International Medicine:
Road to Refugee

With over 59.5 million refugees worldwide, refugee health is among the top issues in global health. The people who have been displaced due to natural disasters or political strife, and the family they leave behind, all face challenges. Healthcare workers and facilities are often targeted during wartime, forcing the workers to leave and the communities to become devoid of health providers and supplies; but, those who leave may not find themselves in an improved situation when it comes to cleanliness and health care.

Internally displaced people, who move to another location within their own country, in...
addition to refugees who cross international borders, tend to end up in large camps. They face many environmental health crises such as lacking access to clean water, proper sanitation, and waste disposal. Refugees who arrive in Europe or the United States may undergo a health check to be assessed for pre-existing medical conditions and receive vaccinations. Concern for infectious disease transmission from refugees to locals is often raised; but, the WHO reports that causes are equally likely to be from travelers, international tourists, and mobile populations.

Some of the common medical conditions that affect refugees include injuries, burns, intestinal parasites, tuberculosis, depression, post traumatic stress disorder, hypertension, and diabetes. The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) has created multiple resources to educate refugees on common health topics and practices within the United States. Authors of booklets are experts on the target cultures and refugees who share their stories in the videos speak in their native language. For Congolese refugees, the ORR developed different videos on navigating the U.S. healthcare system, women’s health and pregnancy, and healing after experiencing gender-based violence. For Bhutanese community within the U.S., the ORR noted a need for emotional wellness and suicide prevention so they created a video inspiring hope and meaning in life by featuring personal stories.

Efforts are being made worldwide by individual countries and larger organizations such as the CDC and the WHO to improve medical care for refugees. The negative stigma associated with refugees has not aided in the attempt to help them, as the term triggers a mixture of emotions amongst people who could volunteer their time or supplies. It will take a prevailing amount of compassion and understanding from people of all countries to come together and give aid to refugees around the world.

Information in this article is from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services-Office of Refugee Resettlement, the Center for Disease Control, and the World Health Organization.
start to (slowly) shift our gears to thinking about school again in order to prevent any chaos from procrastination. Now is a good time to take another look at your fall class schedule, and make any adjustments if necessary. Be sure to let your place of employment know about your schedule early on, too, so they can better plan your shifts in advance. No one likes to have to beg off from work…just to go to class!

If you wish to talk to a professor, whether it be about classes, research, or any other type of inquiry, try to do so before school starts too. Most professors are around during August to prepare for the year, or to wrap up their summer projects, so meeting with them shouldn’t be too hard to do. Just shoot the professor a quick email briefly mentioning why you’d like to meet with them. If this is research related, it never hurts to citing why you’re interested in their research in particular.

Lastly, get those textbooks! Many students like to wait until classes start to see if they “need” a textbook, but getting an early start to the hunt for books may be a better financial decision. Look into renting the books from campus, Amazon, Chegg, or other online rental companies.

Also, narrow your search for used textbooks to save money - if someone else’s highlighting doesn’t bother you. Don’t forget about your friends, either - it never hurts to ask them if they have the book from a previous semester! Once your classes begin, you’ll get a better feel for how much you’ll be using it. Most places allow you to return books within a month or so of renting or purchasing them, so you will most likely still have the option to return them and get your money back. If you do choose to play the “waiting” game, at least keep a running list books you’ll written thank you notes. As summer wraps up, keep in mind that it is good etiquette to say thanks to those who have helped you along the way. If you are finishing job-shadowing, a research opportunity, or any other similar type of circumstances, take a few minutes to write a meaningful note to those who have helped you. It only takes a small amount of effort, yet it leaves a huge impression.
need, how much they'll cost and where you can buy/rent them from!

Enjoy this parody video produced by University of New Mexico School of Medicine and get ready to embark on your pre-med journey!