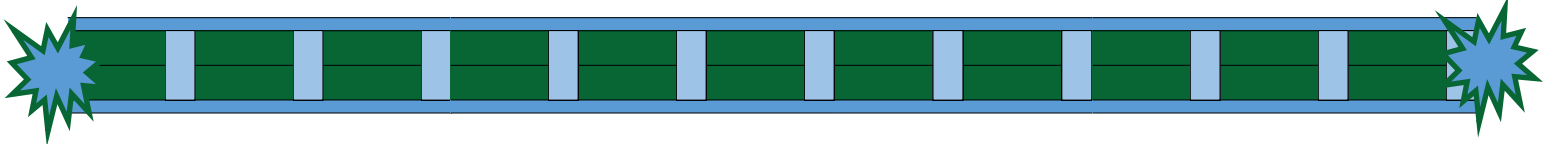


International Eye Institute 2020



The year 2020 was supposed to be the year of Vision with its 20/20 perfect vision theme. The International Eye Institute (IEI) had ambitious plans for 2020 with two medical missions planned to Santiago, Atitlan, Guatemala in May and November. Our May team was “locked and loaded” with supplies packed, airline tickets purchased, and accommodations arranged when the pandemic hit and travel was shut down. Shortly thereafter, our November team also abandoned preparations when it became clear this trip would not be possible.

The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted lives and communities across the globe. We have all endured shutdowns, quarantines, furloughs, lost wages, political turmoil, cancelled trips and a host of other unwelcome challenges. Guatemala has been particularly hard hit. When strict quarantines were put in place and the economy ground to a halt, many families were cut off from their meager means of survival and are struggling just to put food on the table.



A 12 year-old named Emma recently shared some wise counsel. She said, “My mom told me, that when you’re feeling down, go sob for a while, then get up and find someone to help.” While the International Eye Institute has been limited in our most effective means of curing preventable blindness, we have found ways to continue our cause, thanks to our generous donors. We will highlight just six here:

DONATIONS to HOSPITALITO

Most of our work happens in coordination with the local hospital in Santiago called Hospitalito. When we organize these trips, Hospitalito provides the infrastructure to support our work: a place to store our delicate equipment (surgical microscopes, cataract machines, instruments, lenses, disposable supplies, etc), operating rooms, exam rooms, social worker to evaluate patient needs, means of advertising the medical mission, nursing staff to help care for patients, etc. While our surgeons, and volunteers from the US donate their time and expertise, we do not expect the same from our Guatemalan staff—who we pay wages for time spent in our service. This is one of our largest expenses and totals \$5000-\$7000 per trip. This financial help also supports hospital operations for the year. Hospitalito, like all hospitals, has been particularly hard hit by the pandemic and does not have access to government programs like the US Payroll Protection Plan. For these reasons, the board of IEI authorized **\$13,000 in support to Hospitalito for year 2020.**



SPONSORSHIP of LOCAL DELIVERY OF CARE



When IEI first started its work at Hospitalito in 2012, we were doing extracapsular cataract surgery exclusively (a more antiquated technique). Since then, we have developed the capacity to perform modern day, small-incision cataract surgery with quality that rivals the work we do in the US. This is called phacoemulsification. We performed the first and only phacoemulsification procedures that had

ever been performed in this lakeside community. A few years ago, a kind-hearted, adept, and very skilled eye surgeon named Dr. Vicky Loza began working in this remote town, Santiago Atitlan. Dr. Loza has begun collaborating with us in our work, joining us to help screen patients and has started to operate with us. She is still developing her proficiency in the phacoemulsification technique and one of our goals has been to support her development as a surgeon. On each of our recent trips, we have dedicated a few days to sitting at the operating microscope and mentoring Dr. Loza as she operates. Not surprisingly, she has taught us a thing or two as well. The pandemic has highlighted the problem with a community being dependent on outside help; it has also inspired further collaboration with Dr. Loza. Our hope is for the day when Lake Atitlan no longer needs IEI. Over the next 6 months, IEI has committed to sponsoring 4 cataract surgeries/month to be done by Dr. Loza on patients she already has in her practice, but that cannot afford her professional fees. One of our board members will be traveling to Guatemala in December (to scout conditions for our 2021 May trip) and to bring a donation of supplies to be used for the patients we are sponsoring. IEI will be paying a reduced professional fee to Dr. Loza to perform these sponsored surgeries. This has three purposes: 1) help build Dr. Loza's practice and 2) give Dr. Loza more surgical experience through increased case volume and 3) provide surgery for patients that missed the opportunity to participate in our May/Nov surgical mission trips. **IEI has committed \$8000 in financial support to this sponsorship program over the next 6 months.**



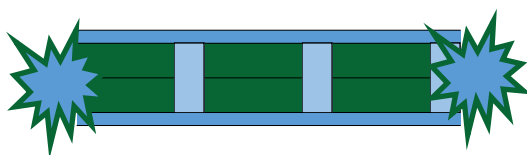
DONATED EQUIPMENT

A generous donation from Southern Eye Bank allowed us to purchase another portable operating microscope, two surgeon stools, and an A-scan to be used during our surgical mission trips to Hospitalito. These were shipped and in place for our May 2020 team.

IEI members sourced and shipped another AMO Whitestar phacoemulsification machine with supporting supplies to be donated to local surgeons in Guatemala in October 2020. This machine is in transit now.

IEI is also preparing to ship an IOL-Master 500. This machine is used to accurately measure the eye and predict the appropriate lens to implant at the time of surgery.

Providing donated equipment is one way we are trying to build the infrastructure necessary to deliver high quality eye surgery in Guatemala, reduce cost for patients, and increase access to care locally.

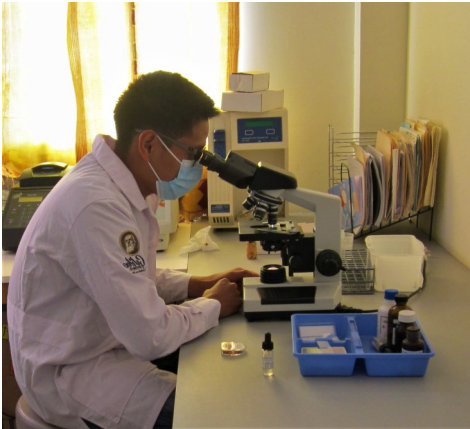


NEW RETINAL SERVICE at HDLF

We have a long working relationship with an excellent organization, Hospital de la Familia (HDLF) that provides medical and surgical care to all-comers in western Guatemala and southern Mexico. They are embarking on an exciting project to provide quality retinal care for diabetic and other patients who otherwise would not have access. We are honored and proud to contribute to this effort and hope to, one day, offer expanded retinal services to the people in Santiago Atitlan as well.



SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM RECIPIENT: Pedro



Pedro continues his studies to become a lab tech for Hospitalito. This year has been entirely online which is a new challenge for him. He is especially enjoying immunology and bacteriology and finds them highly relevant to the work he will be doing in the lab. He has also been volunteering in the lab at Hospitalito when he is not studying. IEI continues to provide scholarship money each semester, that makes it possible for Pedro to complete his education and

we all look forward to the day when he will provide enhanced services for the patients around Lake Atitlan.

OUTLOOK FOR 2021:

IEI is looking forward to its next trip in May 2021. Planning for this trip is underway. We anticipate high demand for eye surgery and our hope is to make up for missed opportunities.

Many thanks for your generous support. We will continue to stretch every donated dollar in unforeseeable ways!

Thank you from **The Board of the International Eye Institute**

