

I participated in the Flex MD program and spent four months at Selian Lutheran Hospital in Aursha, Tanzania from September 2009 to January 2010. Selian is a small hospital on the outskirts of Arusha that is partially run by the Tanzanian government, and partially by the Lutheran Church. Dr. Mark Jacobson, who graduated from the university of MN, formerly ran the hospital. He is now running the Arusha Lutheran Medical Center, a brand new hospital that he started more centrally located within the city of Arusha.

Dr. Jacobson and his wife Linda are the primary contacts for students visiting Selian. Linda handles all of the logistics outside of the hospital. Housing is provided in the form of two houses on one of the nicer roads in town. Rent is 200USD per month. The housing is great; I lived in the student house. It has three bedrooms, a bathroom with pretty reliable hot water for showers, and a kitchen with a gas oven and stove, and refrigerator. Internet is also available, it costs 70USD per month for unlimited, and 40 or 50 for evening access. The Internet is slow but generally works for voice skype, video skype is a bit less reliable.

Selian, where you will probably spend most of you time, is about 6km away from the house by the back roads or 12km by the main roads. To get to the hospital I usually walked along the back road, which takes about and hour and ten minutes. When I walked I usually brought separate shoes to wear at the hospital, and a shirt to change into. The roads are either very dusty during the dry season or muddy once it starts raining. There

are four main services at Selian: Medicine, Pediatrics, Surgery, and OB/GYN. I spent most of my time on medicine and pediatrics. There is usually one intern on each service, and they pretty much run the hospital. Sometimes there are Tanzanian registrars (ie doctors who have completed intern year) who act as staff, and sometimes there are US residents or staff physicians who act as staff. While I was there, there were often no US doctors and the interns and the registrar mainly ran the hospital. There is very minimal teaching available when there are no US doctors. If you spend some time at ALMC there is more teaching because the residency trained Tanzanian physicians spend most of their time at the town hospital ALMC.

Working at Selian was quite a change from the medical care that I was used to patients getting at home. Before I left I had not really anticipated how difficult this would be for me. I often struggled watching patients suffer from diseases that could easily be treated in the US but be unable to help them in Tanzania. Even with the challenges being at Selian was an incredible learning experience. The community is great and I would definitely return.

I would recommend while there taking some time away from the hospital to explore Tanzania. While I was there I climbed both Mount Meru and Mount Kilimanjaro. If you don't have much time Meru is much quicker to do and less expensive, we took 3 days and spent 3 or 400 dollars. We did the camping machame route on Kili, which took 6 days, and you will probably have to spend around 1000 dollars (the park fees are very high). Both were awesome experiences. You will need warm clothes and sleeping bags for both but Kili was definitely colder. We also did a short safari, and went to Zanzibar. I would think about what things you want to do before

leaving so you can bring the right clothes and enough US dollars, but don't book the trips before you leave. It is much cheaper to shop around in town for tour companies.

Hopefully this has been helpful, and if you have any questions feel free to email me at hayn0045@umn.edu