

Health Talents International

ACU Spring Break Mobile Medical/Dental Mission

March 10-17

Trip Participants: MD: Annie Drachenberg, DDS: Jeff Webb; Dental assistant: Haley Webb; ACU team leader: Autumn Sutherlin; ACU students: Katie Bell, Corbin Clifton, Dru Collins, Carson Gee, Kristin Goodwin, Landry Gwin, Carter Hayes, Jennifer Julett, Rachel Hurst, William King, Eunice Lara Castillo, Arodi Leon Osorio, Chip Moore, Morgan Shamblin, Bailey Terhune, Drew Thomas, Meredith Thornton, Sara Touchton, Aubrey White; HTI Team leader: Julie Wheatley

Spring break schedules can be somewhat crazy as we deal with limited seats on flights and high airline ticket prices. The ACU team was thankfully able to all fly down together and arrive in Guatemala around 10pm. By the time they were through customs with all luggage accounted for and all shuttled over to Hotel Barcelo it was just before midnight but everyone was safe and excited for the day to come. The team had a short night at the lovely Hotel Barcelo. When 4am rolled around all the team members were in the lobby with their luggage and we were packed up onto the bus and on the road to Montellano by 4:20am, a whole 10 minutes earlier than planned!

There was a slight delay on the way to Montellano when a suitcase went flying off the top of the bus into the jungle! Several of the guys on the team jumped off with the bus driver to hunt for the missing piece of luggage. They had almost given up hope when a young Guatemalan boy showed up out of the jungle and found the suitcase. He helped the guys get it back up the ravine it had fallen into and the luggage was rescued! The funny part was that the piece of luggage that had fallen off belonged to Arodi, the only team member NOT on the bus at that time! Arodi had ridden in the pick-up truck with Danny to clinic and had had some car trouble so were a little further behind the group. We all got a big kick out of the fact that poor Arodi would have never known what had happened to his luggage had the students not noticed when it went flying off into the jungle! Despite this delay the group arrived at Clinica Ezell around 7am hungry for breakfast! After feasting on eggs, black beans and plantains we split everyone up between the ABC delivery team, Dental team, and two mobile medical teams and headed out to work. The group with ABC went to Rio Bravo, Guatalón, Santa Elena, Rosario and San Carlos. They had plenty of time to play with kids, color and share in lots of laughter. The dental team stayed at Clinica Ezell for the day seeing patients for cavity fillings, cleanings, and extractions. Dr. Jeff and his lovely assistant and wife Haley had a great time teaching students about dentistry while serving and helping so many sweet Guatemalan patients. They were also accompanied by Dr. Heidy and Dr. Margarita, our staff at Ezell. Dr. Margarita is a friend of Dr. Heidy's from dental school and is working with HTI for a few months while Dr. Silvia is on

maternity leave. We are grateful to have such a talented dentist to serve our patients and teach our students while Dr. Silvia enjoys her new little bundle of joy.

The Monday mobile medical teams went to Rio Bravo and San Jose. In Rio Bravo the team worked with Dr. Annie and Dr. Walter while in San Jose they worked with Dr. David and Dr. Nehemias. The Rio Bravo clinic was full of activity with over sixty patients and plenty of children running around to play with. Meanwhile in San Jose the team also kept busy seeing their patients and visiting with Jose Manuel, one of Dr. David's health promoters who enjoyed the opportunity to practice his English.



Monday night the team met for a short devotional time before dinner. We went around and introduced everyone and Travis led the team in some conversation about how the day had gone. After dinner a few people stuck around to visit for a little while but most were in bed early after such a short night and a full day of work.

Tuesday morning held another delicious breakfast and several groups heading in a bunch of different directions. The dental team accompanied Dr. Walter and Dr. Annie to Samayac with a large bunch of students. They spent a full day, some of them on the roof in the hot sun working to treat and serve a great many patients. By the time they made it back to Clinica Ezell that night they were ready to relax and happy to have had such a full day of work and learning. The

group with Dr. David and Nehemias spent their day in Las Margaritas. They had several patients to see and also found some special children to play with. One little girl the locals call Yoya got the students to play with her almost nonstop! Yoya is a special little girl from the Las Margaritas community who is not able to speak but has learned to use signs to express what she wants and boy did she ever enjoy playing ring around the rosy and London Bridge is falling down!

The ABC team visited Samayac, San Jose and San Andres on Tuesday. They were thrilled to see the number of kids in Samayac that day, enjoyed food provided for them by the San Jose community and loved getting to spend a little more time visiting in San Andres as more kids were there since they arrived after school hours. The ABC team spent a lot of time on the road but were happy to have played and giggled with so many sweet little kids.

Arodi and Eunice, the two translators were such a great help throughout the week. The two of them swapped back and forth translating for Dr. Jeff and Dr. Annie and really the trip would have been tough without them. They served so selflessly and helped not just Jeff and Annie connect with patients but also helped their fellow students learn more Spanish and be able to communicate with the Guatemalans.

Tuesday night after dinner Travis once again led the devotional time for the group. He showed great leadership as he led conversation about how God had been revealed throughout the day. He encouraged his fellow team mates to get out of their comfort zones and not let language or cultural barriers hinder them from taking opportunities to be the hands and face of Christ to the people they meet. His preparation and wisdom blessed the team richly!



Wednesday held yet another full day for the team. The mobile medical teams went to Nanzales and Nahualate, dental stayed at Clinica Ezell and ABC visited Siguansis, Sununche, Chicacao, Montellano and Las Margaritas! In Nanzales the local Christians have started giving out numbers to people the night before clinic. Dr. Walter knew that he would have 60 patients waiting for him when he arrived so he was happy to have the assistance of the students who joined him at clinic that day. The day in Nahualate went well until just after clinic wrapped up. The team was finishing lunch and some of the group had started to play with kids from the neighborhood. One little three year old girl got too close to a nasty dog belonging to a neighbor and he attacked her! There was a moment of confusion and panic but Chip was quick to react reaching the little girl almost instantly and tearing the dog off of her. Dr. Annie was quickly there to pick up the little girl and her mother was called for. When her mother arrived she quickly carried her little girl home and Dr. Nehemias and RN Marta from HTI were able to go and help by giving medicine and supplies to treat the deep puncture wounds left by the dog's teeth. It was a big scare for everyone involved but we were grateful that we happened to be there when it happened so that the girl was able to have the best care possible for her wounds.

Wednesday afternoon ended up being an early afternoon so all were able to head out for a little adventure to the cacao farm. As part of the team waited for the Nanzales group to arrive back at Ezell before departing they pitched in and helped shell seed pods for our community

development guys Oscar and Obdulio. The pods held chipilin seeds. Chipilin is an herb used in tamales and soups and the seeds had been harvested by Oscar and Obdulio but needed to be shelled in order to turn around and plant the next crop. The students made short work of the big job for which Oscar and Obdulio were immensely grateful!



Wednesday night the devotional time was very emotional as several people talked about the experiences they had throughout the day. Corbin helped lead the devotional time and the discussion as he gave everyone the opportunity to reveal what God had been teaching them over the first few days of clinic. It was wonderful to have this time of sharing and processing together each night.

Thursday clinics were in Xejuyup and San Juan Moca. Dental split up and accompanied both of the trips, Dr. Heidi in Moca and Dr. Jeff in Xejuyup. Dr. Jeff got off to a rough start when his exam chair collapsed with patient and all! The chair wasn't able to be fixed to sit up right so Dr. Walter came to the rescue by loaning Jeff his exam table and Jeff was able to move on with his day. One of Dr. Walter's first patients was a very sad case of a two month old baby girl named Keily who weighed only 5.8 pounds. She was nothing but skin and bones and her parents were

concerned that she hadn't been gaining weight and had recently lost even her will to breast feed. Dr. Walter sent them to have a test done immediately. The father returned later that day with the results showing that little Keily had a severe urinary tract infection which contributed to her overall poor health. Dr. Walter explained to the father how to administer medicine and told him about HTI's milk program for malnourished babies. If the family would purchase powdered milk to help provide Keily the nourishment she urgently needed, HTI would reimburse them for that milk until Keily gained weight and was no longer on the verge of death. Cases like Keily's are difficult to see and are frustrating. The students who saw that sweet little emaciated body were touched and heartbroken for the innocent child. That night prayers were lifted up for Keily and her family that they might take good care of her and that she might be healed of her infection and provided with that life giving milk she so desperately needed.



Thursday afternoon there was a little down time so the students pitched in and started cleaning some of the awnings around Clinica Ezell. The work was dirty and tiring but they knocked out about half the hospital that afternoon before dinner.

Friday was a little different for the team. There were no mobile medical clinics going out so a big group of students headed out to La Fortuna with Oscar and Obdulio to see what work they had been doing in that community. The group was impressed to see the family gardens at many of the homes and loved their stop at the hot springs where they got to stick their feet in the water and relax for a little while. Another group of students spent a great day in the dental clinic with Heidi, Margarita and Jeff all working at Clinica Ezell doing fillings and extractions. Jeff had a tough case early in the morning with a child who needed dental work done and was crying before he even got to the chair. Thankfully Jeff made it through with the help of Eunice his faithful translator. While these groups were busy working and exploring a third group of sacrificial servants stayed behind at Ezell to finish cleaning the awnings around the hospital. We were soooooo grateful to them for all of their hard work and appreciated so much their taking their morning to help HTI take good care of our clinic.

Friday afternoon was soccer time! After the day's activities had wrapped up both ACU and Clinica Ezell staff headed out to the field for some fun. The game went all the way until dinner time when the players came in ready for a meal after working up a lot of hunger! Dinner was delicious as always and was quickly followed by devo time. That night at devo Travis once again led the team in processing all that God had done and asked the team to share about what they had learned throughout the week. Tears were shed, hearts were shared and God was praised for providing such a wonderful and safe week for the team.

The next morning the team headed out for Antigua just after breakfast. They spent a lovely day in Antigua enjoying the food, the market and the sights before meeting back together for dinner at the hotel that night. A nice buffet dinner was enjoyed by all for both dinner and then it was off to bed before a very early morning shuttle to the airport. Yet another wonderful week serving God, may it forever and always be to His glory!

