



This summer we are celebrating our fourth year of the Global Bioethics Education Initiative (GBEI). Through this initiative the Center hosts rising and established international scholars. GBEI seeks to foster contextually sensitive bioethics reflection committed to the Judeo-Christian worldview and the wealth of the Hippocratic tradition in medicine. To learn more about GBEI, please visit: www.cbhd.org/gbei.

GEMMA N. BALEIN, DMD, MA, MS



Gemma is a dentist, a professor of bioethics, and a member of the ethics review board at the University of the East Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Medical Center in the Philippines. After completing her MA in Teaching Medical Related Subjects, she became the first graduate of the MS Bioethics program

from the University of the Philippines in 2008.

Her primary research interests are in beginning- and end-of-life issues. She has lectured on numerous topics including death and dying and guidelines for ethical research.

This summer Gemma presented a parallel paper at CBHD annual conference entitled “A ‘Good Death’ in a Filipino Context.” This paper presentation builds on her Master’s thesis work which included an empirical study of terminal patients in the Filipino context and their attitudes of what defines a “good death.” Her research revealed that the number one concern among terminal patients and family members was “coming to peace with God.” This empirical evidence provided an entry point for a discussion of the religious values and perspectives of patients within the mainstream bioethical discussion of end-of-life issues. Despite having a majority Christian population with a large Roman Catholic population, bioethics in the Philippines remains almost exclusively a secular enterprise.

During her time with CBHD this summer, Gemma researched the influence of Western bioethics on Filipino culture, as well as explored the backdrop with which to understand a robust Christian conception of death and its relevance to end-of-life ethics.

PACKIARAJ ASIRVATHAM, BA, BD, MA



Packia is an ordained minister of Church of South India–Tirunelveli Diocese, India, and an independent researcher in bioethics. He is one of the youngest members of the World Council of Churches (WCC) strategy group on health and healing. He received his BA in English Literature from St. Xavier College (Palyamkottai, India), and his BD in Theology

and Ethics from United Theological College (Bangalore, India). His BD thesis explored a Christian response to stem cell harvesting in India. Additionally he received an advanced MA in Bioethics from the University of Leuven (Belgium) and was a participant in the Summer Programme on International Affairs and Multilateral Governance at the Graduate Institute in Geneva, Switzerland.

His academic interests center on issues in developing world bioethics with a particular emphasis on building bioethics capacity in the Indian context. His current research explores the bioethical issues associated with the cross-border commercial surrogacy industry in India. Other on-going research activities include abortion, infanticide, sex-selection, and justice in healthcare.

During his time with CBHD this summer he also presented a parallel paper at the Center’s annual conference on the reproductive autonomy of commercial surrogates in India. Additionally, his research focus was on the commercialization of reproductive surrogacy with special attention given to the social and legal dilemmas involved.