



SOLIDARITYBRIDGE
Healing & Empowering the Poor

REPORT ON OUR 29th MEDICAL MISSION TRIP

September 23 – October 4th, 2008: Gynecology Mission to Cochabamba / Sacaba

HIGHLIGHTS

In Cochabamba, the gynecology team of US and Bolivian professionals performed 30 gynecological surgeries at the Hospital Viedma with emphasis on teaching and equipping our partners so that future gynecology services for the poor may be enhanced there.

In nearby Sacaba, our gynecologist and translator teamed to evaluate over 70 patients at the clinic run by San Pedro parish and at the local prison. One surgery was performed by our gynecologist at a small hospital in Sacaba.

Our missionaries packed their luggage with numerous medications, anesthetics and surgical supplies valued at \$96,000 to leave at this mission site. An additional \$848,000 worth (primarily pace-makes, leads and neurosurgery materials) was deposited into our Cochabamba warehouse for future mission work and ongoing programs.

MEDICAL MISSION IN COCHABAMBA / SACABA

Dr. Bob LaPata and Dr. Enrique Via-Reque showed great leadership in both the planning and implementation of this mission. Bob recruited two gynecologists and two translators from the Evanston area (Dr. Linda Holt, Dr. Tony Cirrincione, Laura Franco and Jane Richman.) Enrique recruited two nurses (Judy Biggus and Arlene Meyer). In an effort to maximize the surgical schedule, Bob, Enrique, and Linda departed for Bolivia in advance of the mission team to determine the schedule for surgery and evaluate the surgical candidates that had been pre-selected by our Bolivian partners and screened for economic need by our own Bolivian social worker.

Surgeries: Bob and Linda partnered with two Bolivian gynecologists, Remy Uriona and Jackie Severich, and they successfully completed 31 surgeries including hysterectomies, tran-vaginal tape procedure for urinary incontinence, and diverticulectomies. Nurses Judy Biggus and Arlene Meyer worked closely with Bolivian surgical nurses. On one occasion the US team performed a surgery at a smaller facility in Sacaba, a small town about 15 miles southeast of Cochabamba. We are developing partnerships in a small hospital there so that we will have more opportunities to perform surgeries in the Sacaba community to ease travel burdens for our more rural patients.



Our medical director, Dr. Enrique Via Reque (right), worked closely with Bolivian gynecologist Dr. Remy Uriona. Remy continues to serve the poor with the training and supplies he received from Solidarity Bridge.

Education: Midway through the week, Dr. Bob LaPata presented an in-service to the medical community of the Viedma Materno Infantil Hospital. His topic centered on "Surgical Management of Urinary Incontinence in Women" and was well attended by physicians, nurses, medical students and administrators. Copies of Bob's presentation were left for our Bolivian partners to share with future teaching groups.

Outpatient Clinic: 72 women were seen in Sacaba by our gynecologists. Dr. Tony Cirrincione partnered with Jane Richman to provide gynecology consultations at a parish clinic. Dr. Linda Holt partnered with Laura Franco to serve women at the nearby prison where they reside indefinitely, often waiting years for a trial.

Donated Materials: Our mission team delivered a large quantity of surgical supplies as well as medications, anesthetics and surgical supplies valued at \$96,000 (Of particular significance was the \$46,000 worth of TOT gynecological materials.) An additional \$584,000 worth of pacemakers, leads, neurosurgery instrumentation and implantables and other high value supplies were delivered to our warehouse for our ongoing programs and future mission trips.

Each mission trip is designed to afford the US team an opportunity to move into neighboring areas to further see the realities of Bolivian life. To that end, we ventured to the outskirts of Cochabamba where we saw the Solidarity Bridge Fair Trade Program in action. We visited two sewing cooperatives, Kanchay and Ulala, and visited with some of the workers. Seeing the beautiful alpaca wool sweaters and shawls along with the array of high quality cotton based clothing, made under extremely modest conditions, was a memorable experience for our team.



Clinic patient waiting her turn to see Dr. Cirrincione



PATIENT PROFILE

Fany Antezana lives in a two room house with her two teenage grandchildren. She supports herself and her grandchildren by walking the streets with her pushcart, selling pastries. Her ability to work has been greatly restricted by a longstanding and steadily worsening problem of incontinence. Because so many Bolivian women have many children, beginning at a young age and without medical help, incontinence is a common problem with tremendous implications in their lives. When Fany heard about our program, she saw it as her only chance to improve what had become a debilitating condition for her. The Solidarity Bridge team operated jointly with Bolivian gynecologists to perform surgery on Fany and 30 other women who would never have been able to afford it without our help. Each one of them had a moving story to tell about the incredible difficulties they contend with and how the surgery will transform their daily lives. With

the training he received and the very specialized supplies that Solidarity Bridge left for this purpose, Dr. Uriona is continuing in our absence to help other women who are unable to pay for this surgery.

MEDICAL MISSION TRIP TEAM

R.N.	Judy	Biggus	Surgical Nurse	Dr.	Bob	LaPata	Gynecologist
Dr.	Tony	Cirrincione	Gynecologist	N.P.	Arlene	Meyer	Recovery Nurse
Ms.	Laura	Franco	Translator	Ms.	Ann	Rhomberg	Assistant Trip Coordinator
Ms.	Sarah	Hinojosa	Chaplain/Trip Coordinator	Dr.	Jane	Richman	Translator
Dr.	Linda	Holt	Gynecologist	Dr.	Enrique	Via-Reque	Medical Director and Anesthesiologist