



**VOLUNTEER IN GUATEMALA AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE!
SURGICAL TRIP: MAY 17 - 27, 2012**

The scales of the world are unbalanced. Some of us have much more than we need, while others struggle to survive on an unthinkable amount of nothing. You can help ease the balance by volunteering for a Project HANDS surgical trip to rural Guatemala. We are now accepting applications for the May 17 - 27, 2012 team.

What is Project HANDS?

Project Hands is a group of people who want to do our part to help rebalance the scales. Our goal is to provide healthcare, education and support to those who, by chance of birth, have less fortunate lives than our own. We are a Canadian-based, registered non-profit organization working amongst the indigenous Maya in the rural regions of Guatemala. We have no religious affiliation.

What is the goal for this trip?

To perform 40 to 50 plastic surgeries (burn reconstruction, contracture releases, syndactyly, polydactyly, simple cleft lip/palate procedures). Approximately 75% of the cases will be pediatric. We will work in collaboration with Guatemalan medical professionals. Three surgical days will be spent assisting Guatemalan surgeons and three will be on our own.

How can I help?

You can volunteer for this trip. By giving of your time and expertise, you become a very important part of a team that makes dramatic changes in the lives of underserved Guatemalans. Your participation gives them a future filled with hope and possibilities for a better life.

What types of volunteers are needed?

A team leader, a medical director, plastic surgeons, anesthesia providers, OR nurses, PAR nurses, post-op ward nurses, an instrument sterilizing technician, an instrument sterilizing assistant, Spanish translators and non-medical volunteers.

What are the dates of the trip?

May 17 - 27, 2012, including travel to and from Guatemala and one free day in Antigua.

When is the deadline to apply for a spot on the team?

September 30, 2011

Where will the team be working?

We will work in Centro de Salud Bárbara, located in the small town of San Juan Sacatepéquez, approximately one hour northwest of Guatemala City.

What types of patients do you serve?

Our patients live in rural areas, most of them in extreme poverty, on less than \$1 a day. Over half suffer from chronic malnutrition. Poor sanitation, lack of electricity and running water, and open cooking fires are typical of their homes and lifestyles. Very large families are common, and most births are unattended by medical personnel. In spite of their living conditions, they are proud, dignified, hardworking people.

What is the trip schedule?

Thursday, May 17: Travel to Guatemala and drive 45 minutes to Antigua
Friday, May 18: Free day to enjoy Antigua's myriad historic sites, markets and restaurants
Saturday, May 19: Drive 1 hour to San Juan, set up clinic and triage patients
Sunday, May 20 – Friday, May 25: Surgery
Saturday, March 26: Return to Antigua for overnight
Sunday, March 27: Travel home

How large is the team?

In addition to our Guatemalan counterparts, the team will consist of a team leader, a medical director, 2 plastic surgeons, 3 anesthetists, 4 OR nurses, 5 PAR/post-op ward nurses, 2 sterilizing technicians, 2 administrators, 2 English/Spanish translators and 1 dispensing/gofer.

Where does the team stay?

The team stays at the basic but pleasant Casa Damasco, a retreat set in peaceful gardens overlooking the town. The accommodations are shared, dormitory-style with electrically operated showers. Sometimes there is hot water; sometimes there is not.

What are the participation requirements?

You must pay your airfare and a participation fee; complete a volunteer application; sign an agreement and waiver of liability; provide a brief resume and copy of current professional registration/license; and purchase international medical and evacuation insurance. Volunteers from the Vancouver area are required to travel with the team (but may return separately), pick up a supply bin(s) from the designated location and transport it to Guatemala. You must be in good physical health, as the days are often long and demanding. Flexibility, team spirit and sense of humor are also essential qualities.

How much does it cost to volunteer?

Airfare: CA\$1100 (budgeted cost from Vancouver)

Participation fee: \$550 (covers accommodations for 10 nights, ground transportation and food). Food in Antigua (2 days), expenses of a personal nature, and extra nights in Antigua are not covered.

Are my participation and expenses tax-deductible?

Project HANDS is a Canadian-based, registered non-profit organization and can issue tax receipts to Canadians. If you are a U.S. citizen we can process your payment through our American affiliate, Partner for Surgery, so that you can obtain a deduction.

What if I don't speak Spanish?

Spanish language skill is a plus, but it is not a requirement to become a volunteer. Both Spanish and Mayan translators will be assigned to you.

My spouse or child would like to accompany me. What are the guidelines?

There are a limited number of non-medical volunteer spots for spouses or teenage children (age 16 and older). If selected for the team, your accompanying family member is also required to pay a participation fee equal to that of other participants. Student applicants are required to submit an essay explaining why they feel that they would be good team members. They are also required to present a report to their school following the trip. Sorry, we do not accept children younger than 16.

Where can I learn more about Project HANDS and this trip?

Visit www.projecthands.org. Click on Upcoming Trips, Surgery May 2012, then Team Handbook.

I would like to be considered for a spot on the team. What's the next step?

Please contact Debbie Jefkin-Elnekave, Recruiting Officer, at 808-214-6053 (HST) or debbie@projecthands.org. If you are a medical professional applying for the first time, please submit your resume. If you are a returning or non-medical volunteer you do not need to send a resume.

I have additional questions. Whom should I contact?

Debbie Jefkin-Elnekave, Recruiting Officer, at 808-214-6053 (HST) or debbie@projecthands.org.

If you are unable to volunteer at this time, perhaps you could pass along this information to your colleagues who might be interested.

If you no longer wish to receive our mailings, please reply with Unsubscribe in the subject line and you will be removed from our volunteer list.

**What if it was you who needed a hand?
Would it be there?**