

The Volunteer Connection



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Health Volunteers Overseas ♦ Transforming Lives Through Education

HVO: Thirty Years of Service

HVO celebrated its 30th anniversary in August and, certainly, much has changed since 1986. We spoke with a few members who were early volunteers to give us a brief look back. In the next issue of *The Volunteer Connection*, we will focus on the future for HVO.

What inspired you to volunteer with HVO?

An HVO trip is all about why I became a physician -- caring for people, using some creative judgment and your mind and diagnostic skills with less technology, rules, politics, and no electronic medical records! It's working with individuals in their home territory, respecting their culture and ideas, sharing ideas together from different parts of the world. The playing field is leveled and we are just trying to care for people and learn from each other. I wanted to improve the health care of at least one person who may not otherwise have had such access. Each time I go on an HVO trip I receive more than I give-- emotionally, educationally, and spiritually. (Germaine Fritz, DO)



Photo courtesy of Germaine Fritz
Dr. Fritz with staff in Nicaragua, 2015

I volunteered to see different parts of the world and to be able to see how others really live. While traveling, I wanted to be able to share my skills and "give back." (George Meyer, MD)

It offered me the opportunity to follow my passions of teaching, intercultural explorations, and wanting to help improve anesthesia care in developing countries. (Lena Dohlman, MD, MPH)

I was drawn to the experience because it offered the opportunity to teach while doing hands-on treatment. (David Frost, DDS, MS)

What were some of the challenges you faced in early assignments?

Some volunteers arrived at the project site only to learn that they weren't expected to teach but to practice alongside the staff. In other cases, although the younger medical staff was eager for information and skills training, either the administration or senior medical management did not want any volunteer

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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



"In teaching you cannot see the fruit of a day's work. It is invisible and remains so, maybe for twenty years."

-Jacques Barzun

Dear Friends,

I am often reminded of this idea that teaching does not usually reveal immediate results but that efforts do, indeed, reap long-term benefits. As HVO celebrates 30 years of providing education and training in resource-scarce countries, it is nice to reflect on how much has changed and how lives have been transformed in that time. We will spend some of the coming year looking back on our 30 years of service, and we encourage you to share your stories of challenges, accomplishments, and special memories. HVO truly has much to celebrate and our volunteers, sponsors, and donors are all part of this remarkable history.

However, just as important as those accomplishments are, we know that there is more work to do to share new educational findings and skills, more challenges to meet, and that we must continually raise the bar to ensure that global health care improves for all. We look forward to expanding opportunities for volunteers to serve, and exploring new and different ways to convey health care training. As important as it is to know where we started, we also know that "those who don't look forward get left behind."

Best Wishes,

Nancy

Nancy A. Kelly, MHS
Executive Director

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SAVE THE DATE

HVO 30TH
ANNIVERSARY
SYMPOSIUM

APRIL 28, 2017
Washington, DC



For more information,
visit www.hvoused.org/symposium

Active Project Sites

CURRENT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



Photo courtesy of Lance Peterson

Anesthesia

Bhutan	4 weeks
Cambodia	2 - 4 weeks
Ghana	4 weeks
Laos	2 - 4 weeks
Malawi	2 - 4 weeks
Rwanda	2 - 4 weeks
Vietnam	2 - 4 weeks

Dermatology

Cambodia	2 - 3 weeks
Costa Rica	1 - 3 weeks
Uganda	3 - 4 weeks
Vietnam	2 - 4 weeks

Hand Surgery

Honduras	1 week
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Hand Surgery/Hand Therapy

Ghana	2 - 4 weeks
Nicaragua	1 week

Hematology

Cambodia	2 - 4 weeks
Peru	2 - 4 weeks
Tanzania	1 - 4 weeks
Uganda	2 - 4 weeks

Internal Medicine

Bhutan	4 weeks
Cambodia	2 - 4 weeks
Costa Rica	2 weeks
India	2 - 4 weeks
Uganda	4 weeks

Nursing Education

Cambodia	2 - 4 weeks
Tanzania	3 - 4 weeks
Uganda	2 - 4 weeks
Vietnam	2 - 4 weeks

Obstetrics & Gynecology

Nepal	1 - 2 weeks
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Oncology

Bhutan	4 weeks
Honduras	1 - 2 weeks
Nepal	1 - 2 weeks
Vietnam	2 weeks

Oral Health

Cambodia	2 weeks
Haiti	1 week
Kenya	2 weeks
Laos	1 - 2 weeks
Nepal	2 weeks
Nicaragua	1 - 2 weeks
Tanzania	2 weeks

Orthopaedics

Bhutan	4 weeks
Bolivia	2 weeks
China	2 - 4 weeks
Costa Rica	1 - 2 weeks
Ghana	2 - 4 weeks
Malawi	2 - 4 weeks
Myanmar	3 - 4 weeks
Nicaragua	1 - 2 weeks
Philippines	2 - 4 weeks
St. Lucia	1 - 4 weeks
Tanzania	2 - 4 weeks
Uganda	2 - 4 weeks

Pediatrics

Bhutan	4 weeks
Cambodia	4 weeks
Indonesia	6 weeks
Laos	4 weeks
Nicaragua	2 - 4 weeks
St. Lucia	2 - 4 weeks
Uganda	4 weeks

Physical Therapy

Bhutan	4 months
Bolivia	2 - 4 weeks
India	2 - 4 weeks
Malawi	4 - 6 weeks
St. Lucia	1 - 4 weeks
Vietnam	2 - 4 weeks

Special Projects

Bhutan

Emergency Medicine	4 weeks
Mental Health	3 months
Residency Training	3 months
<i>(Anesthesia, General Medicine, General Surgery, Ophthalmology, & Pediatrics)</i>	

Uganda

Pharmacy	4 weeks
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Wound Management

Cambodia	1 - 2 weeks
Haiti	2 weeks
India	2 - 4 weeks

Please Note: New projects are added regularly and volunteer assignments are made on a rolling basis. For the most up-to-date information on volunteer sites and scheduling, contact the HVO Program Department: info@hvousa.org or (202) 296-0928. Visit the website www.hvousa.org.



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involvement (and, in one case, had even neglected to tell the rest of the staff that a volunteer was coming). From logistical problems of not being met at the airport or picked up for the first work day, to being ignored by senior medical staff, all the volunteers agreed that flexibility was key to being a productive volunteer.

This may sound odd, but challenges in my earlier assignments seemed fewer. The census of the Special Care Baby Unit (in Uganda) was only a third of what it is today and leadership held medical and nursing staff accountable. It was easier to schedule classes with the nurses and teach at the bedside then because the unit wasn't so chaotic. Resources were limited then and continue to be 15 years later. (Ellen Milan, RNC-NIC)

How has the volunteer experience changed over the years?

When I first started (volunteering) in Sulawesi, Indonesia, I didn't have a clear picture of what I wanted to do or accomplish. This was more than 30 years ago and it was not so easy to get an idea beforehand of what it would be like or how we should prepare. Communication was weak because there was no Internet or fax, telephone calls were expensive and even mail was unreliable and took weeks. However, the lack of communication did not take away from the

experience, which was tremendously educational for me. I believe I was helpful to the sole anesthesiologist on the island in bringing (and later shipping) up-to-date educational materials. I think the biggest change in the experience has been the ability to communicate with sites, and through HVO, to get information easily. This has helped smooth out the volunteer experience and I think it makes it easier for change to occur more rapidly. Another change has been a better "big picture" of global health challenges and possible solutions. So much more data is being disseminated – mostly in the past ten years. The interest in volunteering and global health has risen at the same time. Perhaps the growth in information and interest are feeding each other? It would have been good if more of us volunteers had written about anesthesia conditions in developing countries earlier but there wasn't the platform for publishing in global health like there is now. (Lena Dohlman)

Perhaps due to some of the problems encountered on early assignments, over the years there has been "a greater emphasis on explicit project goals and an increased emphasis on formalized and quantitative evaluation and monitoring," noted Peter Trafton, MD. As the organization has grown, "there have been more people interested in volunteering; an increased number of projects, specialty fields, and volunteers; as well as more volunteer opportunities for residents."

What do you feel have been HVO's accomplishments to date?

In 1986, HVO expanded on the model of Orthopaedics Overseas to broaden the scope of program areas and, today, volunteers are serving in fourteen different specialty areas, Dr. Trafton commented. While orthopaedic assignments still play a vital role in HVO's work, 80% of volunteer assignments are in other program areas. Another accomplishment cited was HVO's focus



Photo courtesy of Lena Dohlman

Dr. Minh performs a supraclavicular block using nerve stimulator while Dr. Dohlman observes in Hue, Vietnam.

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on selecting project sites with clearly identified needs and opportunities to improve health care delivery with the assistance of education and training. By setting clear goals and measuring results, HVO volunteers are able to contribute to improved health care despite the limitations of short-term visits.

Suzanne Brown, CRNA, noted that HVO is known for “seed planting” around the world. By focusing on select needs and working consistently to address those needs, additional opportunities open up, and collaboration with other organizations is developed. She pointed to the success of a couple of nurse anesthesia projects. In Cambodia, at Angkor Hospital for Children (AHC), what began as a small project to train nurse anesthetists has developed to such a degree that the hospital is now identified as a training hospital for the country and the hospital is now providing nurse anesthesia training in Laos. One of the nurses trained at AHC has pursued further training in ethics and is now working on curriculum development for the nursing program nationwide.

In the small country of Belize, HVO has trained two cohorts of nurse anesthetists. The first group of students was diploma certified but the success of that group led to the second cohort being integrated into the university system and the students graduated with a university degree, which enhances the profession as a whole in the country. A critical element to the success of the most recent training was that a member of the initial group is now on the university faculty and served as an excellent example of how training could make a significant impact on the country's health care.

Looking back at your early volunteer experiences, what advice would you now give to your younger self?

For those who started volunteering later in their careers, there was an awareness of the lack of relevant experience and a wish that volunteering had started earlier.

DO IT! I first thought about HVO but...I was new in practice, I was finishing boards, I was new in the practice group...lots of excuses, then one day I said to myself, “If you want to do it...Do it!” Never a regret... (Germaine Fritz)



Dr. David Frost on assignment in Nepal, 1988

Watch out; this can become habit forming! Remember, the kind of change we seek takes time; it is a long-term commitment. You never dream that you will have such an impact but it is possible; it just may take years before you see the results. Remember that you are not trying to do the work alone; you have a team working with you to effect change. (Suzanne Brown)

All the volunteers interviewed stressed the importance of preparing diligently for an assignment and being open to learning about others – about their culture, language, relevant local health care systems, needs, and barriers to change.

Close collaboration with our host colleagues may be the best way to help establish achievable goals for short-term visits. (Peter Trafton)

Listen, observe, and truly appreciate the struggles your host country colleagues face every day trying to provide care with high patient census, grossly inadequate staffing, and limited resources. Teaching doesn't happen only in a classroom; every patient is a teaching opportunity. Hands-on experience is critical. You can only do what you can do...a lesson taught to me by my Uganda colleagues. (Ellen Milan)

(I) should have volunteered even more! Working with HVO and the many dedicated, interesting anesthesia providers all over the world has been immensely enriching and I am very thankful for the experience. (Lena Dohlman)



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HVO: Thirty Years of Service

What advice would you give to a current prospective volunteer?

Be patient, particularly with those in administrative positions; expectations and qualifications are often different than ours. Flexibility is crucial!

Talk with other volunteers who have been to the site. Attend the volunteer sessions at professional association meetings.

Talk, ask, share thoughts, stick your neck out, you will never regret it, go with a seasoned volunteer. (Germaine Fritz)

How has volunteering with HVO had an impact on your career and your professional life?

When I first started volunteering with HVO in 2001 I was still working full-time. I returned home from each assignment with a greater appreciation of all that we had to offer our NICU patients, but at the same time I felt perhaps we do too much, just because we can...I witnessed the

intact survival of many, many Uganda neonates, who didn't have the benefit of a functioning incubator, a ventilator, surfactant replacement, targeted oxygen saturations, continuous IV access and total parental nutrition, and breast-milk "engineering." Working in the Special Baby Care Unit, with its high census, grossly inadequate staffing, and limited resources continues to be a humbling experience, after 12 volunteer assignments. (Ellen Milan)

All of the volunteers interviewed have been HVO members for many years. Their commitment and work have helped build a stronger, more dynamic organization. HVO is grateful for the many volunteers who have served in the first thirty years and encourages those who are considering an assignment to make a commitment in the year ahead.

In the next issue, Executive Director Nancy Kelly will share her thoughts on plans for HVO in the next 30 years.



A planned gift ensures that HVO will be able to continue to make important educational strides in the improvement of health care in resource-scarce countries.

When you write or review your will, please consider leaving HVO a charitable bequest as an investment in HVO's future. You may bequeath a specific amount of money or a percentage of your estate. Another relatively simple option is to designate HVO as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy or the assets of a retirement plan.

To discuss making a charitable bequest in your will or other charitable aspects of your estate planning, please contact Nancy Kelly at giving@hvousa.org. *If you have already made a charitable bequest, please let us know. We would like the opportunity to express our gratitude and will honor all requests to remain anonymous.*

Thank you to the following people who have made this commitment:

Anonymous (6)
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STAFF REPORT FROM THE FIELD

Report from the Field

by April Pinner, HVO Evaluation Specialist

One of the questions I ask myself almost daily at work is: What is HVO's impact?

On a recent trip to Southeast Asia, I had the opportunity to meet with HVO partners in the region and assess this question first hand. One stop on my trip was Siem Reap, Cambodia where I spent a week with HVO's longtime partner, Angkor Hospital for Children (AHC). HVO has partnered with AHC for over ten years to provide staff education and mentorship in anesthesia,



Photo courtesy of April Pinner
April Pinner with the AHC oncology team.

nursing, wound care, hematology/oncology, and general pediatrics. Throughout the week, I had the opportunity to meet with numerous beneficiaries of HVO training over the years as well as AHC leadership and administration who have worked alongside HVO staff and volunteers to ensure each project's success.

I was truly impressed with the anesthesia team which has worked with HVO since 2005. In that time, six anesthetists have advanced from students to teachers, eager to refine advanced techniques and position themselves and AHC as a regional education center for training young anesthetists from Cambodia and throughout the region. During the interview process, I learned that HVO's training had enhanced their confidence as clinicians and educators; improved their ability to educate, comfort, and communicate with pediatric patients and their families; taught them how to think critically and work as a team; and improved the quality and effectiveness of their patient care. AHC anesthetists are now working alongside HVO volunteers to train newly enrolled student

anesthetists at Lao Friends Hospital for Children in Luang Prabang, Laos – a remarkable example of a project coming full circle and the ripple effect HVO's training can have far beyond an individual provider or institution.

During my time at AHC, I also had the opportunity to meet with the multi-disciplinary oncology team which has been receiving training through HVO's hematology program. The team is comprised of a pediatric oncologist, oncology nurse, social worker, pharmacist, and ophthalmologist. I was inspired by their commitment to a multi-disciplinary approach to cancer care and the respect and trust each team member had for the other was clear. In subsequent interviews, I learned from Dr. Vireak, AHC pediatric oncologist, that he credits the HVO hematologists/oncologists for inspiring and cultivating their multi-disciplinary approach. I also learned that AHC has been informally distinguished as a national leader and referral center for the treatment of retinoblastoma. The team recognizes this distinction is due in part to the ongoing training and support provided by HVO volunteers. The team has ambitious goals for the future as they hope to expand their expertise beyond retinoblastoma and serve as a role model for effective multi-disciplinary pediatric cancer care in Cambodia within 5 years. I was honored to meet such passionate individuals and look forward to HVO's continued collaboration with this team to help them realize their goals.

Reflecting on my time at AHC, it is clear that AHC has successfully instilled a culture of life-long learning and commitment to professional excellence among its staff. This culture permeates not only the anesthesia and oncology departments, but is palpable in nearly every staff person and department. HVO's goal is that our projects and dedicated volunteers will provide the education, mentorship, and professional development opportunities to continue to foster that culture - advancing the knowledge and skills of AHC health care providers and, ultimately, improving the lives of children throughout Cambodia and the region.

For more on HVO's work with AHC, check out the "Reflections from Abroad" series by guest blogger Victoria Elliot, MSPH at www.hvousing.org/blog



Photo Contest

VOLUNTEERS SHARE PHOTOS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



HVO 30th ANNIVERSARY



These are just some of the entries submitted to the HVO 30th Anniversary Photo Contest.
To find out the winners, visit www.hvousing.org/photo-contest.

Photo Credits: Marcel Durieux, Orrin Franko, Jim Matiko, Christine Parks, Deirdre Robinson

Photo Contest

VOLUNTEERS SHARE PHOTOS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



CELEBRATE • COLLABORATE • GROW



HVO's Grow 30 More Fund

This fund was created in honor of HVO's 30th anniversary and is dedicated to continuing HVO's work to improve global health in the years to come.

Your support honors the work of our volunteers, leaders and overseas collaborators, and will enable HVO to continue and expand this work in the decades to come.

Visit www.hvousing.org/Grow30More



Many thanks to the volunteers, members and supporters who contributed to the contest, helping us to celebrate 30 years of HVO's work to improve global health.

Photo Credits: Cary Bjork, Marcel Durieux, Jim Matiko, Deirdre Robinson, Ann and Lizzy Van Heest

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PARTNERING TO EMPOWER

Haitian Dental Library Update

Haiti is the poorest country in the hemisphere, and it is still struggling to rebuild after the devastating 2010 earthquake. The country has one dental school, at the Université d'Etat



d'Haiti, where there are about 125 students enrolled in the five-year program. With the majority of dentists practicing in the capital, a

goal of the school is to graduate dentists who will work independently to serve the Haitian population. After graduating, students are expected to provide one year of public service in a Ministry of Health facility in order to become licensed to practice. With very few specialists in the country, the dental students must be trained in a well-rounded, comprehensive and practical capacity to serve the population.

Thanks to a generous donation from the Academy of Dentistry International and many gifts from volunteers, the dental school library in the university's Faculté d'Odontologie will be well-stocked for students and faculty! The textbooks, which have been eagerly anticipated, are scheduled to arrive this fall. They will serve as a wonderful resource for Haiti, where access to oral health care is extremely limited. Thank you to all those who made this possible!

Congratulations to Award Honorees

Many HVO volunteers have been honored recently. Congratulations to each of them! HVO is proud to have them as members and dedicated volunteers.

Julia Chevan, PT, PhD, MPH, OCS received the Ronnie Leavitt Award for Leadership in the

Promotion of Social Responsibility in Physical Therapy. The award was presented in February at the Combined Sections Meeting of the American Physical Therapy Association. Dr. Chevan has taught and mentored therapists in the US, Armenia, Liberia, Rwanda, and Haiti. Her work as a Fulbright scholar in Rwanda led to a USAID grant with HVO to provide continuing education for therapists throughout the country. An HVO member since 1994, Dr. Chevan serves as the HVO project director for Rwanda.

On May 10th, 2016 at the Global Health Expo, **Lena Dohlman, MD, MPH** was awarded the first annual Mass General Hospital Global Health Service Award, Excellence in Teaching and Mentoring Award. Dr. Dohlman has been teaching anesthesia providers in Vietnam, Malawi, and South Africa, and sending anesthesia residents around the world for the past 18 years through her work at the Society for Education in Anesthesia and with HVO. She is also an Assistant Professor at Harvard Medical School, where she encourages students to be the next generation of global health leaders. Dr. Dohlman has been working for the Mass General Hospital in the Department of Anesthesia, Critical Care and Pain Medicine for the past 17 years. In addition to her volunteer assignments, since joining HVO in 1987, Dr. Dohlman has also served for many years on the HVO Anesthesia Steering Committee and was a recipient of the HVO Golden Apple Award in 2007.



Photo courtesy of Lena Dohlman

Samuel R. Baker, MD, an orthopaedic surgeon, was honored in June with the University of Washington School of Medicine Alumni Humanitarian Award. Dr. Baker received the award for his work at home in Port Angeles where he helped create a free clinic to serve residents of

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HVO MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

the Olympic Peninsula without health insurance, and for his work abroad. Dr. Baker, an HVO member since 2005, has served in Cambodia and travels annually to Bhutan to train orthopaedic technicians for rural areas and to work with orthopaedic staff at the country's main hospital.

The American Association of Nurse Anesthetists honored **Richard Henker, PhD, CRNA, RN, FAAN**, with the AANA Foundation 2016 Janice Drake Humanitarian Award at their September conference. The award is "presented to a CRNA who volunteers and provides anesthesia, education and training in needy areas of the United States and overseas." Dr. Henker has volunteered, taught, and lectured around the world. A member of HVO since 2004, he serves on the Board of Directors, has served as Project Director for Bhutan, Cambodia, and now Laos, and has volunteered in Belize, Bhutan, Cambodia, and Laos. Funding from the Janice Drake Humanitarian Award allowed him to spend 5 weeks volunteering in Laos, where he helped open the operating theatre and train an anesthesia student at the Lao Friends Hospital for Children.

Randall W. Culp, MD was honored by the Eastern Orthopaedic Association at their October meeting with the 2016 Humanitarian Award. Dr. Culp, an orthopaedic surgeon who specializes in the hand, wrist, arm and elbow, has led teams to Honduras on six occasions to provide surgery and training. A member of HVO since 1998, in addition to his volunteer work in Honduras, he has volunteered in Peru. Dr. Culp was a recipient of HVO's Golden Apple Award in 2013.

Harvey Weinberg, MD was honored with the American Academy of Dermatology's Making a Difference Award, their highest recognition

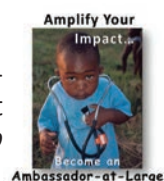
of volunteer service. After serving with HVO's dermatology project in Hue, Vietnam, Dr. Weinberg saw the lack of dermatopathology skills and identified a young, talented physician who would benefit from further training. An individualized course of training was set up with Columbia University Medical Center and, with funding from HVO's Wyss Scholarship, the Vietnamese dermatologist traveled to New York for six weeks of intensive study. Dr. Weinberg and his wife graciously hosted the physician for the entire period. This project not only provided training for Vietnamese clinicians, but it has provided a new patient care tool, since dermatopathology was not previously possible in central Vietnam.

Frank C. Andolino, DDS, an orthodontist, was presented with the American Dental Association's Humanitarian Award at their annual meeting in October. The prestigious award honors dentists who have demonstrated at least a ten-year commitment to humanitarian work by dedicating time and professional skills to improving oral health care in underserved populations both in the US and overseas. Dr. Andolino, whose service spans more than three decades, co-founded Kageno, a non-profit focused on addressing poverty through community development projects in Kenya and Rwanda. In the US, he has volunteered with Covenant House, Special Olympics, Habitat for Humanity, and has shared his skills in local schools and nursing homes. Dr. Andolino first joined HVO in 1998 and volunteered in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Bhutan. He served as project director for Vietnam and Tanzania.

Congratulations to all the honorees and thanks for your commitment and service!

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A recurring gift will amplify your impact, saving HVO both time and money. More of your tax-deductible dues and donations can be directed to what you really care about – projects that transform lives through education. *Please see the recurring gift section on the membership application or donor envelope to join!*



Special Thanks

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In August 2016, long-time HVO supporter and leader Julia Plotnick, MPH, RN, FAAN celebrated her 80th birthday. The following individuals contributed to the Plotnick Nursing Education Volunteer Fund. This fund will support HVO's nursing education projects and volunteers who seek to improve the quality and availability of nursing care around the world. The Plotnick Fund remains open and donors are welcome to contribute at www.hvousing.org/plotnick

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Reflections from the Field

VOLUNTEERS REPORT ON THEIR ASSIGNMENTS

Corinne Mercier, PT · Physical Therapy · Bhutan

There is a little 4-year-old patient named Karma that I will always remember. He had a severe burn injury 3 months prior to my arrival. He would not collaborate with anybody and would spend his whole day in bed getting more and more contractured. With my students we approached him gently, bringing different toys every day to distract him during stretching exercises. After the 3 months that I was there, he was smiling when he would see us, was walking on his own in the hallways of the hospital, and climbing stairs on his own. He was our little success story!

Ann Carroll BSN, NNP-BC · Nursing Education · Uganda

I continue to return to the Special Care Nursery because of the relationship that I have developed with the nursing staff. I have been told that the volunteers boost their morale and give them hope so that they continue to work under these most challenging conditions. I have the utmost respect for these nurses. They are responsible, committed professionals who have worked for many years in an environment without support from administration. The commitment of the nursing staff and the mothers of these babies is what makes any survival possible.

Krystyna Kiel, MD · Oncology · Vietnam

The surgeon generally has the first opinion regarding management of esophageal cancer. After at least 2 lectures regarding the utility of neoadjuvant chemotherapy and radiation therapy (especially the Cross trial and its tolerance by patients), the medical oncologists and radiation oncologists were delighted to hear that the surgeon considered neoadjuvant chemotherapy and radiation therapy in the next patient presented.

David Skinner, MD · Nurse Anesthesia · Bhutan

One of my areas of expertise back home is ultrasound guided regional anesthesia. I enjoy both teaching and performing these techniques. Even though some of the providers have used ultrasound in the past, they did not have their own machine for regular use. Fortunately, I was able to facilitate the acquisition of an aged and mostly unused ultrasound machine from the ED for the use of the OR. My wife was working in the ED, and as such I became friendly with the ED Doctor. It turned out that she had two ultrasounds and only used one regularly. After "borrowing" the machine for a few procedures, she agreed to let it live in the OR full-time. The OR staff was really appreciative. In demonstrating new techniques, I was able to witness the interest and enthusiasm of seasoned providers. Seeing this and other situations gave much depth and meaning to my overall experience.



Photo courtesy of Clark Parrish

Nicandro Castaneda, MD · Internal Medicine · Cambodia

If there were any such moments for me [that crystallized the volunteer experience], they occurred each time I greeted a patient, whether they were lying ill on a hospital bed or seated in a chair in an examination room. There is a moment of distinct and genuine communication when the eyes meet, the hands are placed together palm to palm and raised slightly in front of one's face. In that instant you are asking permission to enter into a patient's life, even for a brief instant; the patient is acknowledging their vulnerability and hope to you, and you are responding with your humble promise to do the best you can, because you are out of your comfort zone and vulnerable as well. I don't know what could be more honest in life for a physician.



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The Volunteer Connection, HVO's biannual newsletter, is available by mail or electronically for those who prefer. Subscriptions are free to HVO members and donors. Previous issues are available on the HVO website under "HVO News." The newsletter is produced by the communications staff at HVO.

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