

Refuge International

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER 2016

Delivering Clean Water • Improving Health Care • Reducing Illiteracy

Changing Women's Lives and Improving Eyesight

Dr. Lola Page



Dr. Lola Page in the clinic

“You must be the change you wish to see in the world” are the words that Gandhi spoke over 70 years ago and the mission statement of Refuge International, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing clean water, health care, and education to people in Guatemala.

After going on several mission trips starting in 2001, I crossed paths with Refuge in 2005 and have been on many trips since that time, provid-

ing obstetric and gynecologic care to residents in Guatemala at the clinics in San Raymundo, Chocolá, and Sarstun.

In the last three years, my main focus has been in Chocolá, for that area has the most need. In Chocolá there is a higher percentage of indigenous people that account for the extremely

poor in Guatemala. Indigenous women in particular have very little health care, if any. I wanted to be part of that change, one woman at a time, one procedure at a time, one change in a life at a time, improving the lives of people who cannot always speak for themselves.

Chocolá's First Vision Clinic

After going on several Refuge trips with me and serving in different capacities from recording secretary to pharmacy tech to dental assistant, Doreen Hutton saw a need that had been unfulfilled. She took the initiative to take an eye screening training with the Texas Lions Club Center in Midland. In 2014, she began the first vision screening in Chocolá, and began distributing 50 pounds of recycled glasses and new readers provided by the Texas Lions Club.



Again in the words of Gandhi, “The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” Refuge International has been instrumental in helping those in need.

Our Guiding Principles

Mission Statement

Refuge International is a compassionate 501(c)3 volunteer organization dedicated to the goal of improving the lives of families and individuals through the collaborative development of sustainable programs in areas where health care, adequate nutrition, clean water and education are lacking or non-existent. Refuge International also provides opportunities for mentoring of students who wish to become involved in humanitarian efforts.

Vision Statement

We believe all of humanity is of equal worth and should have their essential needs met without regard to culture, ideology or religion. When people reach out to meet a need, those who choose to help benefit as do those who are in need. Working within these basic tenets, we hope to improve the lives of all.

Straightening a Boy's Long-Broken Leg

Dr. James Parker

It is a calling, always a calling....that brings people to Guatemala and moves them to continue helping the local residents. Dr. James Parker and Jay McCown have answered that call, and they keep working to help so many of those in need in Guatemala.



Dr. Parker

Dr. Parker and Jay made their first trip to San Raymundo in 2013 with a group of people from Amarillo, Texas, and now travel twice a year to perform orthopedic surgeries on people, helping the lame to walk again. The orthopedic team brings instruments and surgical equipment, as well as needed prostheses, to help them help others. Many of the supplies are donated or lent by companies and medical equipment representatives. Without these tools, they would not be able to perform the surgeries. Over the years, they have seen many lives changed.

Working with orthopedists in Guatemala, they are assured that patients receive the postoperative follow-up that they need. Over the years, they have performed total knee replacements, total hip replacements, amputations, anterior cruciate ligament reconstructions, shoulder arthroscopy, surgery for carpal tunnel repair, cyst removals, and hardware removal.

In August of this year, during their seventh life-changing visit to San Raymundo, they were able to see their first hip replacement patient return, and found that the patient was doing very well.



The broken leg

During their time there, they also attended a 12-year-old boy who came to the clinic with what appeared to be a broken leg. After speaking with his family and the boy, Dr. Parker found out his injury had occurred 8 months prior to his arrival at the San Raymundo clinic. Unfortunately, the boy was not treated in December, and the broken bones healed together, leaving his lower leg crooked.

Dr. Parker and Jay operated on the boy by re-fracturing the leg and straightening it. They were able to place the necessary plate and screws to keep the bones in the proper position for healing. The surgery was a success, and the boy will be able to use his leg normally. All told, they performed 21 surgeries in August and 27 surgeries in October of this year.



Jay with his young patient after surgery

About Refuge International

Contact Us

Refuge International
P.O. Box 3586
Longview, Texas 75606-3586
Phone: (903) 234-8660
Fax: (903) 234-8664
info@refugeinternational.com
www.refugeinternational.com



Find us on Facebook at facebook.com/refuge.international

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