



SURGEONS OF HOPE

Dear friend,

At Surgeons of Hope, we believe that all children deserve the chance to live a long, happy life. Unfortunately, thousands of babies die each year simply because they are born with a congenital heart disease (CHD) – a common and treatable condition. We have the technology, resources and knowledge to save these young lives.

Our medical teams are among the best in the world, and they are committed to going on life-saving missions to the most underserved regions of Central and South America, where medical resources and health care infrastructure are severely lacking. Surgeons of Hope strives to create a world in which every infant and child with a damaged heart has an equal opportunity to receive life-saving surgery. Thousands of children and babies are waiting for our medical professionals to arrive and give them a chance at childhood. This year, our talented volunteers performed an astounding 19,210 outpatient consultations and 447 complex and delicate surgeries on babies and children, mending tiny hearts and giving families joy on every mission.

However, their services are not a permanent solution. That is why Surgeons of Hope builds the capacity of local surgeons, nurses, anesthesiologists, and entire medical centers like our Pediatric Heart Center in Managua, Nicaragua to adequately perform these procedures. Our unique sustainable long-term model enables local communities to, over time, have self-sustaining pediatric cardiac programs with limited-to-no further involvement from Surgeons of Hope. In this way, we leave a lasting impact on the communities we serve, because we believe it is not what we bring, but what we leave behind that matters most.

We know that by equipping local medical professionals with supplies and skills to perform complicated heart surgeries and procedures, we ensure that generations upon generations of babies born with heart defects can be saved. Child mortality rates are at a staggering 27 out of 1,000 live births in Nicaragua, compared to just 8 out of 1,000 in the USA, with heart-related complications being the leading cause worldwide.

Our goal is for all children and families throughout Latin America to be able to experience the same opportunities for health and joy that we are afforded in the developed world.

On November 7, 2017, two Nicaraguan surgeons, **Dr. Téllez** and **Dr. Narváez** who were trained by our teams, successfully performed a Glenn procedure in total autonomy in Managua for the

very first time. The patient is now well and thriving! The Glenn procedure is a complex surgery, so this success is an important milestone for our program. *Dr. Téllez* and *Dr. Narváez* are two young talented surgeons, and we are very proud to support them and their incredible team. Together, we will save many more lives.

According to the National Center for Health, approximately 1,064,000 children are born with Congenital Heart Disease (CHD) every year. Unfortunately, 90% of these children are born in the developing world. This means that 957,600 bright, young children will not have access to modern treatment, and 30% of these children (about 287,280) will die in their first years of life.

In Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Peru, where Surgeons of Hope currently operates and hosts missions, and Panama and Paraguay, where we recently began our assessment missions, access to care is extremely limited and often impossible for families. Every year, Surgeons of Hope brings precious peace of mind to hundreds of families who are suffering from being unable to find, travel to, or afford the professional care their child so desperately needs to survive. In a recent pilot mission to Lima, Peru, we found that the hospital, which is in the poorest neighborhood in the city, has only 2 ventilators in the entire ICU. The patient waiting list is ever-growing and too long to manage, and new supplies take what seems like a lifetime to arrive at the facility. In that same facility this past year, we saved the life of little Adriano Francisco, whose heart was just the size of a walnut, and is now at home with his parents growing stronger every day.

Thanks to your support, Surgeons of Hope is able to be a beacon of hope for families facing life's most devastating challenge – the fear of losing your small child. We are expanding throughout the region and sending missions regularly to areas of highest need. We are able to perform over 10 surgeries in as little as one week or less, like in Nicaragua where we performed 10 surgeries in just 5 days in March. Furthermore, close to 20,000 screenings were performed by our team last year to ensure that no heart disease goes undetected and no families are left powerless to help their child.

Last year, we sent assessment teams to Paraguay and Panama to begin evaluating need and establishing the foundation for our work there. We also launched in Peru this past fall and have already performed 27 surgeries, demonstrating the great potential that already exists within this new program.

Our critical work would not be possible without the generosity and commitment of our over 100 unpaid volunteer surgeons, nurses, anesthesiologists, and many more, whose time and talents change the course of hundreds of lives each year in Central America. However, without the steadfast support of our generous donors, these children would be left without a chance to grow and thrive alongside their loving families and friends. They would be left to die simply because they are born in a community without proper healthcare facilities, resources, and trained professionals – the backbone of all health care systems. Incredibly, with the help of our generous donors and annual gala guests, we raised \$620,000 in 2017!

Our board members, volunteers, and friends would like to thank all who give for the first time and those who have supported us over the years. Thanks to your goodness of heart, our teams are saving more children than ever before. We are deeply grateful for your spirit, dedication, and commitment to Surgeons of Hope.

On behalf of all our patients and staff, we sincerely and profoundly thank you.

Missions Throughout 2017

