



Mission Moments Newsletter

December 2010

## FUTURE FACES OF MEDICAL EVANGELISM...



Dr. Ruben Romano, of Managua, Nicaragua, pictured with a patient above, will be HTI's next scholarship graduate. He has completed all of his medical school requirements and is now in his internship in Nicaragua. He expects to begin his service with HTI in May, 2011. In our last e-newsletter, we outlined the scope of the Health Talents scholarship programs. It was quite an impressive list, even to those of us familiar with the program.

A basic tenet of the program is that students who receive scholarships are required to "give back" a year of service for every year of school. To date, HTI has enjoyed the services of three Bates Scholarship students.

Darling Ayerdis was our very first graduate. She is a registered nurse from Managua and has completed three years of her six-year commitment. She is an indispensable part of HTI's surgical team.

Dr. Marcos Lux was our first dental school graduate. He is from Santa Cruz del Quiche in Guatemala, not far from where he is working in the highlands. He is in his third year of service, with two years to go.

Our second dental school grad was Dr. Jessica Romano, who is Dr. Ruben's sister. She will complete her service obligation at the end of this year and will return home to Managua. She has been an important addition to our dentistry ministry as she worked at Clinica Ezell with Dr. Silvia during her tenure.

In 2012 Nehemias Lopez will come onboard, and in 2013, Nidian Poz will arrive. Both are in medical school now.

It is important to note that scholarships are not so much about education, as they are about equipping Christian nationals of Central America to serve the needs of their own people. This is clearly the best way to ensure a future for a medical evangelism ministry. Not only does it mean that qualified Christian medical personnel will be available, but it means that the local churches will benefit from the presence of a more educated membership with greater resources with which to serve their community.

Sheri Kretschmar said recently on her blog that ***"People have needs...needs that are the same today as they were in the Bible days. People are lost, sick, and lonely and are looking for healing and salvation. It is only Christ that can provide the hope and comfort that we need."***

**Just scholarships?** By no means! They could well be the answer to someone's prayer.

## Kingdom News

Baldemar Ruiz, HTI's evangelism coordinator for the clinics, reported significant progress during the past year. Following are some highlights from his report:

**Rio Bravo:** There are now 4-5 regular volunteers helping here. This has resulted in three baptisms. This church had been losing members for the past 10 years and were down to only 4 or 5 people. Since they began hosting the medical clinic, attendance has grown. There are now 28 people meeting regularly...in only 1-1/2 yrs.

**San Bartola:** Four baptisms have resulted from this clinic. The new Christians are from Canton Libertad, a far away village with a terrible road. They are very poor, so we've supplied them with Bibles.

**Samayac:** Recently baptized Rolando Aguilar is from Canton Pajales, near the ocean. There is no church presence there at all. Recently Baldimar Ruiz held a meeting there, and fifty people attended!

**Chocola:** This is the site of HTI's former surgery clinic. Because of recent baptisms in Chocola, there is now a Church of Christ meeting there. There are ongoing Bible studies with two different groups of people.

***We believe that HTI's clinics enhance a church's presence in its community, reinforcing the concept that the church is a place of healing. To God be the Glory.***

## HTI Board Changes

Alan Towler of Austin, Texas, has accepted a 3-yr term on the HTI Board of Directors. Alan, as well as his two adult children, Ashley Anderson and Aaron Towler, have participated frequently in HTI trips. He comes with a good understanding of HTI's mission.

Gary Tabor and Dr Mark Whitefield have resigned from the board and transitioned to our Advisory Board. Gary has served since 1995; Dr. Mark since 2004. We thank him for their devoted service and will miss them greatly.

## Patient News...

We know that our ministry can sometimes make a dramatic difference in someone's life. Rarely, though, is that difference so visual as in the life of Andy Abigail López Xom. Some time ago this 13-yr-old lost most of her hair to a fire. In August she came to Clinica Ezell seeking help. There was nothing that could be done for her surgically, but plastic surgeon Dr. Dwayne Fulk's heart filled with compassion when he met her and heard her story. When he returned home, he purchased a wig and sent it down to her in October. What a difference that wig will make in her life! Thank you, Dr. Fulks, for caring.

## Community Development Ministry

HTI has been developing a ministry to more fully address the basic needs of a community, i.e., clean water, latrines, and smokeless wood burning stoves. With help from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, attention will begin to focus on the problem of erosion. Erosion can devastate crops and water lines. You will learn more about this ministry in the next issue of Mission Moments.

# The Health Talents International “Dash”

by Rick Harper, HTI Executive Director

A few months ago I was introduced to a poem by Linda Ellis entitled “The Dash.” Linda does a masterful job of reminding us that it is the “dash” that will appear on our tombstone between the year we were born and the year we die, that is truly important. The “dash” represents the things we value most and tells our life story. I highly recommend you read the poem or watch the short movie with the same title.

If you are receiving this newsletter, you are already part of Health Talent’s dash and we are part of yours. I, for one, am honored and humbled to know that the work of Health Talents has already made up twenty-five of my fifty-two year dash. I trust you are as well!

You will find other articles in this newsletter that elaborate on Health Talents thirty-seven year dash and our plans for adding new physicians and new dentists through our scholarship program well into the future. In fact, we have students entering school next year who will not be ready to join us until 2020!

Through the patient care we provide, the teaching, the training and the volunteers who come to Guatemala each year, we will directly touch the lives of almost 40,000 people in 2010. After you include the families of these direct contacts and our partnering churches in the US and Guatemala, that number swells to more than 250,000 people.

Thank you for being part of the Health Talents family and including us in your life story...your dash.

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## 2010 Memorable Clinic Moments



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**2010 HTI Statistical Report**

**Medical patients – 28,000 projected**

**Dental patients – 9,000 projected**

**Surgery patients – 560 projected**

**Communities served - 41**

**ABC students – 663**

**Bates Scholarship students – 5**

**Bennie-McDonnel Nursing students – 1**

**Deborah Rivas Scholarship - 1**

**Sherman Scholarship students – 12**

**(9 in high school; 3 in college)**

*And Jesus said, "Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God is near you.'"*

*Luke 10:9*

**2011 Trip Schedule**

**Jan 15-22 – Gen/Gyn Surgery**

**Jan 27-Feb 1- Nicaragua Medical/Dental**

**Feb 5-12 – Gyn/Plastics Surgery**

**March 12-19 – Eye/Orthopedic Surgery**

**April 9-16 – Gen/Gyn Surgery**

**June 4-11 – General Surgery**

**July 6-11 – Guatemala Medical/Dental**

**July 16-23 – Eye Surgery**

**Aug 6-13 – Gen/ENT/Plastic Surgery**

**Sept 3-10- Gen/Gyn Surgery**

**Oct 1-8 – Gen/Gyn Surgery**

**Nov 2-7 – Guatemala Medical/Dental**

**Nov 12-19 – Eye Surgery**

Register online at [www.healthtalents.org](http://www.healthtalents.org) or contact Julie Wheatley for more info at [juliecarmen@gmail.com](mailto:juliecarmen@gmail.com) or 615-397-5447.