

TRIP REPORT

HARDING PA TRIP

FEBRUARY 27-MARCH 5, 2016

Those who made this trip were: Dr. Audrey Haywood, Gary Hill, PA Faculty, Timothy Shipp, PA-C. The Harding PA students attending were: Karli Blickenstaff, Maggie Bumpus, Caylin Collins, Carly Edwards, Dane Garden, Hanna Ra, Kaitlyn Rauwerdink, Ahmad Scott, Stephanie Sherrell and Mallory Taylor. Pre-med students attending were: Belle Blickenstaff, Titus Dauck and Emily Mylhausen. Rowdy Sarrett joined as a translator, David and Susan Mellor were trip leaders.

Saturday, February 27th I drove to Searcy to pick up students from the Harding campus. As soon as I arrived I knew this was going to be a great trip. All the students and Gary Hill were waiting, ready to go, and I had arrived 15 minutes early! They were eager to get this trip started.

We arrived in Guatemala about midnight Saturday night and Alex had arranged for vans to deliver us to the Hotel Barcelo. It is always good to know that Alex will have all our arrangements for transport and beds all taken care of; we were tired by the time we arrived. However, taking the late flight out of Houston and getting into Guatemala that late had its advantages. The plane was carrying a light load, so we got to move to seats where we could stretch out a little. Immigration and customs was a breeze - seemed that all the airport staff was eager to get us processed and out the door. We moved through the airport in record time.



After a short night, Lisa and Kemmel met us for breakfast at Hotel Barcelo and immediately began to provide good leadership. We loaded up and pulled out shortly after 9 am. When we got to Chichi we enjoyed the buffet at Santo Tomas, unpacked, and shopped the market. Kemmel called a meeting at 4 p.m. where he and Lisa laid out the plans and procedures for the week. We had a devotional and communion, shared a nice supper and called it a night.

The main purpose of this trip was to provide the well child and dental check-up for about a third of the ABC students living in the highlands. We had 3 team members who were able and qualified to join our Guatemalan staff to do the check-ups: Gary Hill, Dr. Audrey and Tim Shipp. Dr. Kelly

was filling in for Sheri who was in the states, and he is an excellent physician and teacher. The students took a patient's chart, weighed, measured, took BP and eye exams and escorted them through the doctor's exam. They also were seen by the dental hygienist and the students helped with effective teeth



brushing along with the dental dye test to see how clean the child's teeth were. We photographed each child so Kemmel could attach a current photo to the child's chart.

The students were excited to actually be able to get some hands on experience. Gary, Tim and Audrey were wonderful teachers. Admittedly the desire to answer questions and explain what

they were seeing in the multitude of patients slowed down the process a little, but each patient left feeling they had been heard and received quality care. The team was able to see over 100 patients excluding those who were not part of the ABC program.

One of the highlights of this trip was seeing the finished church building at Paxot II. What an incredible finished project this has turned out to be. We were delighted to see this progress. (photo at right)

Five members of this team had either been MET students or interns. This gave us a good balance of experience and ability to communicate with the Guatemalans. Titus, Rowdy and Julie Kelly provided amazing translating. It was fun to watch the returning students reunited with their former "families".



Our team really came from all over the U.S. and formed an unusually cohesive team. The students led the evening devotionals and came

up with challenging, deep thoughts. We were encouraged to hear the seriousness with which these young people are facing their relationship with God and others.



P.S. One of the funny things that happened on this trip was provided by Dr. McClarty's (Harding's president) challenge to take "him" to all the places the students visited on their Spring break trips. We feel confident that his trip to Guatemala was the best!

