

## IMPACT REPORT 2019

***Surgeons of Hope strives to create a world in which every infant and child with a damaged heart has an equal opportunity to receive lifesaving care.***

Every year, over a million children are born with congenital heart disease (CHD) – it’s the leading birth defect in newborns, and if left untreated, it often becomes a death sentence. Millions more are affected by rheumatic heart disease, a condition in which permanent damage to heart valves is caused by rheumatic fever. While most heart defects can now be corrected or improved, children living in low- and middle-income countries frequently lack access to lifesaving care because of their place of birth.

With support from donors like you, Surgeons of Hope is building locally sustainable pediatric cardiac programs to ensure that no infant or child is denied the lifesaving care they need. Partnering with some of the world’s best teaching hospitals, Surgeons of Hope coordinates and deploys highly-skilled volunteer surgical and medical teams to train the pediatric cardiac teams it works with in Latin America. To reinforce what is taught during missions, Surgeons of Hope President, Dr. Eduardo da Cruz, and Surgeons of Hope volunteers provide valuable year-round support through lectures, video conferences and emails. Additionally, with your donations, Surgeons of Hope provides much needed medicine and medical equipment.



*Rosaura (age 8) being visited by her grandmother after undergoing open-heart surgery.*

### OUR PROGRAMS

#### Nicaragua

Surgeons of Hope has been working in Nicaragua since 2008. The organization played a leading role in building the pediatric cardiac program from scratch at La Mascota Children’s Hospital and facilitated the construction of a state-of-the-art pediatric heart center, which opened in 2013.

In 2019, 11,667 screenings and 89 heart procedures were performed at the Surgeons of Hope supported Heart Center, which offers the only public pediatric cardiac program in the country.

In August, a team of Colombian Surgeons of Hope volunteers, led by Dr. Jairo Sanchez, traveled to Managua and worked with the local team to continue cultivating their skills to perform cardiac surgeries with increased levels of complexity.

Due to the country's economic downturn and an acute dengue epidemic, the Heart Center was unable to perform the same volume of procedures as in previous years (an average of 150 procedures were performed annually from 2015-2018, vs. 89 in 2019). In 2020, Surgeons of Hope will double down on its efforts to support the program and will provide intensive care unit training for the center's nurses, which is critical for patient recovery.



*The team of Colombian SoH volunteers who traveled to Nicaragua - some returning for a fourth time!*



*Ayeli (age 14) who was operated during the October training mission in Costa Rica.*

## Costa Rica

Since 2014, Surgeons of Hope has been working in Costa Rica to restructure and strengthen the pediatric cardiac program at the San José Children's Hospital. With Surgeons of Hope's support, patient mortality rates were reduced from 8 % in 2014 to 1.4 % in 2016 and the average length of stay went from 9.5 days down to 4.5 days. To detect and prevent CHD early on, an oximetry testing program for CHD was rolled out in maternity wards nationwide.



*Dr. Forbess training the pediatric cardiac team at the San José Children's Hospital.*

In 2019, 12,300 screenings, 252 open heart surgeries and 250 catheter interventions were performed at the Children's Hospital. A surgical and catheterization training mission was led by Dr. Joseph Forbess and Dr. Alan Nugent of Lurie's Children in October.

In 2020, Surgeons of Hope plans to send four training missions to continue its efforts of developing the program as the regional hub for pediatric cardiology and cardiac surgery in Central America.



*Axel (age 10) is in good spirits prior to undergoing a catheterization procedure to repair his heart.*

## Paraguay

Surgeons of Hope began working in Paraguay in March 2019 with a week-long surgical, interventional and medical training mission at the Acosta Ñu Children’s Hospital. The mission, which was co-led by Dr. Costancio Medrano and Dr. Gil Jaurena from the Gregorio Marañón Hospital in Madrid, was highly successful and resulted in 8 open heart surgeries and 25 catheterization interventions – almost half of the cardiac catheterizations that were performed at Acosta Ñu in 2019.

Throughout the year, the pediatric cardiac program at Acosta Ñu performed 3,428 screenings, 67 open heart surgeries and 54 catheter interventions.

In order to increase the number and complexity of catheter interventions performed at the hospital, Surgeons of Hope will sponsor the training of a pediatric cardiac catheterization team, as well as providing intensive care unit training for the center’s nurses, in 2020.

## OUR RESOURCES

Surgeons of Hope’s operating expenses totaled \$466,893 in 2019. In the next three years, we are committed to growing our annual budget to \$1.2 million. For more information about our financials, please visit: <http://surgeonsofhope.org/financials/>.

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Surgeons of Hope is incredibly grateful to its donors and volunteer surgical and medical teams for their support and partnership. By working together to build locally sustainable pediatric cardiac programs in Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Paraguay, 27,000+ screenings, nearly 400 open heart surgeries and 300+ catheterization interventions were provided for infants and children from poor families.

***Thank you for opening your heart to heal theirs!***



*The team of Spanish SoH volunteers from Menudos Corazones and the Gregorio Marañón and La Paz Hospitals in Madrid, Spain outside the Acosta Ñu hospital.*

