

THE GREEN MEDICINE NEWSLETTER

Publication of The Student Rainforest Fund

WINTER 2011/2012

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www.studentrainforestfund.org



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

SRF: 2012 - AN ATTEMPT TO TRAVEL TO CUBA, OR MAYBE BACK TO COSTA RICA.

*READY FOR OUR 17th YEAR
June 24- July 4, 2012*



Dear SRF Supporter:

The 2011 expedition of the Student Rainforest Fund is history and for the 16th consecutive year we helped to meet the financial needs of a group of American college students, studying the health professions, to make a journey to some of the last remaining rainforests in the Western hemisphere. For the second time we traveled to Ecuador, one of the most bio-diverse countries in the world.

We're gearing up for #17. We have a slim hope of possibly traveling to the natural and health-conscious island of Cuba. I have applied for a license to take our team with the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Our chances remain slim since the U.S. government still has travel restrictions to this 'hidden' island. I have personally been there four times and I cannot think of a better place to study plant medicines, natural therapies and alternative means of healing. The Cubans are 'top-notch' natural healers and the students could not get a better education.

If Cuba does not go through, we are gearing for our fourth trip of Costa Rica. We have had wonderful trips there and Costa Rica offers a variety of eco-systems that are macrocosms for 'healing' plants. We hope to return to Luna Nueva, the ginger farm and botanical gardens of New Chapter- one of America's leading herbal supplement companies. We also plan to travel to the Atlantic coast of Costa Rica to visit Wilson Botanical Garden, part of the famous Los Cruces Biological Station. It is well known that Wilson is the largest and most diverse botanical garden in all of Central America.

In either case we plan to have another memorable 'green' adventure. Dr. Steve Morris, our noted 2012 SRF BOARD OF ADVISORS, and I want to THANK YOU for your consideration and courage in attending this 'once-in-a-lifetime' experience. We have given the SRF experience to over 300 students from 22 universities over the years. Email me at dtwherb@gmail.com if you are interested or have any comments.

In health and spirit,

Dr. Dan Wagner, President

Dr. Steve Morris, Chairman

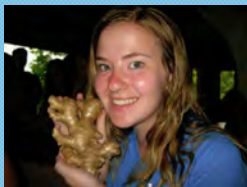
WHAT THE STUDENTS ARE SAYING

Two SRF alumnus discuss how the 'green adventure' influenced and changed their professional careers

My decision to go on the 2010 SRF trip to Costa Rica was a spur-of-the-moment choice. I was told about the trip only 6 weeks prior by Dr. Dan Wagner and jumped at the opportunity to not only immerse myself in a foreign country but also in a foreign sector of medicine. Although this information was all new to me, I went on the trip with an open mind. This experienced changed my perspective of what it can mean to be a pharmacist in today's world. The past, present, and future uses of natural sources of medicine are not covered in conventional pharmacy school curricula, which is why programs such as the SRF are so important in expanding students' knowledge of these topics.

Not only did I have a chance to broaden my understanding of plant-based medicines, but also had many opportunities to explore Costa Rica. A river safari, horseback riding in Monte Zuma, and zip-lining above the cloud forest of Monte Verde are just a few of the many unforgettable adventures we went on in just 10 days. Another invaluable aspect of the trip was getting to know other students and practitioners from around the country. I have made. I would definitely recommend this trip to any medical or pharmacy student who is even just curious about natural medicine and I cannot wait to go on another SRF trip in the future!

Erika Rost, 1st year student at South Carolina College of Pharmacy working towards a PharmD/ MBA dual degree.
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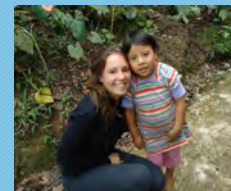


SRF has brought me to where I am today, literally. I went on my first SRF trip to Peru in 2008, right after my junior year at Penn State. Before going, I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life after graduation. All I knew was that I was going to have a degree in biology but didn't know where to go next. On the trip to Peru, I met many students from Bastyr University, one of the most well-known naturopathic medicine schools in North America. After spending time in the Amazon Rainforest with these students and learning about plant-based medicines, I decided naturopathic medicine would be the right career path for me. I applied to a few schools around North America and fell in love with the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine in Toronto, Ontario and this is where I have spent my last 3 years.

This past summer I traveled once again with the SRF group to Ecuador. This year was a little different in that two friends and myself backpacked around Ecuador and the Galapagos before meeting up with Dr. Dan and the group. We stayed in beautiful Vilcabamba, the valley of longevity nestled in the Andes mountain range. We had lectures from Dr. Dan, his wife Lynn, and Dr. Aisha Jaffrey, all covering alternative therapies to many different concerns such as fish oil for heart disease and essential oils to fight to common cold. The one mountain we hiked, Mandango, turned out to be one of the most intense physical and spiritual journeys of my life.

I am currently in my third year of naturopathic medicine school and I love every bit of it. Naturopathic medicine is a rigorous 4-year medical program that covers all the basic sciences such as anatomy, biochemistry, immunology and more plus all of the naturopathic modalities including nutrition, homeopathy, botanical medicine. If not for my trip to Peru in 2008 with SRF, I may have never met the people who would inspire me to come into such an exciting and fulfilling profession.

Shannon Sutter, 3rd year naturopathic student at CCNM
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MEET OUR NEWEST MEMBER TO THE SRF BOARD OF ADVISORS

Dr. Jillian Stansbury Brief Bio

Dr Jillian Stansbury is a naturopathic physician with 25 years of clinical experience and has chaired the Botanical Medicine Department at the National College of Natural Medicine in Portland, OR and still serves on the faculty. She also teaches at numerous universities and professional medical conferences throughout the US and Canada and writes for numerous books and journals on the topic of natural medicine.

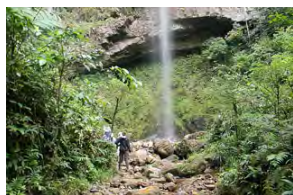
For the past 5 years Dr Stansbury has spent half the year in Peru learning the Spanish language and the plants of South America. She built a simple adobe home in the mountains surrounding Cuzco, Peru to serve as her basecamp and travels into the Manu region of Peruvian Amazon to study with several indigenous tribes. Dr Stansbury has spent several months each year with the Harakambut Queros, outside of Pilcopata, Peru and the Matsigenka Shipitieri community 5 hours upriver by boat. She has become acquainted with the important plant medicines and how they are prepared as well as is learning the philosophical and spiritual ideas on health, healing, and disease held by these fascinating communities. Travel to these communities is a no frill adventure not for the squeamish or faint of heart. These indigenous people live far off the typical tourist trail and simple lives, a way of life very much in danger of dying out altogether as the youth choose to leave the villages and seek jobs in the nearest small towns in order to have cell phones, motorcycles, access to computers and other amenities of the modern developed world. There is an urgent need to learn the language, accumulated knowledge of medicinal plants, and the songs, art, and myths of the culture before it becomes even more fractured than it is. Dr Stansbury leads Ethnobotanical study trips to help preserve this knowledge as well to help these communities earn income in a manner that sustains their culture, rather than diluting or corrupting it. For more information contact Dr Stansbury at jstansbury@ncnm.edu.



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OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide higher education for college and university students with the opportunity to explore the natural history of medicine and evoke the healing edge of knowledge regarding natural products and phytomedicinals in the world's greatest pharmacy--the rainforest. We are pursuing a holistic approach to the healing of the body, mind, and spirit by learning from unique practitioners. Our organization gains an invaluable international perspective from the indigenous peoples of different cultures that we encounter.



SRF EXPEDITION TO ECUADOR, JUNE-JULY, 2011

For the second time in our 16 years history, students studying the health professions had a wondrous chance to discover the wild and majestic regions of Ecuador. Ecuador is one of the most bio-diverse countries on the planet. Some incredible statistics about Ecuador include: 28 percent of all the world's birds reside there; there are 600 species of fish in one river; you can explore two climates in one day -- from the lush rainforests in the east to the Andes Mountains hovering 9,000 feet above sea level.

This year's group of SRF students got to see a little of everything. Our 'green' adventure took us the magnificent cloud rainforest called Pontecarpus near the city of Loha, to the mountain top in the town of Vilcabamba called Mandango, to the southern-most border with Peru where we traveled by boat on the remote Zamora River -- one of the most remote and inaccessible rainforests left on the planet. High above the mountain peaks caressing the river below live the remote and mysterious Shuar Indians. Part of the tribe still lives almost completely apart from modern and Western influence. There are few tribes like this left in the entire Amazon basin. We visited a Shuar village that has been 'Westernized' by modern day medicine and some conveniences. The people of the village no longer hunt for game but rely on the Ecuadorian government to provide stores to purchase their food. The women and children still make beads and necklaces to sell to tourists.

The team stayed at the renowned Madre Tierra Spa and Hotel in Vilcabamba. We had a visit with the elder 'centenarians' of the Vilcabamba (known as the Valley of Longevity) and learn a little of the diet, plant medicines and life style that adds to their longevity. Professional lectures on medicinal plants, herbs, vitamins, fish oil, and natural cancer treatments were provided by SRF President Dr. Dan Wagner, and SRF Board of Advisor member Dr. Aisha Jaffri. The food was all natural and delicious. We had a morning session with well-known raw-food experts Matt and Angela Monarch. On the final day the team enjoyed a 'going-away' party at the residence of Dr. Dan and Lynn Wagner who built a small home in Vilcabamba last year.

It was a great team and everyone enjoyed each others' company. It is almost certain that Ecuador will be a future destination of the SRF team.

THANK YOU!! SRF CONTRIBUTORS IN 2010-2011

Bob Amity- East Hills Pharmacy, Dr. Elaine Berkowitz, Susan Brody, Shirley Brusco, James & Barbara Chemel, James Comport, Sarah Lynn Connors, James Dillon, Shirley Dowling, Drake University Kappa Psi Beta Chi Fraternity, Ed & Marily Foote, Shuko Harada, Albert Heinricher, Joan Huber, Dr. Aisha Jaffri, Donna Johnston, Stanton Jonas, RPh, Dr. Douglas & Dottie Kay, Steve Kunkle, Joseph Lech, RPh, Deborah & Glen Lumsden, Maria & Edward McMullen, Mukilteo Natural Health Clinic, Margaret Polosky, Wolfgang & Marion Rihmland, Paula & David Sculley, Dr. Frank Wagner

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