

FAITH IN PRACTICE

Lives Changed: Armando

GOD'S PURPOSE FOR ARMANDO'S LIFE

Eight months ago, Armando Najera traveled from the dusty, mountainous village of San Carlos Alzatate to the Faith in Practice office in Antigua with a friend, armed with a CD of photos, an official letter requesting a village medical trip, and a heart filled with hope. The photos were difficult to see: severely malnourished babies, terrible cases of scabies, tumors, and difficult orthopedic problems. Faith in Practice receives many requests for medical trips each year, but this request was particularly special. A few years ago, Armando, the young man requesting the medical clinic, could have been one of the people in the photos. Afflicted with a large cancerous facial tumor, he

Armando's dream to bring a volunteer medical team to Jalapa comes true.

received four surgeries performed by volunteers at the national cancer hospital and Las Obras Sociales to remove the tumor and then repair his face.

Armando recounts this time in his life, saying, "At

first, I told my family to start making preparations.

I wasn't going to survive. But I did survive, and Father Victor told me, 'God saved you, and he knows why and what purpose you will serve.'" Armando continues, "We can all be survivors...and because of the support of others I am one." Ever since Armando's recovery, he has devoted his life to helping those in his community obtain life-changing surgeries at Las Obras Sociales. However, he knew his limitations and saw the needs of his community as greater than he could manage. His hope was that Faith in Practice could help.

In January, Armando's dream came true. Armando beamed with pride and gratitude, as tears welled in his eyes. Village Team 169 and local volunteers surrounded him as he addressed the

group, thanking the volunteers and doctors for accepting his request for a medical team in Jalapa. He and the other Guatemalan volunteers worked five long months, travelled between 38 villages, made lists of patients with various afflictions, organized transport, and slept overnight in freezing churches during the clinic week. As a result, there were over 120 surgery referrals, more than any previous Faith in Practice village week.

While Faith in Practice volunteers are privileged to witness the immediate results of surgeries they perform, the volunteers often do not have the opportunity to see the long term miracles that can result. Armando has taken the miracle of his surgeries received from volunteers, and multiplied it exponentially to benefit and help many other Guatemalans.

Armando now has the difficult task of accompanying the referral patients, week after week, to Antigua for their surgeries. For some, this is a challenge, as oftentimes the patients are afraid, but Armando finds it easy. "I just tell them, look at me, I am a witness of the success that can happen to those who need a surgery."

On behalf of Armando, and the thousands like him, thank you for your support and commitment to life-changing medical mission. And, thank you, Armando, for being a blessing to so many.

For more on Trip 169, see Trip Logs and the Photo Gallery at www.faithinpractice.org.



Dedicated Lives: Dr. Daniel Everitt

AN EXCERPT FROM DR. EVERITT'S LETTER TO HIS FAMILY

I'd like to reflect upon one of the most remarkable weeks of my life. Our FIP village mission was to spend four intense days in rural areas of the country where there is little healthcare. We provided primary care and screened for surgical patients who would later receive surgeries from FIP surgical teams. The wonderful people we had the privilege of serving survived decades of civil war and genocide, yet they are loving and grateful. Never have the Old Testament words of Micah been more relevant to me: "...what does the Lord require of you to but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God."

Through the 100 patients I saw, and the 1800 we saw as a group, it felt like I could do more good in a week for a small slice of humanity than I have done in 5 years in my corporate job that pays so well. Countless times as I gazed in to the eyes of my patients I saw the face of God.

I felt God's presence with us nearly every moment this week.

I saw the largest crowd I had ever seen waiting for medical care.

The line was endless outside the gate and the crowd was about 500 inside the fence—all with their yellow paper that indicated their name, age and the triage diagnosis—they were expertly divided by their need for care.

I examined the largest hernia I have ever seen. The old man still worked in the cane fields, suffering from his hernia for 8 years. He humbly asked if we could help him. I turned my back and wiped my eyes as I did many times throughout the week. There were countless experiences like these.

Well, the week ended, but the experience pushes me forward to thoughts and plans of how to spend my life after I retire from J&J. Paula and I have many choices ahead. As I sat in my upgraded first class seat, I was reminded of my privileged life in contrast to the conditions in which our patients live, and I am wrenched by the inequities of life and the admonition of Micah.



Dr. Everitt treats a patient at Santa Lucia.

See the photo gallery at www.faithinpractice.org for more about Team 168.

Far Reaching Miracles

As Faith In Practice's new Executive Director, I am privileged to be affiliated with so many of you who step out in faith to love your neighbors and then are present to watch in wonder as the miracles unfold.

With this newsletter, I hope that you all see that the miracles that unfold are not limited to a patient receiving needed surgery or antibiotics, although that care, in and of itself, represents a miracle to both patient and caregiver. But, rather I hope that you all realize that miracle continues long after you leave Guatemala—that your support of Faith In Practice has a greater reach than you might have imagined. Armando is now a community leader bringing health and wholeness to his fellow villagers; John and April Long and Dr. Mickey and Toni Golbus' involvement with FIP, and their ongoing commitment, has translated into thousands of children and families gaining health

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CORNER

because they are now drinking clean water for the first time in their lives; volunteers, like Dr. Dan Everitt, have been touched in profound ways,

which then impacts their home communities and futures; a mother lives to raise her children, because one of our VIA/Cryo trained healthcare providers treated her

for pre-cancerous cervical cells.

Miracles are still happening, long after you have written your last check or bordered your last plane to return to the States. Thank you for acting out your faith in reaching out to your Guatemalan neighbors. Because of your actions, miracles, far beyond what any of us could have imagined, abound. Thank you for being a part of these far-reaching miracles.

LINDA MCCARTY, *Executive Director*



www.faithinpractice.org

Life-Changing Partners: The Longs and Golbuses

FAITH IN PRACTICE VOLUNTEERS MAKE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Faith In Practice volunteers John and April Long and Mickey and Toni Golbus recently returned, as John states, from a 'whirlwind' trip to Guatemala to install new water systems. After seeing preventable diseases in Guatemala for years, they sought ways to prevent disease, and have undertaken a life-changing, life-giving water project. One project is the Hospital Corpus Christi, orphanage and school in Patzun. Hospital Corpus Christi is one of Faith In Practice's partners and Faith In Practice is now sending surgical teams there. Mickey writes:



Mickey Golbus and John Long

"We installed three purification systems to make sure we had sufficient flow for the 1,400 plus children at the school each day. The over-riding memory of the school is the cooperation and good nature of the Sisters and how thrilled they were to have potable water for the children. At the hospital, Madre Reyna took us hiking up the mountain, slippery with mud, to show us her large water storage tanks. On the way we met the huge pigs being raised above the hospital, and then viewed a myriad of PVC tubes. She then led us in the dark, up the mountainside, showing us other water lines, and the holes made by 'large rodents' that live there. We now have some understanding of their water system and are hoping to install purification systems while we are

in Guatemala for our FIP trip this Spring."

The work of these amazing volunteers are truly changing the lives of the children of Patzun who will now have clean water because of these volunteers' commitment and vision.

Mother's Day Gift Market

HONOR THE WOMEN YOU LOVE

Motherhood means love all around the world, but for many mothers and children in Guatemala who are facing a future of poverty, illness, and hunger, love alone is not enough. Faith In Practice is offering an alternative Mother's Day gift market to support cervical cancer screening.

Send a gift of compassion in honor of a woman you love, and we will send either a Mother's Day card signed by you to let her know of your gift. Or we will send you the cards directly. Give a gift online at www.faithinpractice.org.

Suggested Gift List

- Visual Inspection Test for five **\$10**
- Cryotherapy Treatment for two **\$25**
- Refill a tank of nitrous oxide to treat 4 women **\$50**
- Purchase a tank full of nitrous oxide **\$150**
- Sponsor training for one Guatemalan nurse/physician **\$500**
- Sponsor training seminar for 10 medical professionals **\$5,000**
- Purchase a Colposcope **\$7,000**

DID YOU KNOW...

SPANISH LESSONS FOR FAITH IN PRACTICE VOLUNTEERS AVAILABLE!

How often have you wished your Spanish skills were better before you left for Guatemala? How often have you wished to continue on with your Spanish after having returned from Guatemala?

Faith In Practice has a new partnership with Interlangua which will help you increase your Spanish skills and at the same time support local Guatemalans. Interlangua employs Guatemalan Spanish teachers to



give one on one Spanish lessons over the Internet, through state of the art technology.

Interlangua is committed to raising the economic conditions of Guatemalans in Guatemala, providing all employees with a living wage, benefits and paid vacation time. This commitment to respect and dignity for our Guatemalan neighbors makes this partnership with Interlangua a natural fit for Faith In Practice.

Faith In Practice volunteers receive a discounted rate to learn medical Spanish. Lessons start as low as \$220 for ten 1 hour private lessons, Monday through Friday. Saturday lessons are \$250 for ten 1 hour lessons.

Visit Interlangua's website at interlangua.com or contact them at susan@interlangua.com. Tell them you are a Faith In Practice volunteer. Not only will you be learning Spanish, you will be supporting local Guatemalans in Guatemala as they strive to support their families.



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*Faith In Practice
received Charity Navigator's
highest rating for
the fourth year in a row.*

Life Changing Options for Guatemalan Women

Did you know that the mortality rate due to cervical cancer for women in Guatemala is 8 times that of the U.S.? Did you know that when cervical cancer takes the life of a mother, she often leaves behind six children who are orphaned or oftentimes left to take care of themselves?

Did you know that Johns Hopkins University and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation have developed a process for radically changing these statistics?

Did you know Faith In Practice is leading the way in the use of this tool with cervical cancer screening and treatment throughout Guatemala?

Join other women for the inaugural women's luncheon to learn more.



Nancy Thompson in Jalpatagua

FAITH IN PRACTICE'S WOMEN'S LUNCHEON

May 8, 2008

11:30 – 1:00

The Briar Club

2603 Timmons Lane

Houston, Texas

Come to hear about what is happening in Guatemala from Guatemalans and Americans who are committed to saving lives through proactive screening and treatment. You will learn how cervical cancer affects Guatemalan women and their families, and how you can participate with a network of women to help our Guatemalan sisters take control over their lives.

Tickets are \$500 per table of ten or \$50 per individual.

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