Medical Student Enrichment Program
University of Alabama at Birmingham Heersink School of Medicine

Clinical Elective: Managua and Chinandega, Nicaragua – The Chosen Clinic
Dates of Training: January 28, 2024 – March 07, 2024

Student: Morgan Sisk, MS4

As I near the end of my medical school journey, I am immensely grateful for my international medical experience and could not have imagined a better capstone on my medical school education. My experience in Nicaragua was a tremendous opportunity to hone my language and cultural competency skills before transitioning to the role of resident physician. In learning about the culture and traditions of my community in Nicaragua, I grew both personally and professionally. Moreover, the Nicaraguan community touched my life in a profound way with their hospitality, generosity, and kindness.

Working in the triage area of the clinic provided me with the opportunity to listen to patients' stories and learn about their families and communities. My role challenged me to implement the clinical skills I had acquired in medical school in conjunction with the language skills I had been refining in the classroom. Furthermore, working with the clinic highlighted the challenges that clinical initiatives in low resource environments must overcome to provide sustainable care. The Neelys and Chosen team have made advanced surgical interventions possible for a population that would not otherwise have had access to vision-restoring care. I will carry the lessons I learned from them on healthcare infrastructure in low-resource environments forward as I pursue a career in global orthopaedic surgery.

My newfound family and community in Nicaragua truly touched and inspired me with their kindness and generosity. It was a great privilege to hear about their journeys and learn from them. My international medical experience reminded me of all of the reasons I fell in love with medicine in the first place. I am walking away from Nicaragua with a full heart and can't wait to return.