

Impact Statement

2017



*Delivering compassionate
healthcare and the Gospel to the
most needy in the developing world*





HELPING HANDS Medical Missions Impact Statement 2017

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and Share with Others



Reflections on Retirement

December 2017

As some of you may know I have worked as a nurse at Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas, Texas for the last 25 years. Last summer I retired.

Since the founding of Helping Hands Medical Missions in 1996, I had juggled my limited time between my spiritual life, raising a family, a full-time job, and being the International Mission's Coordinator. Throughout the last 25 years I had many challenges, especially when it came to time management. The decision for my retirement wasn't easy. It required prayer, meditating on what is most important, and discerning God's Will in my life. I have grown spiritually through the many challenges our Lord has allowed in my life. There is so much to learn regarding our Catholic Faith and the supernatural life that our Lord Jesus wants for us, and I saw this decision as another growth opportunity.



Eventually, it became clear to me that having time to do what I cherish the most was the best decision; spending time with God, my family and the missions was the best use of my time to honor our Lord and bring the light of the Gospel to many parts of the world. The choice was not an easy one, in fact it has been humbling at times, denying my wants to simplify my life, but I have great peace in knowing I have made the right decision.

I am truly enjoying retirement. I now have more time for my spiritual life, attending Mass on a regular basis, more time for prayer, picking up my grandchildren from school, cooking for them, visiting my children and grandchildren who live out of town, and being available for the coordination of the missions now rounds out my daily, monthly and annual schedule.

I have learned to appreciate the smallest and largest of blessings. I am thankful for the opportunity given to me to make an impact in the lives of others, working side by side with the most generous and beautiful human beings I have ever known; the missionaries of Helping Hands and the poor whom we have the honor of serving. Our mission is to radiate the love of our Lord Jesus to the patients we treat. In turn He offers us all the love, courage and perseverance we need to give to those we meet an authentic experience of our Lord, Jesus Christ, be it on missions or in our daily walk through life.

As I continue to understand the important role Helping Hands Medical Missions has in the New Evangelization, I pray and plan for our continued growth and expansion in 2018 and beyond. I continue to be encouraged by the ongoing enthusiasm and zeal of our missionaries and cannot wait to serve with them on a mission. I pray that you enjoy the 2017 Helping Hands Medical Mission Impact Statement. I hope it gives you a greater sense of the larger mission in which you are involved. We've truly had a blessed year! I will leave you with one of my favorite quotes from the last 25 years, an invitation from St. John Paul II in Denver 1993, "Be not afraid! Go out into the streets to make Christ known." I believe if we take this message to heart, we will continue to expand Helping Hands both now and in the future. However, to be successful according to St. Louis de Montfort we must totally depend on prayer and need to constantly remind ourselves what the Blessed Virgin Mary said to St Dominic "Pray the Rosary unceasingly."

I remain in Jesus through Mary,

Sincerely in Christ, Lupita Assad, RN

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lupita Assad RN". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Foundress and International Missions Coordinator Volunteer

History and Mission



MISSION STATEMENT

Helping Hands Medical Missions is a non-profit organization providing humanitarian aid in rural areas of developing countries, offering its volunteers a transforming experience and the opportunity to share their faith while selflessly serving the needs of others

HELPING HANDS Medical Missions (HHMM) was formally established in 1996 after 3 years of developing a program for a Catholic medical mission. The idea originated in Dallas in 1991, when a priest recognized the need for Catholic medical professionals to provide health care services for the poor in rural areas of developing countries. In Holy Week of 1996, a small pilot group of seven medical missionaries from various areas of the U.S. joined the youth missions in Michoacán, Mexico. The mission was a success. In the fall of 1996, the first official mission under the name of **HELPING HANDS** Medical Missions took place in Cotija, Mexico, with 30 participants: doctors, nurses and volunteers serving more than 500 patients and providing 91 surgeries in 5 days.

HELPING HANDS medical missionaries are doctors, nurses, and volunteers who come from all areas of the United States, Australia and Canada to join the host team. Participants pay their own round trip airfare, mission fee (food, housing, ground transport, and overhead) and bring supplies and medicines. Missionaries work in small clinics, hospitals, schools and churches located in rural towns where they provide free medical care for thousands of patients in need. Services include surgeries, eye care, dental care, consultations, and distribution of medications, follow-up of surgical patients, house calls and Natural Family Planning instruction. The participants also take part in the mission's spiritual program. This aspect of the mission includes daily prayer, mass, meditation, discourses on the teachings of the Catholic Church, and sharing the faith with the people of the town through home visits.

Equipment, supplies and medications are collected year-round from various companies, hospitals and individuals in the U.S. **HHMM** is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. All donations are tax deductible as permitted by law. Your participation could be time spent on a mission, spreading the word among your medical community, prayer or a monetary donation.





Mission Highlights

I am happy to report that HHMM continues to grow and expand its reach to many parts of the developing world. This year, 218 missionaries participated in eight medical missions.

Our team from the Cleveland, OH area, led by Dr. Eddie Jimenez, completed another great year in the Philippines. Learning from experience of the needs in Tanauan, Philippines, Dr. Eddie organized a team of opticians to make the 8,300-mile trip. It had a wonderful impact on the people of the region. In addition to medical and dental care, the team gave away 400 pairs of reading glasses and 280 pairs of distance glasses. They also taught classes on how to take better care of one's vision.

Our team from the Madison, WI region, led by Dr. Michael Kloess, expanded their services providing water filters from EcoFiltro to the people of Ateos, El Salvador. The water filters will help to rid the drinking water of several contaminants which will help reduce the risk of contracting intestinal infections due to drinking contaminated water.

Dr. John O'Brien has been attending the San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas mission for four consecutive years supported by Dr. Erik Meidl from New London, MO. Dr. O'Brien looks forward to the opportunity to be the preceptor to five Physician's Assistant students from SUNY Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, New York in June of 2018.

In 2017, we were blessed with a new mission site in Zapatón-Puriscal, Costa Rica. This area is located on the west coast of the country. Some of the issues the people of the area are dealing with are skin diseases and respiratory and gastrointestinal infections. Fr. Thanh Nguyen, LC. has been a great help to both the missionaries and the locals through his priestly ministry by offering confession, counseling, and pastoral leadership.

Our team from the Laredo, TX region, led by Dr. Sonia Soriano, expanded their services by also providing the same water filters from EcoFiltro to the people of Copainalá, Chiapas.

Prior to the devastating floods in Houston, the team organized yet another huge shipping effort to bring much needed equipment and supplies to San Salvador, El Salvador to be used by our local Parish based clinics. We thank Christine Hunter, Diana Janssens and Dr. Ron Taylor for their leadership in spite of the challenges.

The St Louis, MO mission team, led by Dr. Peter Danis, launched a successful fundraiser this year in order to help the missionaries going to Santiago Texacuangos, El Salvador to pay part of the mission fee. We hope the team continues with the infectious missionary spirit.

Our team with members from Colorado and Connecticut were instrumental in bringing a new program supporting the local Catholic School and bringing water to the town of Santa Maria de Jesus, Guatemala. Dr. Michael Brezinsky and Ellen Miller have led this effort for eleven years now.

Overall, I am happy to report it has been another grace filled year for HHMM. I am thankful to all our missionaries, for their sacrifices and heartfelt efforts in bringing compassionate care and the Gospel to our poorest brothers and sisters. I am looking forward, by the grace of God, to continuing to bring compassionate healthcare to those most in need in 2018.

Special Projects

Helping Hands Missionaries, lead by Dr. Michael Brezinsky participated in another successful mission to Santa Maria de Jesus in Guatemala. Over the course of five days, the medical staff treated and managed care for over 2,000 patients.

Our Water Filter team, including a representative of EcoFiltro, Ellen Miller and Maura O'Connor; distributed 320 filters during our five clinical days. We educated local families on the importance of clean drinking water and emphasized the proper use and care of these new filters to maximize their longevity. According to our 2016 family census, our filter distribution this year directly affected the lives of approximately 2,000 people.

We like this product because it has less moving parts and is produced in Guatemala. In addition, EcoFiltro is owned by a Guatemalan who supports our mission.

Following the suggestion of EcoFiltro, we charged a nominal fee of 20Q or \$3 USD for each filter. The charge was well received and we expect it will help instill a sense of pride of ownership by the filter recipients.



2017 Missions

8 Missions

218 Missionaries

13,453 Patients

839 Dental patients

202 surgeries



21 Years of Missions

150 Missions

4,161 Missionaries

240,955 Patients

18,865 Dental Patients

3,827 Surgeries

IN KIND DONATIONS

Medical & Dental Vol. Services

2015-16
\$1,036,665

2016-17
\$1,019,410

OPERATING REVENUE

Mission Fees

2015-16
\$137,571

2016-17
\$130,500

Donations

\$88,851

\$158,173

Total Operating

\$1,263,087

\$1,308,083

OPERATING EXPENSES

Program Services

\$168,209

\$175,995

Administrative and General

\$37,815

\$17,761

Fund Raising

\$27,116

\$24,120

Total Operating Expenses

\$233,140

\$217,876

HELPING HANDS Medical Missions

Mission Schedule 2018

LOCATION	DATE
Philippines: Tanauan-Batangas	February 15-24, 2018
México, Chiapas: Copainalá	February 23-March 3, 2018
El Salvador: Ateos	March 2-10, 2018
México, Chiapas: San Cristóbal	June 1-9, 2018
Africa, Ghana: Butre	June 15-24, 2018
El Salvador: •San Salvador •Santiago Texacuangos	October 26-November 3, 2018 November 2-10, 2018
Guatemala: Santo Tomas Milpas Altas	November 9-17, 2018

Contact Information

If would you like additional information on dates and locations please contact:
Gloria Madrigal, **National Secretary 972-253-1800**
or visit us at www.hhmm.org



HELPING HANDS Medical Missions

P.O. Box 171088, Irving, TX 75017
972-253-1800