

Health Talents International

Harding Spring Break Mission

March 6-13

Trip Participants: PA: Gary Hill; PA Students: Sarah Ezell, Cecelia Reyes, Kara Haase, Mendy Cooper, Rebecca Howard, Brian Miller, Jaclyn Davis, Amanda Spahn, Lindsey Wilson, Luly Spinola, arah Spear, Adrian Kvedys, Sonal Patel; Pharmacy Students: Jacob Blair, Mandy Young; Translator: Nadia Aguilera; Team Leader: Julie Wheatley

It was a beautiful day in Guatemala City when the team arrived at La Aurora airport. Once all the team members had arrived we loaded up into the pick-up trucks and headed out for Chichicastenango. The drive went by quickly and we arrived in Chichi with time to relax in the afternoon before dinner. That night we ate together at Hotel Santo Tomas and followed dinner with some orientation and devotional time. Kemmel served as the chaplain on Sunday and Monday and then passed the torch off to some of the others on the team. We were able to hear talks from Gary, and Brian later on in the week. Each of the devotionals was a time to worship together and be encouraged.

Sunday morning we had breakfast together and headed out to the market. We had plenty of time to enjoy the activity of market day and shop and get to know one another before we met back up for church. Kemmel invited us all to attend the Xepocol Iglesia de Cristo with he and Lisa. We all loaded up into the pick-up trucks for the dusty ride out to Xepocol, home of Gaspar our health promoter. The service was thoroughly enjoyable. Gaspar gave the sermon and even those who couldn't understand the Spanish paid attention as Gaspar stood before us all with a HUGE smile on his face. We were glad that we got to spend the time in worship with our brothers and sisters in Xepocol. We loaded back up into the pick-ups and said adios till Tuesday when we would be headed back there for clinic.

Monday morning we were up early for breakfast and quickly headed out to clinics in Lemoa and Chuchipaca. Several students went to Lemoa with Dr. Josefina, charged with the task of getting a new "toy" to work. The machine was supposed to measure the lung capacity of patients but there was a lot lost in translation....as we tried to explain in Spanish that the patients had to keep blowing with only one breath of air the HTI health promoters were translating this into Quiché for the patients. Needless to say we weren't especially successful in using the machine on this first attempt. The doctors will do some further training with the health promoters in hopes that we can try again once we have a better idea of how to get our patients to blow until they can't blow out any more!

In Chuchipaca the team stayed busy with 30 medical and 51 total dental patients. The group divided to get a chance to check out what was happening on the medical side and then on the dental side. The church members in Chuchipaca were welcoming and great assistants throughout the day.

Both of the Tuesday clinics were special. In Xepocol the team once again greeted the members of the church we had met on Sunday. We got set up for clinic and prayed with our patients before beginning the day. We stayed busy with both medical and dental patients and also got some good play time in

with the children. Gaspar's wife and another lady from the church prepared lunch for the group. Everyone raved about how delicious her fried chicken was! After lunch we saw a few more patients, packed up and headed back to Chichi. Meanwhile the group in Patzite had a wonderful first clinic. Patzite is not a normal clinic site for HTI but is an area of great need. The church was interested in seeing how clinics worked with us so we headed out there for our first clinic in many years. The patients slowly arrived throughout the day and by the end of the day we had seen almost 30 medical patients and around 20 dental patients. The most exciting thing is that the church in Patzite requested that we make them a permanent clinic once a month! We look forward to working with this congregation in the future.

Wednesday rolled around and we were in full swing of things. The pharmacy students were manning the mobile pharmacy, the advanced PA students were seeing their own patients with the help of translators and the other students were doing a round robin and sticking to patients from the time they entered till they got their prescriptions and said "adios". In Mactzul VI the group saw a great number of patients and had some yummy chow mein for lunch provided by the Mactzul congregation. In Chinique the team was very busy with patients. Chinique is a community where the church is new and the few members there are dedicated to growing their congregation so it was exciting to have a good number of patients turn out for clinic. Tomas our health promoter in charge of doing teeth cleanings was especially happy because there were 13 people for him to attend to! It is exciting to see that some good habits are catching on in these villages.

The last day of clinic for the team was Thursday and we once again split into two groups. One group headed to Zacualpa and the other to Clinica Caris. Zacualpa was a new spot for us and was about a two and a half hour drive from Chichi. Once we arrived we unloaded the supplies and set up shop. While Josefina and Sheri saw patients with the students, Kimmel went out visiting. He spent time talking to church members from the area and about bringing teams there more often. He was well received and there seems to be a great deal of interest from the local Christians so "primero Dios" or Lord willing we will have yet another new area to take the gospel and good medical care. One special little girl warmed our hearts by coloring pages and giving them back to some of the team members as little "recuerdos" or reminders of her and their time in Zacualpa. Special connections like this one are what make these trips so meaningful.

The group at Caris enjoyed spending time with Lisa as she saw several patients and dedicated time to helping the students learn about a variety of conditions. The groups met up at the end of the day at Caris to reorganize the pickup trucks and help the HTI team prepare for the next two days of clinic. Dinner that night was festive feeling as everyone was in such a great mood. We were all happy that the week went so well. All together we saw 172 medical patients and 126 dental patients. Devotional time went well and we went around the circle and shared about the week and discussed the things that had touched our hearts the most.

Friday morning we left Chichi early and headed to Antigua. We stopped on the way and had breakfast at a place called Kafe Paulina. We were treated to a yummy and very complete breakfast with a side of shopping before taking off again to Antigua. We rolled into town mid morning and stored our luggage at

the hotel before hitting the streets. Everyone divided up and went separate ways to eat or shop or tour the charming colonial town. That night we all met for dinner at the hotel and were entertained by a magician that went from table to table doing magic tricks. Everyone's coffee orders were filled and we all said goodnight.

Saturday morning we had a nice breakfast and then headed to Guatemala City for the flight home. Everyone made it off without any trouble and we thanked God once again for a safe and productive week.

By: Julie Wheatley

