

2018 - A Very Successful Year



Dear Friends;

Some exciting changes are happening here at the International Eye Institute (IEI). This year has been a very successful one with 3 medical/surgical eye teams going to Central America. Two of those teams continued to expand our collaboration with Hospitalito in Guatemala and we had a small team continue to provide eye care in Honduras as well.

In 2018 our teams treated 873 patients, performing 150 surgeries. The majority of surgeries were sight-restoring, and often life-changing, cataract surgeries with new lens implants. This added up to over \$300,000 worth of donated medical and surgical care to people who otherwise would have no access to care! Although our eye work began in the early 1990s, we only started keeping track of statistics in 2005. During that time, we have provided care to over 10,000 patients including over 2000 surgical procedures. Our volunteers have donated over 20,000 hours of their time to provide this quality eye care. We have provided over 3 MILLION dollars 'worth of medical and surgical services (a conservative estimate) to our patients who would not have had care otherwise. We're proud of this legacy and excited to continue to volunteer our services, with your support.

As you probably know, we are a 501(c)(3) non-profit and your donations may be tax deductible to the full extent of the law. You can make donations by check.

Please note our **NEW MAILING ADDRESS:**

International Eye Institute
310 S. 13th Street
Coeur d' Alene, ID 83814

You can also give a donation by using PayPal or a credit card here. eyegive.org

Over the decades, since our inception, we have encountered many stories of lives that have been dramatically changed by the efforts of our volunteers. One recent story stands out in my mind, largely because of the outstanding follow-up that we've been fortunate to learn of: It's the story of a young family with blinding cataracts. The father, Baltazar, along with his three children, were all blind from early childhood cataracts. We had the good fortune of being introduced to Jordan Halland by one of our volunteer nurse anesthetists, Mike Oswald. Jordan is a very talented film maker and he happened to join our team a couple years ago when this family showed up to our Hospitalito clinic in Guatemala. Jordan volunteered his time and talents and produced a 2 minute, powerful trailer called MIRA (<http://www.jordanhalland.com/mira/>) that briefly tells their story. And best of all, he has done extensive follow-up so that we may get a glimpse into their lives before and after their surgeries... such a treat! He is currently working to **find funding** to make a full-length feature film of this family's story. I hope you take a few minutes of your time to check this out.

This is just ONE example of the difference made by your donations and the powerful work of our volunteers! Every patient we treat has a unique story...

We can provide this amazing care because of the generous donations of time and talent that our volunteers give, and because of the wonderful support we receive from a variety of sources: We are indebted to the

Southern Eye Bank foundation for their generous annual support. AmeriCare provides us with donated medical supplies for every trip we make. We have a wonderful relationship with Dennis Deters and Vantage Outsourcing that supports our work with donated equipment and supplies. Alcon, AMO, Kevin Penelerick with Henry Schein and North Idaho Home Health have all provided us with surgical supplies and intraocular lenses. And of course, we are completely dependent on our individual donors' generosity to keep us afloat. We truly appreciate the support and encouragement you give us and we promise to be good stewards of your donations. As you can see, because of the willingness of our volunteers to spend their time, talents and money on this important work, we are able to leverage your donation dollars to an incredible extent. I hope you'll consider giving to our cause this year as well.

In other news this year, we are excited to report that we are collaborating with and supporting a new, local, Guatemalan ophthalmologist in Santiago Atitlan, Guatemala. Dr. Vicky Loza travels to this community once a week and we hope she will be able to provide better continuity of care to our patients there throughout the year.



This is also a year of transition for me. I have stepped down as President of IEI but will continue to remain on the board and participate in IEI's work, hopefully for years to come. I look forward to continuing to support the great work that IEI does. I am heartened that a younger, talented, energetic generation of surgeons and other healthcare professionals are willing and able to invest their time and talents in this wonderful endeavor, so it is time for me to let them take the reins and fly! Dr. Pulin Shah has been a stalwart colleague and has been working by my side for the past 13 years at IEI. The board has bestowed upon him the honor of President. Dr. Dave Dance has now led 3 annual teams to Guatemala with the fine coordinating assistance of Julie Crandall, RN! They have both also joined the Board of IEI. Dr. Dance has taken on the role of Vice President and Julie is now Secretary of the Board. I have taken the role of Treasurer and am grateful for the years of dedicated service that Karen Sines donated to this task.

Mary Sibulsky, RN - our team coordinator extraordinaire - will be stepping down from her role after our Guatemala Trip next May. She is currently in the process of training Peggy Palmer, a former IEI volunteer to take this job. We are sad to see Mary go, and warmly welcome Peggy to the team.

Drs. Shah and Dance are two very fine surgeons with big hearts and fresh ideas. I welcome them both with open arms and expect IEI to blossom under their leadership.

I wish you all a very happy and healthy holiday season and a new year full of joy!

Sincerely,

Justin StormoGipson, MD

From the President of International Eye Institute

It has been a privilege to work with and learn from Dr Justin StormoGipson over the past 13 years, and I appreciate the honor of assuming the role of President of the IEI Board. Our impact in Guatemala has grown impressively, and we will continue to seek out new opportunities to help those in need there and elsewhere. Along with Dr David Dance, I look forward to serving the IEI family as we enter into this transition. Again, thank you all for your continued support of this precious non-profit organization which has changed the lives of so many people, including myself.

Pulin Shah, MD