Georgia Tech Center for Health & Humanitarian Systems (CHHS) Offers Professional Education Certificate in Health & Humanitarian Supply Chain Management to International Cohort

During May 14-19, 2018, practitioners from all over the world, including Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Hong Kong, Kenya, Lesotho, Nigeria, United States, and Zimbabwe, participated in the Health & Humanitarian Supply Chain Management (HHSCM) certificate program offered by Georgia Tech’s Center for Health & Humanitarian Systems (CHHS). The participants’ admirable passion for their work motivated them to seek systematic approaches toward improving the efficiency and effectiveness of their organizations to positively impact the beneficiaries they serve.

The 2018 cohort represented corporate, government, and non-governmental organizations such as the Carter Center, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI), Delta Airlines, Federal Medical Center in Nigeria, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Phillips Healthcare, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the United States Department of the Air Force.

HHSCM program consists of three courses (2 days each): Pre-planning Strategy for Health and Humanitarian Organizations, Tactical Decision Making in Inventory and Supply Chain Management, and Systems Operations in Health and Humanitarian Response. Topics include distribution network design, strategies for managing inventory and uncertainty, resource allocation, and systems dynamics related to a broad range of activities including preparing, responding to, and recovery from disasters and health emergencies, as well as ongoing efforts in the delivery of healthcare and other services to populations, and strengthening and managing health systems.
2018 participants had high praise for the HHSCM program, highlighting the importance and relevance of the practical applications discussed in the program and how they plan to incorporate the new skills and knowledge in their current and future work. Benhilda Mainje, Logistics and Supply Chain Officer for UNDP in Zimbabwe noted: “This course will not only benefit me, but also my colleagues.” She intends to share the skills obtained within her organization, and elsewhere. Frankline Keter, Essential Medicines Program Manager for CHAI “will be applying course knowledge directly to improve the national medical oxygen roll-out strategy.” By sharing what he has learnt within his department, he believes it will help improve decision-making and thinking “globally.”

Others shared objectives for future applications of their learnings in the course. Ngozi-Vivian Anthony, Medical Lab Scientist at the Federal Medical Center in Nigeria, hopes to improve Nigeria’s blood bank. She was inspired by the milk distribution network case study shared by the instructors and plans to apply a similar design to blood banks to make them more accessible.

The participants praised the instructors and the course content for being well-prepared and “well-structured, taught in an excellent manner, and rich on resources.”

Participants also enjoyed and benefited from the interactions with each other throughout the program, sharing experiences and practices. Stephanie Kaari, Logistics Officer for the US Department of the Army, commented that: “The instructors did a fabulous job giving health and humanitarian services examples to reinforce the supply chain principles taught. The other participants were extremely knowledgeable and full of examples, and I find these interactions very beneficial and critical in my learning.” Likewise, Adam Mosley, Director of Global Business Development at UZima Clean Water Mission, commented: “Hearing various scenarios, challenges, and perspectives on the cases presented helped to broaden not only my understanding of the various organizations, but also of how these models can be used in different ways.”

Throughout the program, the participants gained knowledge and understanding of a “systems approach” for managing health and humanitarian systems, and also formed new professional relationships and expanded their networks during in-class interactions, breaks, and social activities, including the outings to the Atlanta Botanical Gardens and the Civil Rights Museum.
Thanks to the generous support from the UPS Foundation, several scholarships were awarded to a subset of the HHSCM program applicants. UPS Foundation has been a strong supporter of the HHSCM Program for the past 7 years, contributing to workforce development across the health and humanitarian systems worldwide, and positively impacting many organizations and the constituents they serve.

The courses are led by CHHS Director Pinar Keskinocak, and former CHHS co-directors Özlem Ergun and Julie Swann, who are currently at Northeastern University and NC State University, respectively. This year’s guest instructors were Sheereen Brown from the Task Force for Global Health, John Bartholdi from Georgia Tech, and Paulo Gonçalves from the University of Lugano.

We are proud and honored to continue our educational outreach beyond borders, and many thanks to this cohort and past CHHS alumni, for their positive impact around the world!

For further information on the Certificate in Health & Humanitarian Supply Chain Management, please visit: https://chhs.gatech.edu/professional-education.