



## **VOLUNTEER IN GUATEMALA AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

The scales of the world are unbalanced. Some of us have much more than we need, whilst others struggle to survive on an unthinkable amount of nothing. You can help ease the balance by volunteering for a Project H.A.N.D.S. surgical trip to rural Guatemala. **We are now accepting applications for the April 11 – 28, 2013 team.**

### **What is Project H.A.N.D.S.?**

Project H.A.N.D.S. is a group of people who want to do our part to help rebalance the scales. Our goal is to provide healthcare, education and support to those who, by chance of birth, have less fortunate lives than our own. We are a Canadian-based, registered non-profit organization working amongst the indigenous Maya in the rural regions of Guatemala. We have no religious affiliation.

### **Where can I learn more about Project H.A.N.D.S.?**

Please visit [www.projecthands.org](http://www.projecthands.org).

### **What's the duration of the trip?**

The duration of the trip is 11 days for surgeons. All other volunteers have the option of applying for 11 or 18 days.

### **What are the dates of the trip?**

Week 1 only: April 11 – 21, 2013, including travel to and from Guatemala and one free day in Antigua

Week 2 only: April 18 – 28, 2013, including travel to and from Guatemala and one free day in Antigua

Full 2 weeks: April 11 – 28, 2013, including travel to and from Guatemala, one free day in Antigua and one day off

### **When is the deadline to apply for a spot on the team?**

The deadline to apply is November 15, 2012. Please specify whether you are applying for 1 or 2 weeks. If you apply for 1 week, specify which week.

### **What are the goals for this trip?**

Week 1: To perform 40 - 50 general and gynecological surgeries

Week 2: To perform 40 - 50 plastic surgeries (burn reconstruction, contracture releases, syndactyly, polydactyly)

### **How can I help?**

You can volunteer for this trip. By giving of your time and expertise, you become a very important part of a team that makes dramatic changes in the lives of underserved Guatemalans. Your participation gives them a future filled with hope and possibilities for a better life.

### **How large is the team?**

In addition to numerous Guatemalan counterparts, at any given time, our team will consist of 20 – 24 volunteers.

### **What types of volunteers are currently needed?**

Week 1: OR Nurse, Sterile Processing Technician

Week 2: Sterile Processing Technician

Notes about Week 2 (plastic surgery):

- We will not perform cleft lip & palate surgeries.
- A high percentage of the cases will be pediatric, so anesthesia providers and nurses must have professional competency with children as young as 18 months.
- We will work in collaboration with Guatemalan medical professionals. Three surgical days will be spent assisting Guatemalan surgeons and three will be on our own.

### **Where will the team work?**

We will work in Centro de Salud Bárbara in San Juan Sacatepéquez, one hour northwest of Guatemala City.

### **Where does the team stay?**

We stay at the basic but pleasant Casa Damasco, a retreat set in peaceful gardens. The accommodations are shared, dormitory-style with electrically operated showers. Sometimes there is hot water, sometimes not.

### **What types of patients do you serve?**

Our patients live in rural areas, most of them in extreme poverty, on less than \$1 a day. Over half suffer from chronic malnutrition. Poor sanitation, lack of electricity and running water, and open cooking fires are typical of their homes and lifestyles. Very large families are common, and most births are unattended by medical personnel. In spite of their living conditions, they are proud, dignified, hardworking people.

### **What are the participation requirements?**

Each volunteer must...

- Pay airfare and a participation fee.
- Complete an application, volunteer agreement and waiver of liability.
- Submit a resume and a copy of current professional registration/license (medical volunteers only).
- Purchase international medical and evacuation insurance.
- Be in good physical health, as the days are long and demanding.
- Be flexible and possess a team spirit and sense of humor.
- In addition, volunteers from B.C. are required to travel from Vancouver with the team (but may return separately), pick up a supply bin from the designated location, and transport it to Guatemala.

### **How much does it cost to volunteer?**

Airfare: CA\$1100 (estimated cost from Vancouver)

Participation fee:

1 week: CA\$530 Covers accommodations for 10 nights, food and ground transportation

Does not cover food in Antigua (2 days), expenses of a personal nature, extra nights in Antigua

2 weeks: CA\$785 Covers accommodations for 17 nights, food and ground transportation

Does not cover food in Antigua (2 days), expenses of a personal nature, extra nights in Antigua

### **Are my participation and expenses tax-deductible?**

As a Canadian-based organization, Project H.A.N.D.S. can issue tax receipts to Canadians. If you are a U.S. citizen we can process your payment through our U.S. affiliate, Partner for Surgery, so that you can obtain a deduction.

### **What if I don't speak Spanish?**

Spanish language skill is a plus, but it is not a requirement to become a volunteer. There will be Spanish and Mayan translators on the team.

### **My spouse or child would like to accompany me. What are the guidelines?**

There may be one or 2 spots for spouses or teenage children (age 16 and older). The duties will vary according to the team's needs. If selected for the team, your accompanying family member must meet all of the participation requirements. Student applicants are required to submit an essay explaining why they feel that they would be good team members. They are also required to present a report to their school following the trip.

### **I would like to be considered for a spot on the team. What's the next step?**

Please contact Debbie Jefkin-Elnkave, Recruiting Officer, at 808-214-6053 (HST) or [debbie@projecthands.org](mailto:debbie@projecthands.org).

**First time medical volunteers must submit a brief resume in order to be considered.**

### **Do I need to complete the Registration Form to be considered for a spot on the team?**

No. The Registration Form is only completed by volunteers who have been selected for the team.

### **I have additional questions. Whom should I contact?**

Debbie Jefkin-Elnkave, Recruiting Officer, at 808-214-6053 (HST) or [debbie@projecthands.org](mailto:debbie@projecthands.org).

**What if it was you who needed a hand?  
Would it be there?**