

THE BIRTH OF A GLOBAL OUTREACH DREAM

By **Matthew Geck**, MD, Co-Chief at Seton Spine and Scoliosis Center in Austin, Texas and Co-Founder/Board Chairman of SpineHope

When SpineHope formed in 2008, I rented a conference room and gathered with a handful of friends and colleagues (who are now board members and our strongest supporters), and we engaged in the difficult articulation of our mission and vision for our nonprofit. We all believed several themes to be important.

The first theme revolved around having a lasting, positive impact in the medical and patient community. We wanted each global outreach site to have a sustainable medical program that focused on safety, was patient and family centered, and incorporated long-term clinical and academic follow-up.

The second theme was building partnerships with local surgeons and local hospitals, clinics, and the entire medical community to engage in a collaborative sharing of medical knowledge. Finally, we valued maximizing current and future relationships with physicians and patients to continue to incrementally improve overall patient safety and care.

Now 8 years later, I am happy to report that we are still in alignment with these values and, as we work towards expanding our capacity and reach, these themes will remain priorities for our team. As we engage in further growth efforts in our U.S. Hub program and global outreach (including Costa Rica, Ethiopia, and other under-resourced areas), we hope you see value in our mission and choose to join our cause.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Kendra Scott Gives Back Party
July 28, 2016 6-8 PM
1400 South Congress Ave. Ste. A170
Austin, TX 78704

Fall Wine Spectacular Fundraiser
September 23, 2016
New York

Ethiopia Medical Mission trip
January 18-28, 2017

Costa Rica Medical Mission Trip
February 25 - March 5, 2017



VOLUNTEER OR DONATE TODAY

Our mission is driven by dedicated volunteers and the generous donations we receive. Your support helps us correct spinal deformities, alleviate pain, prevent paralysis when possible, and improve the quality of life for underprivileged children around the world.

To volunteer, please contact us at spineoutreach@gmail.com or (682) 463-9082.

We are currently raising funds for our upcoming Ethiopia and Costa Rica medical mission trips. To make a donation, visit our website: www.spinehope.org, or mail a check to:
SpineHope P.O. Box 684261 Austin, TX 78768



GLOBAL OUTREACH PROGRAM

COSTA RICA - Our 2016 medical mission trip to Costa Rica (February 20-28, 2016) was a monumental trip. We took a team of 15 incredible volunteers including surgeons, physicians, monitoring techs, nurses, equipment representatives, translators and more to the Hospital Nacional de Niños.

Working with host surgeons Dr. Jorge Alpizar, Dr. Max Mendez and Dr. Jose Vargas, local medical staff, and local volunteers, we achieved great success. Our medical volunteers evaluated

EDUCATION PROGRAM

By **Jon Block**, DC, CNIM, Surgical Neurophysiologist at ION Intraoperative Neurophysiology in California

I've been fortunate to serve as a surgical neurophysiologist on multiple medical missions around the world. When I first started, I thought that I was just going to lend a helping hand without expecting much to gain in return. But I didn't expect that these missions would turn out to be some of the most valuable educational experiences of my life.

Many of the surgeries on these missions are highly complex involving severe pediatric spinal deformities. I clearly remember the feeling I had after a week on my first mission. I was exhausted, but I knew that I was going home better at my job than when I arrived.

These missions create unique conditions that are conducive to accelerated learning for all involved. It is rare to have the opportunity to spend so much concentrated time with all the health care practitioners that make up the surgical team: surgeons, anesthesiologists, neurophysiologists, nurses. This is time that is often spent sharing knowledge and gaining insight into each other's specialties.

One goal of these missions is to educate local health care providers so that they can provide higher quality care thereafter. It is exciting to see that SpineHope continues to emphasize the educational aspects of missions with the understanding that the long-term benefits are highly dependent on the quality of the educational experience. This goes both ways as the volunteers themselves gain from these unique educational experiences and return home as better health care practitioners.

27 children during two clinic days, held three education talks and performed 11 complex pediatric spine surgeries.

MEDITEK hosted an educational conference during which all four of our volunteer surgeons, Dr. Matthew Geck, Dr. Laurence Mermelstein, Dr. Ryan Murdock and Dr. Alec Stall presented. The session gave local surgeons, physicians and medical staff information on state-of-the-art techniques and treatment options for scoliosis and other spine conditions. Our volunteer anesthesiologist and OR translator, Dr. Jorge Guerrero, arranged a round-table discussion on how anesthesia protocols in the U.S. differ from those in Costa Rica.

SpineHope volunteer surgeons, Dr. Alec Stall and Dr. Ryan Murdock, performed the first ever spine surgery in Costa Rica using the innovative technology, SHILLA™ on an 8-year-old boy. Dr. Alec Stall also presented this new technology and procedure type to a group of 40 medical staff at the Hospital Nacional de Niños.

ETHIOPIA - We are pleased to announce that we will be coordinating our first spine medical mission trip to Ethiopia in January 2017! Working with the staff at Myungsung Christian Medical Center and the well-respected Dr. Rick Hodes, we are forming a team with the goal of helping 8-12 children during our initial trip. Scoliosis and other complex spine deformities are a huge issue in Ethiopia, where there is a waiting list of over 500 children in need, and no surgeons capable of performing these procedures. We are grateful to have the opportunity to help this developing nation and under-served population. Our hope is to build a long term and sustainable global outreach program in Ethiopia.



A VOLUNTEER STORY

By **Laurence Mermelstein**, MD, Orthopaedic Surgeon at Long Island Spine Specialists, P.C. in New York and SpineHope Volunteer Surgeon

I can honestly say this was a moving experience. Sometimes I forget that our mission as doctors is to change lives and relieve suffering. This can be easily lost in the stress of running a private practice in the world of medicine as a business. My time in Costa Rica allowed me to focus on the patient exclusively – and the appreciation I felt went beyond words (and transcended any language gap).

This mission ran almost flawlessly and was a logistical work of art. As a “newbie” to this trip, I can emphatically say I was impressed with the entire team organizationally to medically. I hope that my presence brought a positive impact to the mission. I look forward to hearing some long term follow-up about all the patients we took care of during the trip.

U.S. HUB PROGRAM STORY OF HOPE

Like many girls, Suharshi Dabrera loves reading, singing with her friends and listening to her favorite band, One Direction. Unlike other girls her age, Suharshi was diagnosed with severe Thoracolumbar Scoliosis in 2011 when she started to feel considerable back pain. Since then, she had been through a gamut of tests, received extensive physiotherapy, and had been wearing a back brace 23 hours every single day. Despite the limitations of her family's income, Suharshi's parents were committed to helping their daughter find treatment. The surgery she required is not available in her home country, Sri Lanka, and the cost of the operation and travel overseas were out of reach for her family. Ajith, Suharshi's father, said that he and his wife felt helpless. Thankfully, they reached out to SpineHope. After being accepted to SpineHope's U.S. Hub Program, their hearts were filled with new hope. On March 31, 2016, Suharshi received the surgery she needed by Dr. Matthew Geck at Dell Children's Medical Center and is now, happily, five inches taller!



We hope to raise enough funds to bring one to two more children to Austin, Texas for spine surgery in 2016. Thank you to all of the organizations, donors and volunteers that make the U.S. Hub Program possible.



WALK TALL AUSTIN BENEFIT

A special thank you to all who donated, sponsored, attended, contributed silent auction items, volunteered and supported the 2016 WALK TALL Austin Benefit. We successfully raised thousands of dollars to help children around the world...Walk Tall. Proceeds from the evening will support SpineHope Global Outreach and U.S. Hub Programs. We look forward to planning the 2017 WALK TALL Austin benefit!

We could not have done it without our generous benefit sponsors. Diamond Level: **Medtronic, Inc., NuVasive** and **SentryNeuro**; Platinum Level: **Biotronic NeuroNetwork, The Deakin Family** and **Husch Blackwell LLP**; Gold Level: Capitol Anesthesiology Association, DePuy Synthes Companies, Encompass Home Health and Hospice, ImplantBase, K2M, Medical Express PSI, Seton Healthcare Family, and Synaptic Resources of Texas

Several individuals and organizations also contributed in-kind to our silent auction, including: KaleidaCare Management Solutions for donating Walker the bear for our raffle; Austin Fitness Clinic; Austin Vision Associates; Body Business Fitness Studios; Chez Nous; The Deakins; Fall Creek Vineyards; GoDance; Golfsmith; Jana Lee Gondran of Haute Chics; Jayleen Blond of Salon; Uffizi; Kathy Cantillo; Kendra Scott; Long Island Spine Specialists, P.C.; Quality Seafood ; Renaissance Austin Hotel; Sheraton Austin Hotel at the Capitol; Spa Revel; Spec's; Spring Frost Boutique; Steve Wiehe; The Dominion Golf Group; Topgolf; and The University of Texas Club

We also appreciate the following individuals who volunteered their time to make sure this event was a huge success: **Kathy Cantillo** for devoting hours to assist with our Silent Auction; **Grand Scheme Productions, Inc.** for donating the entire production process for our Global Outreach Program promotional video; **McCarthy Print, Inc.** for their program paper donation; **Amanda Beck Creative** for program design service; **The Texas Players Band** for providing music for tonight's benefit; **Joseph Reeves** for AV Consulting; **PSAV Presentation Services** for donating AV services; and **David Scott** for being our Master of Ceremonies.

Finally, thank you to our benefit volunteers: Shaidri Alrich, Berenice Bonilla, Mae Caime, Kathy Cantillo, Rebecca Cheek, Alistair Deakin, Houston Elrod, Yenei Estrada, Kristen Garner, Dallas Jahn, Joseph Reeves, David Scott and Sarah Wilson

For details about upcoming events, visit our website: www.spinehope.org.



ABOUT SPINEHOPE

SpineHope is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that is dedicated to providing advanced medical treatment to impoverished children around the world. We assemble volunteer teams of medical professionals to address pediatric spinal deformities and other complex spine, orthopedic and neurological conditions. SpineHope offers both direct services to patients as well as education and support to surgeons, physicians and medical staff worldwide.

Our Programs

GLOBAL OUTREACH PROGRAM: We work collaboratively with hospitals, organizations and corporations abroad to establish sites for medical mission trips. During missions, volunteer surgeons operate on 8-15 children and see 20+ children in clinic.

U.S. HUB PROGRAM: We have partnered with several healthcare organizations in Austin to bring children with severe spinal conditions to Austin, Texas for surgery and treatment. Children come for 4-6 weeks for surgery and recovery.

EDUCATION PROGRAM: In our Global Outreach sites and during our medical mission trips, our volunteer surgeons conduct training with local surgeons and hold educational conferences to provide hospital staff education on advanced techniques and safety protocols.



www.SpineHope.org
(682) 463-9082

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