

members in the news

People Accomplish Great
Things as A Team!
Steven Miyamoto, DDS

UCLA and Loma Linda University, Team Leader Dr. Mike Roberts of La Palma, Dentis dental implant representative Shanon Browne, and Loma Linda family therapy student Grace Kim, traveled to a suburb of Guatemala City named Villa Nueva. A temporary dental clinic was set up in Verbo Church and consisted of twelve dental chairs equipped with compressors, two Cavitron cleaning units, a portable Nomad digital xray unit, an endodontic apex locator and a diode soft tissue laser.

Every morning clinicians greeted a waiting area full of eager patients where Dr. Christina Do and Dr. Victor Chu assigned patient numbers, triaged and designed an appropriate treatment plan for each. Then, under the guidance of experienced clinicians, students began

dental treatment. Dozens of church volunteers sterilized equipment, provided food, support, interpretation, and helped with patient management.

As Dr. Victor Chu explains: "I get so excited about these trips every year, not only because I get to see so many underserved people get help, but also see God do great things for the students and doctors who are touched by this opportunity to serve others."

"We used to extract beautiful anterior teeth because that was our only solution for treating a necrotic tooth or large pulpal exposure because the people just didn't have the money to get root canals done. It was so sad to see young men and women (and even older ones) cry because extracting the tooth was the only way to stop an infection from spreading."

Dr. Karen Jung remarked that "with the endo

handpiece, apex locator, and nomad portable x-ray unit, we were able to save many of these teeth."

The team was able to provide over \$60,000 in treatment during the course of the week. Procedures performed included composite and glass ionomer fillings, cleanings, surgical extractions, soft tissue laser procedure gingivectomy, surgical drainage of submandibular space infections, and root canal therapy. Over the years Dr. Roberts has led many missionary teams to Central America; still he is always impressed by the strong response students have to their experience. "We did more extractions in one week than in my whole senior year," one UCLA student said. But students did more than extract teeth. Because of the high quality equipment, including a new portable x-ray machine, students were able to provide excellent restorative

procedures as well. Grateful patients often respond with hugs and tearful expressions of heartfelt thanks. "It's so great to make such a difference in people's lives," said LLU student Peder Nordberg. "We don't see that much in the United States."

Dr. Mike Roberts is currently constructing a new team of dentists, physicians, medical and dental students to serve during the week of September 8th through the 15th. This upcoming medical/dental mission trip will be to a new hospital, just completed in the northwest mountainous region near Huehuetenango, Guatemala. So far, 16 health care providers have signed up, including six dentists, several assistants, six dental students from UCLA, a family physician and nurse. Dr. Roberts is

hoping to take more dentists and a pediatrician.

Dentists interested in participating in these, or future, trips can contact Dr. Mike Roberts, CMDA Southern California Area Director, at drmiker@sbcglobal.net.

Though this one trip might not have changed the world, to those who were served, it was a great accomplishment indeed. Working together, donors, supporters, supervising clinicians, students and church members were able to change the lives of some of the area's most needy people.

This spring students from UCLA and Loma Linda dental schools joined forces with volunteer alumni and the California Christian Medical and Dental Association to provide quality dental care to more than 300 underserved people in a temporary twelve-unit clinic in Amatitlán Church, (a VERBO church) just outside of Guatemala City.

Among the volunteers were OCDS member dentists Victor Chu of Irvine, Christina Do of Costa Mesa, Karen Jung of Fullerton, and Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon Steve Miyamoto of Fullerton.

Twenty-one dental students from both

