

Shonta Collins, BSN, R.N., '08

Shonta Collins, BSN, R.N., '08, has spent years traveling around the world. But no trip affected her as much as the one she just took to Senegal.

Collins belongs to a group called Explorers Sans Frontiers (ESF), a nonprofit organization that strives to bring together communities throughout the world. ESF recently sponsored a trip to Senegal, a poverty-stricken nation located in West Africa. There, Collins received a first-hand look at the struggles of a country missing any form of health-care infrastructure.

"Some people have resources. They can receive treatment and be happy," Collins said. "But most of the people are suffering, dying, not getting any sort of preventive care, and are forced to pay for medical services when they don't have any money whatsoever."

On her trip, Collins saw people whose health-care needs went unmet. While visiting a hospital, Collins witnessed crowded waiting rooms with many sick patients sitting and lying on the floor. And, for almost every illness, due to the lack of proper medications, physicians prescribed glucose for treatment.

In the towns and villages Collins visited, preventive care was non-existent. So Collins and the other members of ESF decided to give what they could to Senegal's destitute rural population. They screened people for diabetes and high blood pressure. They gave lessons on how to treat various illnesses before hospitalization was required. And they also brought supplies paid for out of their own pocket.

"At times, it was completely heartbreaking," Collins said.

However, while suffering through gripping poverty, the Senegalese are known for their hospitality and willingness to share. And throughout her trip, Collins was left touched by the constant giving from people who had little to give.



(From left) Dr. Frank from St. Joan Catholic Hospital, Shonta Collins, Lara Lechtenberg, Christina Marie Spino (2008 pre-med/biology graduate), Chiara De Leon (2008 speech-language-hearing science graduate, current grad student), and Tri Huynh (2009 pre-med/biology major).

Collins said one of her favorite memories from the trip came when she visited a grammar school. There, she was treated to a fashion show where students showed off their traditional clothes. While the school lacked items such as working computers, Collins said what the school lacked didn't deter its pupils from learning.

"They have desire, they're smart, and they speak several languages," Collins said.

Collins said the overwhelming generosity and high spirits of Senegal's residents completely overwhelmed her. "I met some of the nicest, most warm people in the world. They're proud to open their doors and to offer to share even with the little bit they have."

The School of Nursing and Health Sciences stresses that its students are part of the greater world and that as members of the medical community, it is a responsibility to help grow and foster relationships with people around the globe.

"What we do impacts the world and what the world does impacts us," Collins said.

NURSING PROGRAMS

Mary Margaret Hale, RNC, MSN, SRN, SCM, is the author of a book, *On Uganda's Terms: A Journal of an American Nurse Midwife Working Under Idi Amin's Regime*.

Maureen L. Gay, BSN, R.N., graduated with an MSN from the Division of Nursing and Allied Health at Wilmington University.

Emily Levitt-Gopie, BSN, R.N., graduated with an MSN from the Division of Nursing and Allied Health at Wilmington University.

Susan McNally, R.N., MSN '99, is currently the laboratory manager at the Community College of Baltimore County. She is also teaching at the community college in Carroll County in the CNA program and the nurse refresher course.

Patricia A. Miller, BSN, MSN, M.A., received the 2008 John J. Rooney Award for Excellence in Research.

NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Rachel Kramer, '05, is pursuing her Ph.D. in nutrition at Penn State University and is a Research Assistant for Dr. Barbara Rolls, who studies how to improve eating behavior related to obesity and chronic disease.

Stacey Matthews, '06, has taken a new position as a registered dietitian at Hahnemann University Hospital, where she will be working with high-risk pregnant mothers.

Trish Carney, '07, received a research assistantship at Drexel University and is a graduate student for a master's in human nutrition there.

Bradlee Skelly, '07, is pursuing a master's in health education at Arcadia University.

Carly Roop, '08, has started her own business called "The Cupcake Lady." See her offerings at www.cupcakelady.net.



Nutrition Program alumni Kelly Cochlin and Rachel Kramer enjoy the Distinguished Lectureship.