



MISSION TO EL SALVADOR — FEB/MARCH 2010

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST :

- > Rita Lavin's Departure
- > Eat, Donate, Help
- > Espanola and Santa Fe Hardship Relief Expansion
- > October Missions

INSIDE THIS ISSUE :

Comings and Goings 2

Restaurant Fund-raisers 3

Scrubs Fundraiser 3

Update on Hardship Relief 3

Missions for Fall 2010 4

Christian Rodriguez 4

Goodshop 5

CFC Campaign 5

For volunteers who have traveled on surgical or medical missions, they know to expect that the second day will be calmer, the children will be special, their parents appreciative, and it will be an experience to remember regardless of the routine. Such was the case of a surgical trip to Santiago Texacuangos, El Salvador headed by returning surgeons Ron Escudero, ENT, and Linda Nicolette, General Pediatrics with a few exceptions. Dr. Escudero had received the donation of a portable audiometer, the first one ever available in El Salvador where the exact number of deaf and hearing

handicapped is unknown. He presented it to the Fundacion Pro-Educacion Especial, where it is being used nation-wide.

A new air conditioner for one operating room at Hospital La Divina Providencia, was sorely needed after damage from a major flood in November 2009. When Doctor Diego Gonzalez (anesthesiologist from Albuquerque) was called on for help, his father back in El Salvador ensured that a new air conditioner was installed. Hospital Director Dr. David Carcamo is very appreciative of this extremely generous

gift from the Gonzalez families and future teams will once again be able to operate in comfort.

Also unexpected was a brief visit with Maria Cecilia, the 89 year old nun who founded the hospital. Ever jovial and concerned, she continues her quest to help children and warmly welcomes the visiting teams who come every year to help relieve families living in poverty.

(cont'd page 2)



## MISSION TO EL SALVADOR (CONTINUED)



All members of the February 2010 team, which included Albuquerque anesthesiologists Joanne Orr and Penny Lingren and RN's Sharon Prudhomme and Jaren Gravagne, collected donations of OR supplies from local vendors, pharmacies, and hospitals. Other Albuquerque nurses Jessie Wetherbe and Jennifer Connelly held a fundraiser at a local restaurant; Jeanette Maxwell brought new stuffed toys; Linda Harper, RN from New Jersey, brought a suitcase full of clothing for the children, and fellow nurse

from NJ Kay Boneberg brought often-forgotten items for the operating rooms.

By the end of the week, the El Salvador mission saw 56 children removed from 3 year long waiting lists and a team promising to return despite economic difficulties back in the United States. **Healing the Children Southwest** would like to thank all of the individuals who contributed their time, effort, money and heart to this mission in El Salvador.

**"Our thanks and deep appreciation goes to Rita for her amazing dedication to Healing the Children."**

## RITA LAVIN DEPARTS HEALING THE CHILDREN

Rita Lavin joined HTCSW in August 2006 and took over as Executive Director learning everything from the ground up. In the spring and summer of 2007, she organized host families in Albuquerque and Sacramento and brought in a total of 11 children for heart surgery and other surgeries as part of the International Inbound Children's Project. In January 2007, she made her first visit to

Guatemala with a surgical mission. During the next two years, Rita was the trip administrator for two surgical missions to El Salvador and two to Guatemala. In November 2009, she organized a pediatric clinical trip with Dr. Carl Fredrichs III and Kit Elliott (RN) to the Assade Clinic in San Andres Itzapa, Guatemala where they provided services to 140 children.

In her time between International Inbound Children and missions, Rita performed a great deal of volunteer work for HTCSW as Executive Director.

Rita is moving to Chicago to be close to her daughters and grandchildren as well as her mother and siblings. Our thanks and deep appreciation goes to Rita for her amazing dedication to HTCSW.

## TWO NEW MEMBERS "ONBOARD"

HTCSW is pleased to announce two new members to the Board of Directors.

Sevie Taylor from Albuquerque was elected at a June 14 meeting and will serve until 2012. Megan Perkins from Santa Fe was elected in July to serve through 2012

Both have agreed to help with activities

outside the duties of the Board.

Megan hopes to fulfill the executive director role in the future. We welcome both Sevie and Megan and look forward to the productive years ahead devoted to helping vulnerable children renew hope for a healthy life.

### EAT, DONATE, HELP

That was the subject of our first restaurant fundraiser held at Sweet Tomatoes in Albuquerque on September 28. Elena Tapia, a sophomore at University of New Mexico, has agreed to help with fundraising activities for HTCSW. She is specifically working on restaurant fundraisers . We are very happy to have her onboard!

Stay tuned for upcoming restaurant events in Albuquerque and Santa Fe. If you live out of New Mexico and would like to help out, let us know!

When the notice arrives via email, please consider this easy and fun way to help raise funds for HTCSW. Tell your friends and family!



### SCRUBS FUNDRAISER

Linda Harper, RN, is one of HTCSW's major volunteers for medical missions. She sent HTCSW new scrubs (primarily tops) to sell in order to raise some much needed dollars. If anyone has ideas about marketing these really good-looking and useful items, please email:

htc\_sw@hotmail.com

(UNM and CNM do not allow sales on campus.) If you would like to help sell these at your favorite weekend market, let us know!

Other options would be marketing to private clinics or selling them online.



### HARDSHIP RELIEF PROJECT UPDATE

The [Hardship Relief Program](#) has been running smoothly and successfully in Albuquerque since 1990, when it was called the Local Children's Program. Money is generally raised from grants, local restaurant fundraisers, and designated donations.

So far this year, 44 children have been helped through this project.

HTCSW is looking to expand the Hardship Relief Program into Espanola and Santa Fe. If you have any ideas for expansion or funding sources, please contact us. We

would like to get the program running by 2011 in these communities.

## MEDICAL MISSIONS FOR THE FALL

### San Salvador, El Salvador, October:

Salvadoran urology surgeon, Dr. Uriel Perez, who works at the government children's hospital in San Salvador, asked HTC to find one or two surgeons who would be willing to teach laparoscopic techniques to local surgeons. Urologists Drs. Jason Wilson and Ismael Zamilpa, both from UNMH Department of Pediatric Surgery volunteered to go to Hospital Bloom October 23-30, 2010. Joining them will be Paul

Gallegos, RN, who will circulate. Bobbye Krehbiel will go as trip administrator. Everyone will pay their own expenses and use vacation time.

awards toward her missions, including the Humanitarian Award from Federation Internationale des Podologues (Denmark, 2009).



### Teculután, Guatemala, November:

A podiatry team from Michigan will travel to a small hospital in Teculután November 5-11. This will be the team's fourth surgical mission. Medical director for the team, Dr. Vicki Anton-Athens, donates money she receives for various



Dr. Vicki Anton-Athens receiving her Humanitarian Award.

## CRISTIAN RODRIGUEZ

Do you remember Cristian?

Our December 2009 newsletter featured an 8 year-old from Mexico named Cristian, an only child who saw his parents murdered when he was younger. He is being cared for by his grandmother who lives in Columbus, New Mexico. He has

muscular dystrophy and requires steroids several times a day.

His social worker, Barbara Agte, wrote recently to let us know that his most recent neurological evaluation showed that his disease is not progressing as rapidly as they thought which is wonderful news. He is

also growing and doing well in school considering all that he has been through.

HTCSW will continue helping with medications this year.

Direct donations can be made to Cristian through HTCSW if you would like to continue helping this child.



## GOODSHOP / GOODSEARCH

Do you know that you can be helping Healing the Children SW just by using Goodsearch as your search engine?

Just go to:

[www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) and search for Healing the Children Southwest. Every time you search for anything, HTCSW will

receive a small donation. And every time you shop through Goodshop, up to 35% will be donated depending on the merchant. This is a significant way to donate to HTC, particularly during the holidays!

Thus far in 2010 Healing the Children SW has

received **\$258** just from these two simple acts. \$258 can provide an Albuquerque child with dental care or provide a few operating room supplies for a surgical mission.

Please consider using Goodsearch and Goodshop for your online needs.



## COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN—2010

HTCSW is once again participating in the CFC campaign for federal employees. Your dollars make a big difference, as you know. Please consider Healing the Children again this year.

Our CFC number is 39008.

For more information, go to <http://www.cnnmcfc.org/>.



Combined Federal Campaign

**HEALING THE  
CHILDREN SW**

1112 San Pedro NE, Box 203  
Albuquerque, NM 87110

Phone: 505-228-1404

E-mail:

htc\_sw@hotmail.com



Healing the Children Southwest is a volunteer, 501c(3) non-profit organization that operates throughout New Mexico. HTCSW works to provide medical care to families both internationally and locally who are otherwise unable to receive it due to lack of medical or financial resources.

Healing the Children Southwest operates three programs:

- Hardship Relief which offers assistance with medical costs to New Mexico families
- International Inbound Program which brings in children from international locations to receive care here in New Mexico
- Medical Missions which organizes American doctors, nurses and supplies to help children in Latin America.

---

**Find us on the web at:**

[www.htcsw.org](http://www.htcsw.org)

---

## **WEBSITE CHANGES**

You may notice the HTCSW website ([www.htcsw.org](http://www.htcsw.org)) changing over the next few months. We are in the midst of buying new software to manage the site and will be making some positive changes to make it more user-friendly and useful.

We also hope to engage people through the national Healing the Children website by contributing stories and briefings about our activities here in New Mexico.

Stay tuned!