI grows, it will be important to ensure that our staff, dispersed as we are, feel part of the same team.

HAI is fortunate to have such a strong administrative team. While the programs provide the actual service delivery, program staff cannot function without the logistical support of the administrative team: accounting, payroll, hiring and recruiting, secretarial support, data entry, translation, facilities maintenance, purchasing, vehicle maintenance, and so forth.

The two areas of programs and administration must work together toward our common goals. While each staff person is important, I was very impressed with our drivers, who took such care to avoid the many potholes in the roads and provide as smooth a ride as possible. With poor road conditions everywhere, I gained an understanding for the important role that our drivers or *motoristas* play in supporting the work we do, especially as we expand into more remote areas. I was certainly glad I didn’t have to drive anywhere, especially driving on the left side of the road.

Expansion means more hiring and staffing. In Chimoio, I participated in the second round of interviews for the new position of Human Resources Manager. Of course, this was all conducted in Portuguese so Elsie Madeira, HAI’s National Administrator acted as interpreter. To support this new manager, Chimoio and Beira will each have an HR Assistant.



Loreen (far right) with Mozambique administrators: (left to right) Lizi Mulambo, Ghislaine Mbelomasina, Susana Knip, Elsie Madeira, Abdullah

Apart from business, staff members invited me into their homes to meet their families. They welcomed me and helped me with my poor Portuguese. They shared their food with me. They gave me gifts. Their hospitality and warm hearts contributed to a very memorable trip!

To the beautiful people of Mozambique and all our staff, I want to say, “Muito obrigada! Valeu! Valeu!” by Loreen Lee



Wildlife park in Zimbabwe, a weekend side trip.

## Promoting Community Demand for Child Spacing in Timor-Leste

In December 2005, World Learning for International Development on behalf of the USAID’s Bureau of Global Health awarded Health Alliance International (HAI) a three-year grant to promote family planning in Timor-Leste. The major partner for this program is the Timor-Leste Ministry of Health (MOH), with which HAI currently collaborates on a national program for maternal and newborn care.

There is currently very little health promotion at the community level that aims to increase knowledge of the importance of child spacing, increase communication

about and awareness of child spacing including ‘natural’ methods, and ultimately increase the demand for and use of



Village women and children attending a health education meeting

contraceptive education and services at health facilities.

HAI’s primary strategy will be to fill that gap in program districts, integrating information and motivational activities about child spacing into current program efforts and making use of existing collaborating groups. At the same time as these activities will take place, the MOH will, with support from international donors, provide MOH health staff with training and supervision in child spacing counseling and service provision, thus increasing the supply of high-quality contraceptive services available.

## Student Experiences (cont'd)

(Ana is from Colombia, resides in Mozambique, and attends school in Seattle—a citizen of three continents. Her thesis will examine reproductive health issues in Mozambique.)

*Andrew:* Working as a research assistant at HAI while completing my Masters in Public Health degree at the University of Washington has allowed me to apply skills that I learned in classes to real-world work – both at HAI headquarters in Seattle and at the HAI office in Dili, Timor-Leste.

HAI-Seattle has exposed me to issues involved in the operation of an international health organization from an administrative level, while my experience in Timor-Leste gave me experience in program implementation in the field.

In June 2005, I traveled to Timor-Leste to work on my capstone project, the culmination of my MPH degree. My project was to help develop the maternal and newborn health drama project (featured in the January newsletter). Working on this project gave me the opportunity to apply a variety of skills I learned in classes – organizing community

meetings, program planning, program evaluation, survey development, etc. – to a real program. There is no substitute for actually doing the work, and I encountered a number of challenges for which school had not prepared me; in many ways, you only really learn certain skills through experience.

My short project in Timor-Leste taught me a lot about program implementation. It greatly complemented my studies and reinvigorated my dedication to public health at the community-level. I was inspired particularly by working with Timorese staff dedicated to improving health and the health system in their new country. My experience developing a community-based project in Timor-Leste reminded me of the importance of local empowerment and that, as an American working in international health, my role should be as a resource for building skills, programs and services that will eventually be sustainable and locally controlled.

(A Seattle native, Andrew's capstone project is entitled "Maternal and Newborn Health Promotion through Community Drama and Street-Theater in Timor-Leste.")

*Ben:* I entered the International Health Program at the UW in October 2004 and have

been working as a research assistant at HAI since then. Working at HAI has given me the opportunity to apply many of the concepts learned in the classroom to a real world environment.

The most obvious example of this is the study I conducted to help HAI with some of its operational research needs. From September to December of 2005, I interviewed patients getting tested for HIV in three towns in Mozambique. The goal was to explore the reasons why people who test positive for HIV either do or do not seek treatment.

Study design and epidemiologic methods classes informed the project planning stage. Survey design courses helped me create effective questionnaires. Biostatistics and data analysis classes will help me understand the data I have collected. While working for HAI has been an outstanding experience in and of itself, the synergy with my work at the University has been especially rewarding.

(Ben grew up in Colorado and was drawn to Seattle for its recreational resources and global health activities. His thesis is "Barriers to HIV/AIDS Treatment in Central Mozambique: A Survey of Voluntary Counseling and Testing Center Attendees.")

## New Day Hospitals Open in Central Mozambique

Mozambique has a strong public-sector primary health care system that is in the process of integrating HIV/AIDS prevention and care and treatment throughout the national health care system. The national plan to expand services in an equitable manner is based upon the concept of the Integrated Health Network (IHN). The IHN describes the full range of services available for people living with HIV/AIDS in the country, including entry points to care (VCT, PMTCT, TB, in-patient services, etc.), the care and treatment centers for HIV/AIDS patients (the Day Hospitals) as well as complementary and palliative services such as mental health support and home-based care.

The national plan promotes the development of IHN model of services as a coherent manner in which individual HIV-targeted interventions are not introduced without concurrent development of complementary services. At the center of the IHN is the Day Hospital which provides ongoing chronic care to people living with HIV/AIDS.

In the Central Region of Mozambique, the first Day Hospital opened in Beira, Sofala Province in February 2003. Health Alliance

International provided technical assistance to accomplish this by partnering with the Ministry of Health (MOH). As a result of the strong leadership of the MOH and the significant funding from USAID/PEPFAR, TAP, and the Global Fund, treatment has expanded rapidly with eight rural and urban sites currently providing treatment in the region.

As of March 2006, over 20,000 patients were registered at one of these eight Central Region Day Hospitals for HIV care, and 2,700 patients were accessing HAART. All of these Day Hospitals represent IHNs which receive referrals from voluntary counseling and testing sites, from PMTCT programs for pregnant women, and referrals to and from home-based care organizations that provide additional follow-up to patients of the Day Hospital.

In the larger cities of the Central Region, the Day Hospitals are wards within the district or provincial hospital, able to tend to the larger population and greater patient flow. More integrated models are being used at the next phase sites which are smaller and more rural. At these sites HIV+ patients pass through the same triage as other hospital patients and are



not directed to HIV-specific wards but still access improved HIV services, including regular clinical and laboratory monitoring.

Together with the MOH, HAI will expand to an additional seven treatment sites in the coming year. In Sofala Province, the sites are: Buzi, Ponte Gea, Muxungwe, Marromeu, Gorongosa, and Munhave. In Manica Province, Gondola will be equipped to provide HIV treatment. HAI is currently hiring doctors with HIV experience to act as advisors to the MOH to support this expansion.

Please contact us with your comments, questions and suggestions:

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**HAI’s Vision & Mission**

**Our Vision** is a just world that promotes health and well-being, including universal access to quality health care.

**Our Mission** is to support the development of policies that foster social and economic equity for all with a focus on public-sector health systems and a progressive realization of the right to health.

Contributing Writers: Celio Antonio Alves, Ana Judith Blanco, Andrew Bryant, Sarah Gimbel-Sherr, Loreen Lee, Wendy Prosser, Ben Stubbs

# Meet A HAI Employee: Celio Antonio Alves

**Full Name:** Celio Antonio Alves

**Place of Birth:** Sub-District Lacro, Manatuto

**Age:** 29 years old

**Education:** Degree in Information Technology to be completed

**Languages Spoken:** Tetun, Bahasa Indonesia, English and minimal Portuguese

**Job Title:** Administrator / Office Manager

**Number of years with HAI:** 1 year, 5 mos

**What has it been like to work at HAI-TL since the very beginning?** In the beginning HAI-TL was not as big as now. I remember when I first joined the organization we had only 4 permanent members (Nadine, Dr Ingrid, Aquito and myself) and then we started to hire some temporary staff for the assessment and a temporary driver. Right now, we are getting bigger and have more grants which mean we have more staff too. I can't wait to see how things are going to develop in the future and also appreciate the way HAI works by implementing its program in accordance with Timorese values and our way of life. I feel proud to be part of the program. I think HAI is doing well and its work is for the benefits of the people.

**How has HAI-TL changed since you began working there?**

We started the program with one grant (Child Survival), and a small number of staff. But right now we have two grants (Child Survival and World Learning) to support the Maternal and Newborn Care Program and Child Spacing Program. In terms of staff we started with 4 and right now we have 10 staff members. Apart from managing these 2 grants, we are also managing individual and organizational (AusAID and UNICEF) funds contributed for the production of a film on maternal and newborn care. I think HAI has been changing a lot and I am hoping that it will make a change in the country.

**What do you think makes HAI different from other organizations in Timor Leste?**

I like the approach that HAI applies in its work. HAI in East Timor tries not to do things in its own way but by working alongside with MOH to insure the implementation of health programs that reflect the culture and values of the Timorese and ownership within the communities in the district. HAI doesn't try to create high expectation from the people that only lasts while the project exists, but tries to create something that they can continue on



their own in the future.

**Anything else you would like to say about yourself, HAI, or the work that HAI does?**

Well, pretty much above are my thoughts. If you're asking me to say something about myself, well I have an ambition to finish up an intensive course/ degree which I think will be an advantage for my future and enhance my quality of life. I am seeking possibilities for a scholarship in order to support my education. My preference is for overseas study. I particularly believe that education is the key for this country; I believe wealthier Timorese will make Timor Leste become a wealthier country. Education = Wealthy? I am very positive that education will certainly make a difference.

