Today’s students will be responsible for solving tomorrow’s global issues, including climate change, the increase in global population, and depletion of natural resources. Experiential learning has proven itself as one of the most effective strategies to gain first-hand experience working in an international, interdisciplinary environment, allowing students to acquire the skills necessary to ensure their success as the problem-solvers of the global issues of tomorrow. When learning about complex global issues, there is no replacement for true international collaboration.

Building upon the existing agricultural-based partnership between Illinois and Njala University in Sierra Leone, we traveled to the School of Community Health Sciences in Bo to establish a new facet of the partnership focused on Global Health.

Learning Outcomes
Students who participate in the program will

- Develop basic cultural competencies enabling identification of differences and understanding of consequences of unique religious beliefs, social norms and taboos, and regional diets
- Understand the importance of finding common languages when working with people of different backgrounds, both cultural and academic
- Recognize the importance of different perspectives and expertise for real-world problem-solving
- Describe contributions of epidemiology and food security to improving population health
- Analyze potential solutions for cultural and sustainable impacts

Neonatal deaths in Sierra Leone related to prematurity

90% of premature babies are aged 28-37 weeks

Basic requirements for premature babies within target age range

Fatty acid Phase Change Material (PCM) filled mattress

Polyvinyl enclosure

Boil or place mattress under sun to change from solid to liquid

Phase change initiates heat release

Bubble-Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (B-CPAP)

WATER COLUMN

HEATED MATTRESS

BUBBLE CPAP

SENSOR

Display

Temperature sensors

Nasal prongs

Air flowmeter

Humidifier

IV/feeding tube