MOST TREATS HUNDREDS IN TEHUACAN AND TULA

**Tehuacan**

In a time when there is so much pain, suffering and violence in the world, your presence here has been a true blessing. You have given these children an opportunity for a new life. Many would have never realized their dream of being whole after a lifetime of feeling broken. We are grateful to have shared this experience with you, to have been your partners in this mission.

**Club Rotario Tehuacan Manantiales**

In November 2005, Mercy Outreach Surgical Team (MOST) made its second trip to Tehuacan, where the team performed 293 surgeries to correct cleft lips and palates and strabismus (crossed eyes).

The trip to Tehuacan was hosted by Hospital General de Tehuacan and co-sponsored by local Mexican Rotary clubs and San Diego Rotary Club #33. MOST partnered with local physicians and providers to help them develop and sustain medical programs in their community. Staff and volunteers at the hospital also donated their time to ensure patients and their families were comfortable and well-cared for.

“Correcting the deformities of these children boosts their self-esteem,” says Thomas Vecchione, M.D. “These procedures enable them to go to school, obtain an education and become vital members of their community.”

**Tula**

In April 2006, MOST made its second visit to Tula, about 50 miles north of Mexico City. The team treated 200 patients for cleft lips and palates, hernias, strabismus and microtia (deformed ears).

MOST teamed with a number of local surgeons and anesthesiologists to care for the children and worked with local physicians and social service agencies to ensure follow-up care.

The trip to Tula was hosted by Hospital General de Tula and co-sponsored by local Mexican Rotary clubs and Pachuca Rotary Club #33. MOST partnered with local physicians and providers to help them develop and sustain medical programs in their community. Staff and volunteers at the hospital also donated their time to ensure patients and their families were comfortable and well-cared for.

“Correcting the deformities of these children boosts their self-esteem,” says Thomas Vecchione, M.D. “These procedures enable them to go to school, obtain an education and become vital members of their community.”

As always, Rotary played an important role in the success of the mission. Local clubs from Tula and Pachuca helped arrange meals for both the team and patients and helped transport patients to and from the hospital. San Diego Rotary Club #33 helped underwrite a large portion of the trip. MOST was recently honored with the Service Above Self award from Rotary International.

MOST trips are more than an opportunity to conduct important medical procedures, they are community events that mobilize entire regions to help care for children with disfiguring conditions. In one case, a soccer coach encouraged a player to seek treatment for his cleft lip. Also, Memo Rios, a famous Mexican comedian, came to entertain the children and promised to join future missions.

As always, MOST wishes to thank all volunteers, especially the pediatric surgeons and anesthesiologists from Children’s Hospital, who have accompanied the team on many trips. Special thanks to Jackie Rodarte and Anita Waldman, who brought large bags of toys to help relieve the children’s anxiety before surgery.
Yajaida

Yajaida is a 2-year-old girl who was born with a cleft lip and palate. When Yajaida’s grandmother heard that MOST was coming to Tijuana, she borrowed 100 pesos (about 10 dollars) for the long bus ride to the clinic. They waited hours to find out if Yajaida could be helped and were told to return the next day for surgery. They did not know anyone in Tijuana and caught the bus home.

The surgery was a great success, but while the grandmother was being given aftercare instructions, she was asked if they had enough money for dinner. She responded that they borrowed money for the bus, but not enough for food. The MOST staff paid for a taxi, so that Yajaida would not have to endure the long bus ride. Also, small bags of food and clothing were gathered for the family.

As they were about to leave, the grandmother had more questions about aftercare, confirming that Yajaida could not eat solid foods for three weeks because of the lip. When she was told that the restriction was due to the palate repair, she was so grateful she began to cry. She had not understood that both the lip and palate had been fixed.

Tijuana

MOST continues to conduct programs in Tijuana, caring for more than 100 patients each year. The programs focus on different types of surgery: plastic, general and strabismus. MOST wishes to thank Beth Ilko and her volunteers from the Centro Social Israelita for their invaluable help in managing the clinic and Ricardo Escandon and the Rotarians from Tijuana, who help recruit patients for the Tijuana programs.

Since 2004, MOST has treated nearly 300 children in Tijuana for hernias, strabismus, cleft lips and palates and other conditions. Without these missions, it is unlikely these children would receive this level of care.
Since 1982, Variety Children’s Lifeline, based in Solana Beach, has helped provide life-saving surgery for children around the world. A longtime MOST supporter, Variety helped underwrite Mercy Day for many years and now supports MOST’s trips to Tijuana. Variety shares MOST’s passion to provide much-needed surgery for children who would otherwise do without.

“Lifeline has had a relationship with Mercy Hospital projects for many years and has always found such projects cost efficient and the results predicted becoming a reality,” says Variety Chairman Salah Hassanein. “MOST is another such project. We not only fully endorse it but are very proud to be part of the team.”

Sempra Energy is also stepping up to support MOST’s work in Tijuana, partially underwriting the September trip. Several Sempra employees have also volunteered to come to Tijuana to help.

“This is a fantastic program that provides services to children who would otherwise have no access to care,” says Beatriz Young, manager of Corporate Community Relations for Sempra Energy.

MOST wishes to thank Variety Children’s Lifeline and Sempra Energy for their ongoing support.
Our Supporters
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MOST relies heavily on your philanthropic support. Here are just a few examples of what your gift can accomplish:

☐ $150 provides surgery for one child
☐ $500 sponsors one team member
☐ $15,000 covers team travel
☐ $25,000 provides supplies for one mission
☐ $50,000 sponsors the team for one week

Would you like to help, too?
If you wish to be part of the valuable work of Mercy Outreach Surgical Team, please complete this form:

Name: ______________________________________________________________
Address: ______________________________________________________________
City: ___________________________ State: _______ Zip: ______________

☐ Enclosed is my check made payable to: Mercy Hospital Foundation – MOST
☐ Please send me volunteer information.
☐ I would like to invite a speaker from Mercy Outreach Surgical Team.

Please clip and send this form to: Mercy Outreach Surgical Team,
Scripps Mercy Hospital, MER, 99, 4077 Fifth Avenue, San Diego, CA 92103
The Admitting Team

Bill and Barbara Ward have many happy stories from their trips with MOST: The child and mother who both had their crossed eyes corrected; the woman with a cleft lip who could only look at mirrors after her surgery; the reclusive little girl who now marches in parades. The trips have touched their lives for more than a decade.

“I wish we could take everyone down there, just to see the need,” says Bill. “We take it for granted how fortunate we are.”

“At the end of the week you’re exhausted,” says Barbara, “but you feel really good about yourself because you made a difference.”

The Wards first heard about the program in 1993 when MOST came to San Diego Rotary Club #33 seeking support. The couple was invited to join the team on its trip to Nochistlan, where they worked the admitting desk, making sure every operating table had a patient at all times. With only three days to conduct hundreds of surgeries, it’s a critical role. After seeing how seamlessly the admitting process was handled, MOST co-founder Judy Hames told the Wards: “You are coming on every trip.”

Twelve years and 17 trips later, the Wards continue to commit their time and resources to support MOST’s surgical missions.

“MOST has always been a good fit for us because we believe in the mission and it’s something we can do together,” says Barbara. “Everyone is there for a common cause, working long hours, and is really happy to be there.”

In addition to their volunteer work, the Wards make regular gifts to MOST and have encouraged their children, friends and business associates to do likewise. With a career in financial planning and wealth management, Bill knows a good investment.

“The leverage is incredible. Every dollar MOST spends in Mexico would be worth $100 in U.S. terms.”

But nothing can top the satisfaction the Wards feel at a commitment accomplished. “At the end of the week you’re exhausted,” says Barbara, “but you feel really good about yourself because you made a difference.”

Learn More About MOST

Mercy Outreach Surgical Team has a new office on 550 Washington Street, suite 621. Nurses who are interested in helping in surgery or recovery should contact Pat.

Contact:
Pat Robinson, MOST administrator
619-686-3633 or
Robinson.PatriciaA@scrippshealth.org

Mailing Address:
Mercy Outreach Surgical Team
4077 Fifth Ave MER 99
San Diego, CA 92103

Upcoming Trips

Sept. 8 – 9   Eye surgery in Tijuana
**MOST Mission Statement**

Mercy Outreach Surgical Team is a volunteer group dedicated to providing medical and surgical care to needy children and adults of other nations.

Our mission is threefold:

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

In addition to caring for those in need of surgery, MOST shares valuable knowledge and medical techniques with local physicians and nursing staff in Mexico.

Each year, MOST provides care during field programs, when surgical teams with needed supplies and equipment travel to Mexico to set up surgical programs in local communities. San Diego Rotary Club members and representatives from cities in Mexico coordinate these efforts and contribute to the logistics and support of the programs. Volunteers donate time and contribute to the expenses for the field programs. Most of the equipment and supplies are also donated.

MOST is supported by donations of personal skills, money, supplies and equipment. Tax-deductible donations can be made to:

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