Abstract: The main purpose of this talk is to argue that strong statistical leadership is needed for reducing the burden of disease worldwide through the conduct of clinical trials. As background, the history of coordinating center work for multicenter trials at the University of Minnesota will be briefly described. Our research on infectious diseases ultimately led to the formation of a large international network for clinical trials. Along the way, this collaborative work became an integral part of Division of Biostatistics research and training. More statisticians are needed to play leadership roles in domestic and international clinical trials. Opportunities exist, the research can be very rewarding, but there are challenges. Some of these will be highlighted in the presentation.