

**TRIP REPORT
EYE/GENERAL SURGERY
CLINICA EZELL
JULY 16-23, 2016**

The team members for this trip were: Dr. Jose Golcher; Hunter Jennings, MD; Rita and Bob Huffstutter, DDS; Buster Herren, MD; Leah Bradshaw, RN; Dave Farrow, RN; Judy Sisson, Optician; Ruth Farrell, RN, Roxy Gazaway, RN, Mark and Sarah Ashley, RN, Rebekah Mullins, RN, Kelly Greenwood, LPN, Dorothy Swanson, Jackie Martinez, Austin Taylor Kallie Pruet, Sarah Pinson, Charlie Yoo, Emily Chambers, Camie Hunt, April Mazak, Shannon and Trace Bennett, Madison Booth, Logan Bussard, Sydney Chronister, Hunt Jennings, Kaili, Kari, Paden and Arden Miller, Beverly Samples, Cameron Boehning, Jackson Brunner, Amy Farrow, Elena Rabago, Sharon and Vince Van Cleave, Vincent Zhang, David Jackson, Julie Obregon, David and Susan Mellor.

Weeks' Statistics: 17 eye surgeries, 29 general surgeries, many eye exams given resulting in glasses being dispensed, over 30 water filters delivered, four teams went out each of 4 days seeing many patients in each clinic.

Usually in these reports we try to tell the story of our trips. This time we would like to tell the story through the eyes of those who were the volunteers out doing the various jobs. As usual, the last night at the clinic we go around the room and share our perspective and meaningful experiences from the week. The following are comments from that traditional time of sharing:



David Jackson, chaplain

- *The spiritual atmosphere was great. David (Jackson) did a wonderful job of sharing thoughts from the book of James. His devotionals in the mornings at the dental clinic demonstrated the emphasis on the spiritual nature of Health Talents.*
- *It was such a joy to get to go out with the mobile medical teams. We were able to test eyes and give out glasses to people who hadn't been able to see for a long time.*

- *I was amazed at how much we were able to learn by working with the Guatemalan doctors. It was nice of them to take the time to actually teach us and give us hands on experience. I think I learned more in this week than I would have in a semester back home.*
- *It's hard work to go out with the mobile medical dental and medical teams, but the Guatemalans do it every day whether we are here or not. They are truly dedicated to their people and profession.*
- *The first day we were mostly strangers, but now I feel like I've made friends that I'll cherish forever. Sometimes it feels*



Rita Huffstutter

like I'm the only young adult Christian. Now I know there are others my age who love Jesus and want to serve Him. I'm not just talking about Americans, most of the Guatemalans we worked with are young adults who are committed to the Lord and HTI.

- I almost didn't come because I'm not medical. I am so glad I did and I think I was able to help. Another person said we like to bring people from our church on the trip because it draws us closer to one another.



pre-med Charlie Yoo learns diagnosis from Dr. Sierra

- When our doctors for eye surgery dropped out, we were very sad that the hopes of so many Guatemalans were going to be lost. Thanks to a number of people, mostly Carlos and the Sills, who were able to get Dr. Jose' to come out for the two days of eye surgery. He asked us to make sure to invite him back because he really enjoyed working with our team. He said even if the American doctors were here, he would love to come back and work with us!

- One patient captured my heart. 5 year old, Gloria, has been blind since birth. Dr. Jose is making arrangements for her to receive the surgery she needs. He said if this can be done before she is 7 she

stands a good chance of regaining sight. This may not have happened if he was not with us for the two days he came to serve. God is good! (note from Bro. Dave: Dr. Golcher is recommending Gloria for corneal transplant to a group who do this free of charge for Guatemalans. We mentioned that there must be a long waiting list and her window of time of closing. He said the doctor who runs this program is one of his former students and he felt pretty sure his recommendation would carry some weight!)



hard working nurses!

- Thanks to the HTI staff in Guatemala and the US. I've been on a lot of these types of trips, but I keep coming back here because because I feel like we can accomplish so much due to the organization and professional approach of HTI.

Dr. Jennings and son Hunt



• *Thank you for allowing me to bring my family. What a joy to see my children serving others. This has been a life changing event.*

This was a good week. We had several pre-med and pre-nursing students with us and we tried to rotate them according to their interests between observing surgeries and going out with the mobile teams. They would come back for their days' events with eyes glowing and stories to tell of what they got to see. Hunt Jennings asked if he could observe surgery on Sunday. He had never seen his father "in action". Here was a 24 year old young man who had been privileged to attend a top notch private school,

graduated with all A's, then took 4 years off to kayak around the world. He is world class. He has been in dangerous, adrenaline pumping situations repeatedly, but he had a complete new respect after seeing his father deftly perform surgery after surgery to help people he had never seen before. He is going back to university this fall and is trying to decide if medicine may be his future.

Julie and Jenny



Like music playing in the background, Julie and Jenny, our new scholarship coordinator, were busy at a table in the dining room every day interviewing scholarship students. Jenny is a natural, sweet and compassionate, everything you want for the encouragement and mentoring of our scholarship students.

Another touching event was watching Shannon Bennett teach kids to brush their teeth. We had assigned him to go help Dr. Sylvia in sterilization. He ended up hand on hand, brushing teeth with kids. The first time he told the child to spit in the sink and black crud and blood came out, Shannon was appalled and stood with silent tears running down his cheeks. Shannon has worked for years as an electrical lineman in Monroe, LA. He's a big tough man. His reaction moved us all. He said he was overcome by how he has taken for granted the dental care his kids have always had and think nothing of. This was his first mission trip and he brought his youngest son, Trace, who will be a high school senior this year. Trace has had some interest in becoming a dentist since he spent a lot of time in braces, but had about changed his mind to become a farmer. Sylva got him to assist her and before long he was really helping her. She

Shannon Bennet
teaching dental hygiene

Shannon Bennet

bragged on his natural eye-hand coordination and how quickly he caught on to her instruction. She told him there were many dental students who were not as capable as he was already. Who knows what influence this positive week will have on Trace?



Over and over again, we heard students say how much they had learned, how helpful it was to have doctors and dentists willing to take the time to really let them try to diagnose or give a shot or observe a surgery. One pre-med student said his work load had gotten so hard he was thinking of giving up, but this week had reminded him of why he wanted to be a doctor.



As usual, God assembled some of the best and brightest to do his work this week. We are blessed and grateful.



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