



SOLIDARITY BRIDGE

Healing & Empowering the Poor

REPORT 28th MEDICAL MISSION TRIP Cochabamba and Sacaba, Bolivia

September 25rd – Oct. 6th, 2010



USA surgeons Dr. Tim Van Natta and Dr. Greg Sachs (right) partner with Bolivian surgeons

HIGHLIGHTS

- Our mission team worked in 2 Cochabamba teaching hospitals, 1 small Sacaba hospital, 2 Sacaba clinics, and the Sacaba prison.
- Our surgical teams performed 107 surgeries (31 gynecology surgeries, 55 general surgeries, 21 dermatology surgeries and over 200 dermatology procedures)
- Our pediatrician, neurologist, dermatologists and gynecologists evaluated 783 patients in our clinics.
- Medical Education was provided on a host of topics spanning dermatology, general surgery, gynecology.
- We delivered medications, anesthetics, surgical supplies and equipment valued at over \$1 million.
- We initiated meetings in Paraguay to further explore our expansion capabilities.

OUR TEAM

Our mission team of 31 physicians, nurses, translators, helpers and staff numbered bigger than ever, and represented 5 US states including, Illinois, Iowa, Utah, California and Washington D.C. This large size proved critical to our success as we covered numerous sites during our 12 day work effort. Despite an initial airline ticket problem, we arrived with our 59 suitcases and settled in with little difficulty. We now gratefully reflect on a most extraordinary journey of life saving, and at times, heart breaking experiences.

OUR WORK

Surgeries:

- 31 gynecological surgeries including abdominal and vaginal hysterectomies, ovariectomies, ovarian cystectomies, and bladder/ rectal support procedures for urinary incontinence.
- 55 general surgeries including hernia, gall bladder removal and numerous more complex surgeries such as colon repair, thyroid and liver cancers etc.
- 21 dermatology surgeries including removal of skin cancers and various types of benign lesions



Dr. Gay Garrett (left) demonstrates laparoscopic technique

Outpatient Clinics: Our clinical group consisted of a gynecological team (nurse practitioner and gynecologist), a neurologist, a pediatrician and 2 dermatologists. A total of 783 patients were seen in 3 clinic locations. Prior to our arrival, our Cochabamba office staff worked with local clinic managers to ‘get the word out’ about the arrival of these US specialists. Accessing this type of specialty care for a nominal fee (based on ability to pay) is rare for this population.



Nurse Misty Starmer assesses patient in our pediatric clinic



Dr. Wayne Blaszk and Janet Hand RN examine a Derm patient

Medical Education: US physicians provided a variety of educational exchanges with our Bolivian counterparts.

Dermatology:

Dr. Jay Herrmann presented two lectures to the Dermatology Society of Cochabamba. (1) Dermatology from A-Z: A review of various skin diseases and their diagnosis and treatment. (2) Auto-Immune Diseases of the Skin. Dr. Herrmann was also asked to host a Cochabamba TV talk show wherein he discussed sunscreens, how to do self-skin exams, and diagnosis /treatment of melanomas and moles.

General Surgery:

Dr. Gay Garrett demonstrated advanced laparoscopic techniques particularly for the reattachment of the intestine after a colostomy. This was done at both the Cochabamba and Sacaba hospital locations.

Dr. Tim Van Natta led Grand Rounds in the hospital auditorium, discussing techniques and complications of tracheal resection and reconstruction in advance of his case that day. Careful planning for this complex operation was discussed, and close communication between surgeon and anesthesiologist was stressed. The lecture, followed by a question and answer period, was attended by faculty surgeons, surgical residents, medical students, and other allied health care personnel.

Gynecology:

Dr. Alyssa Johnston and Dr. Hani Saleh teamed up for a presentation on Medical Education requirements in the USA. This included insight into both undergraduate and graduate levels.

Donated Materials: We delivered 2 defibrillators, 2 microscopes and a myriad of medical instruments, supplies and medications valued at \$1,041,770

PATIENT STORY

Jaquelin is a 17-year-old girl from deep in the Chapare jungle. For nearly two years, she had been suffering from pains in her abdomen, which intensified as her belly swelled. Many people in her village initially believed she was pregnant, however, Jaquelin became increasingly emaciated and her belly swelled far beyond what would be possible for a mere pregnancy. She continued working in her family's fields, planting and harvesting bananas and yucca - in the tradition of her Yuracare people - but she stopped going to school because of the pain, both physical and social. Finally, Jaquelin went to the nearest hospital, 2 hours away, where she learned of her tumor diagnosis and need for surgery that would cost \$15,000 US dollars... an utterly impossible sum for indigenous subsistence farmers.

Desperate, Jaquelin and her parents went to far-off Cochabamba looking for help. She arrived at the public Hospital Viedma, and was told Solidarity Bridge would be coming soon and she could seek help from us. This came to be, as Solidarity Bridge missionary Dr. Timothy VanNatta operated on Jaquelin along with local Bolivian surgeons. Her gigantic (benign) tumor weighed about 25 pounds. Jaquelin is now walking around, smiling happily, and eating ravenously for the first time in a long, long time. She is now full of life!



MISSION TEAM MEMBERS

Ms. Jennifer	Batza	Translator
Dr. Wayne	Blaszak	Dermatologist
Ms. Mary Luz	Botero	Translator
Ms. Nancy	Churchill-Matkov	Nurse
Ms. Jenny	Claxton	Nurse
Ms. Susan	Costin	Nurse
Ms. Anne	Daly	Nurse Practitioner
Mr. Kurt	Florian	Trip Coordinator/Translator
Dr. Gay	Garrett	General Surgeon
Ms. Janet	Hand	Nurse
Dr. Jay	Herrmann	Dermatologist
Dr. Juan Lorenzo	Hinojosa	Trip Coordinator
Mr. Mateo	Hinojosa	Videographer
Ms. Sarah	Hinojosa	Trip Coordinator/Chaplain
Dr. Linda	Holt	Gynecology Surgeon
Dr. Alyssa	Johnson	Gynecology Resident
Dr. Bob	LaPata	Gynecologist – Clinic
Ms. Blanca	Lule	Translator
Dr. Dan	Lum	Pediatrician
Ms. Susie	Moon	Nurse
Fr. Bob	Oldershaw	Neurologist
Dr. John	Oldershaw	Chaplain
Ms. Gayle	Piehl-Pierce	Nurse
Ms. Ann	Rhomberg	Trip Coordinator
Ms. Sue	Rhomberg	Photographer/Helper
Dr. Gregory	Sachs	General Surgery Resident
Ms. Misty	Starmer	Nurse
Ms. Ana	Valenzuela	Translator
Dr. Tim	Van Natta	General Surgeon
Ms. Kristin	Villa	Surgical Physician's Assistant
Dr. Dan	Yousif	Anesthesiologist