Mercy Outreach Surgical Team
Making miracles happen.
Summer 2013

A VISION OF HOPE

M.O.S.T. volunteer Sally Bucko is the team photographer during weeklong missions.

In October 2012, Mercy Outreach Surgical Team (M.O.S.T.) volunteers traveled to Aguascalientes, Mexico, to provide corrective care to patients in great need. During the weeklong mission, the team performed 239 surgeries, including 140 eye procedures.

Joining the team in the 1,500 mile journey, plastic surgeon Dennis Bucko, MD, and his wife, Sally, were among the 47 M.O.S.T. volunteers eager to provide life-changing care.

The Buckos are longtime M.O.S.T. supporters and volunteers. As Dr. Bucko performs surgery in the operating room, Sally observes the miracles of M.O.S.T. from a different perspective. She serves as the team photographer and volunteers in the pre-operating room area helping to entertain anxious, waiting children.

"On the first day of a trip, we hold a clinic where patients receive an initial assessment. If their condition can be fixed by one of our physicians, their surgery is scheduled and a photo is taken to accompany their medical chart," explains Sally. "The gathering for clinic is an incredible sight — hundreds of parents and their children waiting patiently in line. Many have traveled long distances and M.O.S.T. is their last hope."

During the mission in Aguascalientes, there was a family that especially touched Sally. The child had been brought to M.O.S.T. to correct his crossed eye. Both he and his mother also suffered from ptosis, a condition that occurs when the muscles that raise the eyelid are not strong enough to do so.

"To see, they had to tip their chins and tilt their heads back," says Sally. "Their scope of the world was such a small sliver."

Joining together, Dr. Bucko and pediatric ophthalmologist Harry O'Halloran, MD, each performed surgery to correct the young boy's congenital disorders. Dr. Bucko also operated on the boy's mother, fixing her ptosis as well.

"Although the mother's focus was her child and her desire was to give him a better life than she had lived, she was extremely grateful for the care she received as well," says Sally. "It's always moving to see how M.O.S.T. can significantly impact the well-being and vitality of a patient — in this case two — within just a few short hours."

Kent Diveley, MD, Named New M.O.S.T. President

Kent Diveley, MD

Scripps Mercy Hospital anesthesiologist Kent Diveley, MD, first joined the Mercy Outreach Surgical Team (M.O.S.T.) on a trip to Apatzingan, Mexico, in 1998. He never imagined 15 years later that he would be leading the group.

Dr. Diveley was recently appointed president of M.O.S.T. He previously served as the team's medical director and is a member of the board of directors. Dr. Diveley replaces George Ochoa who held the position for 10 years.

"I have enjoyed working with our core group of committed volunteers who sacrifice their vacations and time away from their families to contribute to the greater good," says Dr. Diveley. "As we move forward, I look forward to expanding our outreach while maintaining the integrity of M.O.S.T."

Upcoming M.O.S.T. Trips

March 2014: *Tehuacan, Puebla Mexico*

October 2014: *Irapuato, Guanajuato, Mexico*

A Lasting Impact

Frances Kim, MD, comforted many patients as she administered anesthesia during the October 2012 M.O.S.T. trip to Tula de Allende, Mexico.

With a calming demeanor and kind disposition, first-time Mercy Outreach Surgical Team (M.O.S.T.) volunteer Frances Kim, MD, has a gift for putting patients at ease. The Scripps Mercy Hospital anesthesiologist joined M.O.S.T. during its outreach mission to Tula de Allende, Hidalgo, Mexico, in October 2012. The trip marked the fourth time M.O.S.T. traveled to the city to provide corrective care.

"I had never been on a mission trip before and had no idea what to expect," says Dr. Kim. "My colleagues who have been M.O.S.T. volunteers just told me that it was an inspiring opportunity that could not be adequately described by words."

Dr. Kim's M.O.S.T. experience began at the crack of dawn at Scripps Mercy. She and the team of 38 volunteers met and boarded a bus to Tijuana, Mexico. From there, they took a flight to Mexico City, which was followed by another bus ride to Tula de Allende.

"Although our travels took the entire day, the energy of the group was contagious. Everyone was enthusiastic about the days to come," says Dr. Kim.

The next day, the group managed and evaluated the crowds of people who arrived at the assessment clinic.

"There were people everywhere, but it was a well-organized, warm environment," says Dr. Kim. "The kids were respectful and cooperative. And their parents were very engaged and involved."

During the weeklong trip, M.O.S.T. performed 136 surgical procedures to correct conditions including cleft lips and palates, webbed fingers, extra toes and fingers and more. Many of the surgeries were follow-up procedures from past M.O.S.T. trips.

"When parents were reunited with their children after surgery, their demeanor changed — like a weight had been lifted. Their level of gratitude is indescribable. It's something I've never experienced before," says Dr. Kim. "They will never forget the week M.O.S.T. came to Tula – and neither will I."

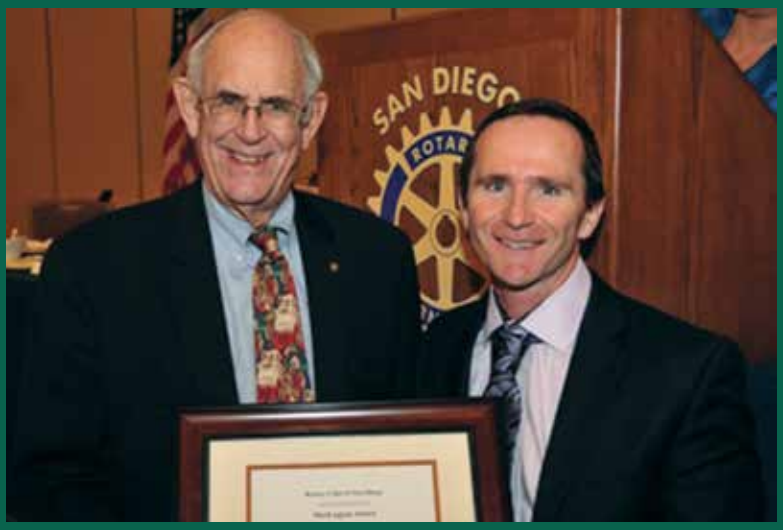
Rotary Club of San Diego Recognizes Harry O'Halloran, MD

Harry O'Halloran, MD, a pediatric ophthalmologist and surgeon on our Mercy Outreach Surgical Team (M.O.S.T.) was recently honored with the Dr. James MacLaggan Award by the Rotary Club of San Diego for exemplary service to children.

As a M.O.S.T. volunteer since 2005, Dr. O'Halloran frequently travels with the team to Mexico offering his expertise to patients with limited access to health care. He has performed an estimated 2,000 eye procedures on children during his eight years of service with M.O.S.T.

"I'm so pleased to be recognized by the Rotary Club of San Diego, but this is really an award for the entire team," says Dr. O'Halloran. "Together we are able to make a strong, positive impact on the health and lives of disadvantaged children in Mexico."

In addition to recognizing Dr. O'Halloran, the Rotary Club awarded M.O.S.T. a $500 grant in his honor through its advised fund at the San Diego Foundation.



Dr. Fred Frye presents Dr. Harry O'Halloran (right) with the MacLaggan Award for 2012 in recognition of his contributions toward caring for pediatric patients in San Diego and worldwide.

Thank You to Our Supporters

The Mercy Outreach Surgical Team (M.O.S.T.) is made possible thanks to gifts, large and small. We are grateful for the generosity and support from the following individuals and organizations for their generosity. If errors or omissions exist, please call Kathryn Guevara, M.O.S.T. coordinator, at 619-686-3633. *All gifts were given between August 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013.*

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Remembering Friends of M.O.S.T.

Maria Heimpel

Maria Heimpel

As a high school Spanish teacher and native of Mexico, Maria Heimpel began volunteering with Mercy Outreach Surgical Team (M.O.S.T.) in 1988 during our first Mercy Day outreach clinic at Scripps Mercy Hospital.

Her commitment to helping those in need continued as she began traveling with M.O.S.T. to Mexico in 1990. She often volunteered with post-operation and discharge services, helping translate and draft post-surgical instructions for our patients and their families.

Thanks to her service, she eased the anxiety of countless patients and provided education on how to best care for their wounds.

We are grateful for Maria's years of dedicated service to M.O.S.T. and her passion will be greatly missed. We extend our deepest sympathies to her family and friends.

Joseph "Joe" Tully

As one of the founding members of Mercy Outreach Surgical Team (M.O.S.T.), Joseph "Joe" Tully developed our current organizational logo and helped establish a culture of compassion that is still synonymous with our name today.

As a talented pilot, Joe provided his services to ferry our supplies and equipment to and from missions in Mexico for more than 10 years. He also recruited many other pilots to help with the task.

During our outreach trips, Joe would volunteer and help wherever he was needed. His friendly disposition was one of his greatest assets and he would often calm and carry nervous, crying children.

In addition to giving his time, Joe generously provided M.O.S.T. with financial support. During the infancy of our organization, when funds were especially tight, Joe gave M.O.S.T. a blank check to cover our expenses. His giving spirit continued throughout the years.

Joseph "Joe" Tully

We are deeply saddened by the loss of our dear friend Joe and thankful for his significant contribution to the ongoing success of M.O.S.T. He will be remembered for his enthusiasm for life and his lasting legacy of giving.

Ways to Give

The best way to get involved and help Mercy Outreach Surgical Team (M.O.S.T.) continue to improve children's lives is through financial support. All gifts, no matter the size, will make a difference in our effort to care for those in greatest need.

There are many ways to give, including:

- annual cash donations
- tribute gifts to honor someone special
- appreciated stocks and bonds
- gifts of real estate
- estate gifts including charitable gift annuities and charitable remainder trusts
- contributions made through payroll deduction

For more information, please call 619-721-7313 or visit scripps.org/most.

MERCY OUTREACH SURGICAL TEAM

SAVE THE DATE:

3rd Annual M.O.S.T. Mariachi Festival

Join us at the 3rd Annual Mercy Outreach Surgical Team (M.O.S.T.) Mariachi Festival on Saturday, September 21, 2013, from 5:30 – 9 p.m., at the Market Creek Events and Venues. The festive evening will include fine Mexican cuisine, live mariachi entertainment, folkloric dancers, a silent auction and an opportunity to fund a critical surgery for someone in need.

For more information about the event, sponsorship or auction items, please contact Lindsay Petersen, special events manager, at 858-678-6349 or petersen.lindsay@scrippshealth.org, or visit scripps.org/mostfestival.

The Mission of M.O.S.T.

The far-reaching impact of our program would not be possible without your philanthropic support. Thanks to your generosity, Mercy Outreach Surgical Team (M.O.S.T.) is able to carry out our mission to:

- bring hope, comfort and the opportunity for a better life to children and adults through corrective surgery;
- share medical knowledge and expertise with colleagues in a host country; and
- provide an opportunity for team volunteers to experience the spiritual rewards of service.

Whether it is $100 for a pair of eyeglasses, $350 to support one child's surgery or $100,000 to sponsor a weeklong mission, gifts of all sizes help provide care that offers our patients a brighter future.

To learn how you can support our medical missions, contact Kathryn Guevara, M.O.S.T. coordinator, at 619-721-7313 or guevara.kathryn@scrippshealth.org.

M.O.S.T.'s eyeglass program has been providing eyewear since 2004.

A RENEWED PERSPECTIVE

Orthoptist Sandy Kohler has been a Mercy Outreach Surgical Team (M.O.S.T.) volunteer for nearly 12 years, helping to assess vision and eye deviations of patients prior to surgery. During her years of service, she has helped develop M.O.S.T.'s growing eyeglass program.

"In the first couple of years, I began to notice that many of the kids with crossed eyes couldn't see five inches beyond their face," recalls Sandy. " I realized that our work would be worthless if they could not see. They needed to be able to focus their vision in order to straighten their sight after surgery."

In 2004, Sandy helped start the M.O.S.T. eyeglass program. The first year, she collected donated glasses from her patients in San Diego to distribute during the M.O.S.T. outreach missions. Although the response was generous, the glasses did not meet the size and prescriptions that M.O.S.T. patients needed.

The next year, M.O.S.T. allocated $500 toward the program. During the M.O.S.T. mission, Sandy worked with a local Mexican optometrist to fit children with the exact frames and prescriptions. Purchasing the glasses at cost, the program was able to provide glasses to 12 kids.

"Each trip we see nearly 100 kids who are in need of glasses. Unfortunately, we do not have the resources to help them all," says Sandy. "We have to choose the most severe cases — children who are not going to school because they can't see — but there are so many more in desperate need."

Today the program continues to grow, thanks to our loyal and generous supporters. In 2012, M.O.S.T.'s eyeglass program helped 25 children. In 2013, we hope to provide glasses to at least 50 more, thanks to a recent large gift from Darren and Kimberly Robbins to benefit M.O.S.T. treatment and care.

Message from the President, Kent Diveley, MD

Although I am the newly appointed president of Mercy Outreach Surgical Team (M.O.S.T.), I am not new to understanding the monumental impact our care has on those we serve. It is awe-inspiring. It is life-changing. And, it is made possible by donors like you who continue to support our missions to provide transformational surgeries to those who might not otherwise receive care.

Funded entirely through the generosity and goodwill of others, philanthropy is the foundation of our organization. Nearly every dollar that M.O.S.T. receives goes directly to patient care.

Although M.O.S.T. is driven by volunteer support and operates with minimal overhead expenditures, the costs of our outreach missions continue to rise each year. From increasing prices of medical supplies to transporting our equipment, M.O.S.T. is in a constant balance to manage our expenses and provide care to as many patients as possible.

Your support is needed, now more than ever. As we continue to travel deep into the shadows of Mexico, we often encounter far more kids than we can serve. Please help us to carry out our mission to provide care to all who come to us for hope and healing.

To learn how you can support M.O.S.T. medical missions, please call 619-721-7313 or visit www.scripps.org/mercymost.

Stay Connected with M.O.S.T.

Join our Scripps Health Foundation e-news list to receive the latest updates about M.O.S.T. volunteer trips, special events and fundraising priorities, and learn more about ways you can make a difference in the lives of our patients. Scripps does not share your personal information and limits the number of e-communications. To register, visit scripps.org/emails.

To learn how you can support M.O.S.T. medical missions, please call 619-721-7313 or visit scripps.org/mercymost.

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