

Dynamic duos

Mothers and daughters serve in Medical Practicum



Mothers and daughters bond in many ways. But for **Dr. Lori Zimmerman '92** and daughter **Karly Eichenauer** and **Elizabeth "Izzy" Houser '96 Fourman** and daughter **Gwen Fourman**, quality time has a whole new meaning.

The women comprised two of three mother-daughter pairs involving MU alumni who participated in Manchester's Medical Practicum in January. An MU tradition since Chemistry Professor **Ed Miller '56** launched the program in 1981, the practicum is a short-term experience in global health that provides health care to underserved populations in Central America. This year, the group of health care professionals and students led by Chemistry Professor Jeff Osborne delivered care to two Maya communities in Guatemala.

At left, **Elizabeth "Izzy" Houser '96 Fourman** and daughter **Gwen Fourman** pose together on their Medical Practicum trip. At right, **Dr. Lori Zimmerman '92** holds the Manchester University crest with her daughter, MU student **Karly Eichenauer**. They represented two of the three alumni mothers and daughters on this year's Medical Practicum.



MANCHESTER SPARTANS

“It was a dream come true,” says Lori of sharing the experience with Karly, a biology-chemistry major.

A family practice physician at Walnut Street Family Healthcare in North Manchester, Lori went on the medical practicum as a student three decades ago. This year, she became the 26th Manchester graduate to participate as a health care provider. Mother and daughter **Dr. Kathy Driver ’71 Long** and **Dr. Rachel Long ’06** were repeat volunteers this year.

For most of the practicum, Karly and Lori worked separately, but spent one day together at Karly’s request. “While I knew what my mom did, I never actually got to see her practice,” says Karly, who took notes for prescriptions, recorded diagnoses and conferred with her mom about what they were seeing in patients. “That was pretty cool – to see her in her element.”

Living conditions on the practicum were outside their element. Off the grid, they had no cell phone service, and generators provided electricity for only two hours a day. Garbage bags provided makeshift stalls for privacy when they showered. “It makes you realize how most of the world lives,” says Karly. “We are the minority. It just puts a lot of the world into perspective.”

Though the 40 or so from MU slept on concrete floors in two schoolrooms, they may have been too exhausted at the end of each 11-hour workday to care. “They kept us working because there was such an opportunity to help the people there,” says Karly. “There were hard times that you just had to get through and things that were uncomfortable – things that really grow your character.”

Like Lori, Izzy, director of The Health and Counseling Center at Saint Mary’s College in Notre Dame, Ind., wanted to give her

daughter space on the practicum. “I didn’t want to crowd Gwen, and I only wanted to go if she wanted me to, so I waited for her to ask,” says Izzy. “And I think Jeff (Osborne) asked both Gwen and Karly if they really wanted their moms to go.”

The Fourmans did work side by side on the last day of the practicum and Izzy was “amazed” at how well her daughter did. “Several of the other providers told me what a great job she did while she was in their clinic, too.”

Working together “was very cool,” adds Izzy. “Whether or not she decides to go in to the medical field, it’s always great to create memories with your children.”

Izzy understands those memories. As a Manchester sophomore, she went on the practicum to Nicaragua with her physician dad, **Dr. Keim Houser ’61**. At the time, she was a peace studies major, but helping deliver two babies got her hooked on health care and she switched to biology-chemistry. In 1997, she graduated from the accelerated nursing program at Saint Mary’s and in 1999 graduated from Vanderbilt University as a women’s health nurse practitioner.

Lori graduated in 1996 from Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine and, like Izzy, has deep and wide family connections to Manchester. The daughter of longtime Psychology Professor **Gary Zimmerman ’64** and **Jean Warstler ’64 Zimmerman**, Lori remembers the good advice she received from the professional health care providers – most of them alumni – on her first practicum. Those conversations, she said, “are where you learn life skills about what it’s like to be in medical school and how do you raise a family with such a stressful job. Those were as important to me as encouragement.”

This past January, Lori returned the favor by sharing her perspectives with current students. “The kids were just amazing to work with,” says Lori. “The students were very professional, respectful, engaging and enthusiastic. It’s exciting to see the next generation of health care providers, whatever they go into.”

In turn, the health care providers taught Karly “how alumni love to give back” and how strong the culture of service is at Manchester. When you see alumni going back on the practicum – some of them repeatedly – it sends a powerful message, adds Karly.

Izzy, who counts “a bazillion” relatives who went to Manchester, says she loves that Gwen chose her alma mater. However, she also wants her daughter to be her own person and make the career choices that are right for her. After the practicum, “I think she realizes she has options,” says Izzy. “As a global health major she’s talked about working for the World Health Organization or trying to fix messed-up medical systems. ... She is only 19. She doesn’t have to know what she wants to do with the rest of her life yet.”

For Karly, the path points clearly to a life much like her mother’s in family practice medicine. Lori, who also serves on the President’s Leadership Council at MU and is vice president of the Alumni Board of Directors, has modeled an ethic of service and demonstrated to Karly how to raise a family and still have a rewarding medical career.

“I’ve been able to put my job and my family first,” adds Lori. “I hope that’s something I’ve shown my daughters.”

By **Melinda Lantz ’81**