

Student Hero (GHT)
Thomas Liggett PhD, DO/MPH (c)



Tom received his Ph.D. at Northern Illinois University where he researched age-related macular degeneration and other types of blindness. During this time, he was an active volunteer as the advisor to Alpha Phi Omega National Service Fraternity (APO). Through his efforts, he was awarded the Advisor of the year and the Distinguished Service Key.

He completed a post-doctoral fellowship in cancer research at Rush University Medical Center. He continued on at Rush as a neuroscientist where he was published in multiple books and journals which have been cited approximately 200 times. He continued his volunteering at APO as the Vice-Chair of the Chicagoland region where he helped to start three new university chapters

After a career transition into medicine, Dr. Liggett continued his volunteerism through his effort helping to start Vallejo People's Garden on Mare Island: whose mission is to promote wellness, education, social connections and provide free food to those in need. Within the first four years, over 15,000 pounds of fresh organic vegetables have been donated to food banks and shelters. As a medical student, Dr. Liggett has been inducted in the Arnold P. Gold Humanism in Medicine Honor Society and Sigma Sigma Phi Honorary Osteopathic Service Fraternity.

Specific to global public health, he has volunteered through the Global Physicians Corps with their schistosomiasis intervention project in Tanzania, Africa. Additionally, he completed his MPH field study in Cambodia through the NGO MoPoTsyo by designing a three year study on a hypertension intervention in collaboration with the NGO Louvain Coopèraton au Deèveloppement and the World Health Organization.

Dr. Liggett's most recent volunteer project included a \$147,000 grant that he co-authored to establish start-up funding for 10 community gardens in Vallejo through the inaugural Participatory Budgeting. Some of these gardens include elementary schools, food deserts and a multifaceted mobile vehicle that provides nutrition and vegetable cooking education along with gardening support for newer gardens. He is a founding member of Vallejo Grown Collaborative which provides support for new and existing gardens throughout Vallejo.