



Mercy Outreach Surgical Team

Spring 2007

M.O.S.T BRINGS WORLD-CLASS CARE TO MEXICO

Zamora

Last fall, Mercy Outreach Surgical Team (M.O.S.T.) visited Zamora, Michoacan, Mexico, a two-hour bus ride from Mexico City. The team treated 260 people with cleft lips, cleft palates, burn scars, crossed eyes and other conditions. Some of the surgeries were relatively simple, such as removing an extra finger or toe; however, these procedures have a lasting impact on patients. You can imagine how difficult it would be to wear shoes if you had an extra toe, and a child who is not wearing shoes cannot go to school.

As often happens, several patients from earlier missions came by the hospital to thank the team and, in some cases, receive additional surgery.

One visitor was Lupita, who was only an infant when a candle, which was being used to heat her house, fell onto her bed, causing severe burns on her face, hands and arms. She has undergone many surgeries to relieve the scarring and even stayed in San Diego for several months during treatment. She was especially pleased to have the skin loosened around her mouth so she

could chew gum. Lupita is now a vibrant 13-year-old, who has no shortage of self-confidence.

Francisco, another patient who suffers from burn scars, first saw the team when he was 7. His chin was scarred down to his chest, preventing him from lifting his head and making it difficult for him to raise his arms. After many surgeries, he can now hold his head up. Recently, Francisco asked to have the scars on his shoulder released so he could perfect his jump shot. Now 19, Francisco is an active teenager and has a girlfriend.

As always, M.O.S.T. wishes to thank San Diego Rotary Club #33 and the local Zamora Rotary for their invaluable help.

Tijuana

In September, M.O.S.T. visited Tijuana, where the team held a marathon surgery weekend—treating 68 grateful patients with strabismus (crossed eyes) and other eye conditions. The screening clinic was organized by Beth Ilko at Centro Social Israelita, and the surgeries were held at Hospital Inglés.

Special thanks to Sempra Energy and Variety Children's Lifeline, which sponsored the trip, and the Sempra employees who volunteered to go on the mission.

You can imagine how difficult it would be to wear shoes if you had an extra toe ...



The toys M.O.S.T. provides are highly prized (see page 2).



Volunteer Sandy Kohler holds a small patient.

M.O.S.T. Missions in 2007

Tijuana, Feb. 16-17
Uruapan, Apr. 15-21
Tijuana, Jun. 8-9
Tijuana, Sept. 7-8

Anita and Dr. Jordan Waldman: A Team Within the Team

When Anita Waldman went on her first M.O.S.T. mission to Oaxaca in 1996, she was struck by the number of children living in poverty. Many of them owned only a single set of clothing, which was often weathered and worn. Since that trip, Anita, Jackie Rodarte and other M.O.S.T. colleagues have brought bags of clothing and toys on each mission. They find that, for people who have next to nothing, little things go a long way.

Waldman helps staff the pre-op room, a place that is often intimidating for children and their parents. The team helps lighten the mood with toys, games and other activities. For the children, the most difficult moment comes when they are taken in for surgery. Waldman and Rodarte give pre-packed Ziploc bags of age-appropriate toys to each child when they exit pre-op. As the children receive the gifts, their fears and anxiety subside. They are not focused on their hospital gown, or the busy operating room, or saying goodbye to their parents—they only see the toys. What could be a difficult transition, in any country, moves forward seamlessly. “We have it down to a science,” says Anita Waldman.

In the operating room, Jordan Waldman, M.D., Anita’s husband, greets a new patient. He is a pediatric anesthesiologist at Rady Children’s Hospital and has been providing care all over the world for the past



Anita and Dr. Jordan Waldman with mother and patient.

30 years. Dr. Waldman and the team, including his partner from Children’s, Alex Rodarte, M.D., work tirelessly to ensure that all equipment works properly and each surgery is as safe as possible.

For Dr. Waldman, working with M.O.S.T. illustrates why he became a physician. “When I thought about getting into medicine, this is what I wanted to do.”

Honored to Serve

For more than a decade, the Waldmans have been a team within the team, helping make M.O.S.T. trips a study in compassion and excellent care. Each trip, they make a commitment to support their fellow team members overcome whatever obstacles are placed in their path and spend every possible moment taking care of the children.

“What we do is truly a privilege given to us by the mothers and fathers,” says Dr. Waldman. “They allow us to take care of their children and trust we’re going to do it right. We are honored, as husband and wife, to work together to change the lives of these children.”



Jordan Waldman, M.D., chats with burn victim Francisco and his mother.

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M.O.S.T. wishes to thank the following individuals and organizations for their generosity.

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M.O.S.T.'s New Web Page

A new M.O.S.T. page has been added to the Scripps Health Web site. To access the page, visit www.scripps.org/mercymost.

Many thanks to Eddie Avedikian, Pharm.D., and the Scripps Web team for creating this invaluable resource.

Learn More About M.O.S.T.

Mercy Outreach Surgical Team has a new office on 550 Washington Street, Suite 621.

Mailing Address:

Mercy Outreach Surgical Team
Scripps Mercy Hospital, MER 99
4077 Fifth Avenue
San Diego, CA 92103

If you wish to volunteer, please contact Pat Robinson with your phone number, profession and how you would like to contribute.

Contact:

Pat Robinson, M.O.S.T. coordinator
619-686-3633 or
Robinson.Patricia2@scrippshealth.org



Barbara and Bill Ward

REMEMBERING BILL WARD

It's always hard to lose a friend, and M.O.S.T. is especially sad to say goodbye to Bill Ward who, with his wife Barbara, committed thousands of hours to advancing M.O.S.T.'s mission as a donor, volunteer and board member. Whether he was handling the admitting desk during the Ward family's many trips to Mexico or scrutinizing a balance sheet to ensure that M.O.S.T. continued to be a strong, efficient, cost-conscious organization, Bill Ward approached his duties with compassion and conviction. Since 1993, he and Barbara went on 17 M.O.S.T. missions and left an indelible mark on everyone they met.

Many Thanks

Thank you to the following donors who made generous gifts in memory of Bill Ward. If you would like to make a gift in Bill's honor, please use the attached remittance envelope or call 619-686-3836.

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**We will make the M.O.S.T. of your gifts.
An anonymous donor has offered to match
all new gifts made between Feb. 1, 2007, and
June 1, 2007, up to \$5,000, to honor Bill's legacy.**

The Philanthropist Next Door

The more Dave Urbanski learns about M.O.S.T., the more he likes the program. Urbanski approaches his philanthropy with the same acumen he brings to his successful business. He is looking for organizations that are well-run, make a tangible impact on individual lives and use resources efficiently to serve their mission. M.O.S.T. easily meets all those requirements.

Urbanski learned about M.O.S.T. during the summer of 2005, from an article in *San Diego Magazine*. He was no stranger to philanthropy, having supported Fresh Start Surgical Gifts and the orthodontia program at the Vista Community Clinic, but something about M.O.S.T. piqued his interest.

He called Sister JoCeal Young, who invited him to meet team members and learn more about the program. "I got a really good feeling," says Urbanski, who was pleased they did not show him "a big fancy

office." He was especially impressed by the dedication of team members — that they take personal time to go on the trips and will not even let illness stop their mission. As he was leaving, Urbanski asked Sister JoCeal to wait a moment. He went to his car and returned with his first gift to M.O.S.T.

"The kids born with cleft lips, cleft palates and crossed eyes get a raw deal right from birth," says Urbanski, who is impressed by the changes corrective surgery can bring.

"In addition to the obvious health benefit of being able to eat and breathe normally, an immeasurable boost happens to a child's self-image. If \$800 covers the cost of getting the medical team in place to fix one child's face, how can one sit back and not help?"

Since first learning about the program, everything Urbanski has seen has validated his initial confidence in the organization.



Dave Urbanski

He plans on doing more and encourages his friends to support M.O.S.T.

"When I factor in the value of the improved future for these kids, I can't think of a better way to spend my charitable dollars."

Miracles in Tula

On Nov. 10, Mercy Hospital Foundation hosted a special premiere of the powerful documentary, *Miracles in Tula*, which showcases M.O.S.T.'s recent trip to Tula, Mexico, where the team treated more than 300 children for cleft palates, cleft lips, crossed eyes, burn scars and other conditions.

The film highlights M.O.S.T.'s volunteer surgeons, nurses and other staff, as well as the difficult lives many of the children must endure and the significant impact the surgeries have on their self-esteem and well being.

Miracles in Tula was produced by Pacific Media Ministry and narrated

by former nurse and country music star Naomi Judd.

Miracles in Tula is slated to be broadcast this year on local PBS affiliate, KPBS, and the Hallmark Network. If you would like more information about the film, please contact Pat Robinson at 619-686-3633.

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:

The Gift of Healing

M.O.S.T. 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
- \$75,000 sponsors the team for one week

Name: _____

Address: _____

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- Enclosed is my check made payable to: Mercy Hospital Foundation – M.O.S.T.
- Please send me volunteer information.
- I would like to invite a speaker from Mercy Outreach Surgical Team to present at my organization/school.

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

M.O.S.T. Mission Statement

Mercy Outreach Surgical Team is a volunteer group dedicated to providing medical and surgical care to underprivileged 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, M.O.S.T. shares valuable knowledge and medical techniques with local physicians and nursing staff in Mexico.

Each year, M.O.S.T. 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.

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

Mercy Hospital Foundation (M.O.S.T.)
4077 Fifth Avenue, MER 99
San Diego, CA 92103-2105
619-686-3633
www.scripps.org/mercymost

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