

HEALTH TALENTS INTERNATIONAL

Surgery Clinic Trip Report

July 22-29, 2023

Team Members: Surgeons: ***Drs. Sarah Davis***, Michael Kohlman, Nathan Powell, ***Ashley Przybysz***, Scott Smith; Anesthesiologist: Dr. Gabriel Brown; Physician: Dr. Quinton Dickerson; CRNA: Mary Beth Greenway; SRNA's: ***Mason Easterling, Janki Patel, Kimi Wendland***; PA: Joe Calderon; Nurses: ***Ana Bridgeman, Jonathan Cambridge***, Ann Cross, Ava Crock, Lesa Dale, ***Kerri Daughety, Katie Duke, Viola Erjomina, Courtney Etheredge***, Clarissa Longoria, Linda Osborne, Allie Osborne, Emily Poterala, Heather Shingleton; Surgical Tech: ***Raechel Gorrell***; Nursing Students: ***Elizabeth Kern, Isabella Patterson, Miranda Rodrigues, Andrea Seawell***; Lay Circulator: Emily Ness; Second Assistants: ***Lily Davis***, Price Dickerson, Emma Russell, Allie Shingleton; Sterilization: Quinton Dickerson III, Susan Harper, Cary Sills; Caregivers: ***Dave Daughety***, Ann Dickerson, ***Addie Grace Greenway, Charlotte Oliver***, Abby Grace Oliver, Katy Oliver, ***Natalie Powell***; Translators: Emily Anthony, Julie Ann Harper, ***Jarren Longoria, Mary Przybysz***, Rita Sills; Trip Chaplain and Team Leader: Rick Harper.

(First-timers listed above in bold, italics.)

Delayed...not denied is an apt theme for this trip!

The delays began on Friday, resulting in our Nashville five missing their flight, being moved to another airline for a Saturday flight, and their luggage arriving on Monday. Later that evening, I received word that the flight from Birmingham was cancelled, impacting twelve travelers. By 2 AM on Saturday, their flight from Atlanta was reinstated, early morning phone calls made, and they all drove to Atlanta in time to make their flight that morning. Determined and grateful may be a better theme as every team member was present on Saturday evening for the first time this year. *Your Medicare eligible sometimes travel agent and scribe slept on the bus ride for two hours.*

Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Mississippi, Montana, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, and Washington were represented, and twenty-three team members were first-time participants. The pandemic delayed the return of two dozen for as long as four years. Julie Ann Harper said the four-year delay was the longest period she'd been away from Guatemala since 2001, having gone once or twice a year from 2001-2019. She would not be denied!

The ride to Clinica Ezell Hospital was uneventful and we arrived before 5 PM, unpacked, sorted supplies, consulted with patients, and prepared the OR rooms for surgery on Sunday. Dinner consisted of 'street tacos' a tradition long before they became a thing in the US. Following supper and a brief orientation, introductions were made, and it was off to bed.

Lesla Dale, an OR scrub nurse made her third trip of the year and set the schedule for the coffee club that convenes each morning. One of our nurses had to back out four days before the trip due to her father-in-law being placed in hospice care, and Lesla came to our rescue. Lesla, and another late addition, RN, Katie Duke, made this team the best staffed group since surgery resumed. We are slowly gaining momentum and returning to pre-pandemic staffing levels.

Our worship time together with the Montellano church family, included a lesson from Lamentations and the joyous singing for which they are known. Surgeries began following lunch and we completed eight cases, six general and two GYN. We were off to a good start and spirits were high.

Dr. Gabriel Brown, known as Gabby by old-timers, was making her first trip since she began medical school. Now an anesthesiologist, following in the footsteps of her parents, Drs. Byron, and Cynthia Brown. Gabby was in her element and managed the three rooms extraordinarily well. CRNA and DNP, Mary Beth Greenway brought her daughter, Addie Grace, and three nurse anesthesia students from Stamford with her. The dream team of Gabby, Janki, Kimi, Mary Beth, and Mason were a delight to work with and we hope they all return.

Monday began smoothly enough; fourteen patients would receive surgical care by late afternoon. This patient, name withheld, experienced complications, and was returned to the OR to deal with internal bleeding. The issue was quickly resolved, yet she would need a blood transfusion. Several on our team volunteered to donate blood and the nurse in this picture, Kerri Daughety, is shown giving her patient...her own blood. (It is an old joke, but on Tuesday we told this sweet patient that in a few days she would begin speaking English and that her hair would turn red. She belly-laughed and held her stomach to prevent any discomfort.)

Tuesday, as is typical, was our most productive day as we hit our stride. Eighteen patients for the day with no complications.

Our GYN surgeons this week were both first-timers, Drs. Sarah Davis, and Ashley Przybysz who each brought their daughter. They were fabulous and we hope they return, and we in turn will seek to do a better job identifying patients for them. We had one too many no shows and a couple of patients who appeared with inadequate records. We will refine our process and count on them returning!



While all of this was going on, Dr. Quinton Dickerson, a board member since the late seventies, was seeing cardiology patients. His sweet wife, Ann, was working as a caregiver in the OR, his son, Quinton the third was helping in sterilization, and his grandson, Price, or Quinton the fourth, was serving as a second assistant in the OR. Three Q's and one Ann made for a three-generation week and a lifetime of memories.

We went down to the recovery ward and sang to our patients on Tuesday, always a highlight. We loved on them, they loved on us, we sang to them, they sang with us and to us.

God was praised and all encouraged!

The average surgical team requires twenty nurses, and/or surgical techs to provide optimal care, no small recruiting challenge. Partnering with nursing programs and introducing nursing students to our ministry is just one way we seek to keep our nursing pipeline full. Three of our nurses on this trip, Ava Crock, Clarissa Longoria, and Emily Poterala were introduced to Health Talents while attending Abilene Christian University. They mentored four ACU students this week, Andrea, Elizabeth, Isabella (Bella) and Miranda. We are counting on all of them returning, along with a few Alabama treasures, nurses Courtney, Katie and Viola!

Wednesday was a bit lighter, fourteen cases and seven on Thursday. Throw in a few minor surgeries completed in the exam room and we finished with sixty-five surgeries for the week, the most of any surgical team in 2023.

On Thursday evening we enjoyed a sharing time in lieu of our devotional, and the family connections stood out.

- Father or Mother/Daughter
 - Dr. Sarah and Lily Davis
 - Dr. Ashley and Mary Przybysz
 - Dr. Nathan and Natalie Powell
 - Dr. Scott Smith and Emily Smith Anthony
 - Mary Beth and Addie Grace Greenway
 - Katy, Abby Grace, and Charlotte Oliver
 - Heather and Allie (Bundle) Shingleton
- Families
 - Dave and Kerri Daughety
 - Dr. Quinton, Ann, Quinton III, and Price Dickerson
 - Rick, Susan, and Julie Ann Harper
 - Jarren and Clarissa Longoria
 - Cary and Rita Sills
 - Joe Calderon with cousins and nieces; Ana Bridgeman, Jonathan Cambridge, Emily Ness

After serving together for a week, we are all family now, no denial...welcome to the family that is HTI!

