

# Impacting Lives Through Service

Quarterly Newsletter Q4



## Thank You Friends

### A Letter from Kyle

This past September, I had the opportunity to travel to Ethiopia for the 16th time. Ethiopia has truly become a second home to me. Each time I travel there something new and exciting catches my attention. This time it was the evolution of the Hawzien Primary Hospital and the growth of Dr. Tewabech Z. Hailu's leadership. When we first encountered the Hawzien Primary Hospital in 2012, it was a regional health clinic that served over 160,000 people. The clinic had limited supplies, very few rooms for patients, and absolutely nothing to serve the oral health care needs of the community. During that visit we made a commitment to help increase access to oral health care for that patient population.

Fast forward to this past September. The clinic is now a primary hospital with two chairs, a Nomad digital x-ray system, and now has a full-time dentist, Dr. Tewabech Hailu, or Dr. T. for short. We had the privilege to watch Dr. T. excel as an intern who served with our group at the hospital, and as a student with the dental school at Mekelle University. After graduating, Dr. T. committed to working at the hospital for two years serving the people of this community where her work continues to make an impact. Making an impact isn't always quick and easy. The late head basketball coach John Wooden at University of California, Los Angeles once said, "Good things take time, as they should." You plant the seeds, continue to water them, and at some point, you get to see the fruits of your labor. That's why we're so thankful for all of you who continue to support the PDS® Foundation and use your time and talents to plant the seeds for the fruits of tomorrow.



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# International Service

## Increasing Access to Care

We invest time and energy in making sure our children are set up for success, whether that be in school, sports, or other extracurricular activities. From the moment they are born, many parents are thinking about all the ways they can protect their children and ensure that they receive the best care and education.

However, the issue surrounding access to care in the U.S. still exists in 2019. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 1 of 5 children aged 5-11 years have at least one untreated decayed tooth. Now, imagine the lack of care in countries like Guatemala, Fiji and Ethiopia. The most basic healthcare needs are vastly unavailable.

Volunteers who take part in the PDS Foundation's International Service Trips are providing these communities with much more than dental care; they're also providing oral health education and oral hygiene instruction. Teaching children how to properly brush and floss to prevent future decay and educating them on how their diet can affect their health can save so many people in these rural areas from pain and disease. Hundreds of families wait outside the dental clinics with many walking miles to get there to be treated for advanced diseases that can often be prevented with proper hygiene care. However, lack of education and poor diet are the main causes of decay and disease. This reality makes the presence of our team of volunteers invaluable.

Collectively, over the 5 international service trips this year, volunteers donated over \$1 million in dentistry serving over 1,500 patients. Patients were not only relieved of their pain, but they also gained the knowledge needed to care for their health. This in turn gave them back their time and energy so that they can focus on their education, jobs, and families.



# Our Mission

## The Impact We Leave

Our mission is to create opportunities to serve through improving oral health care locally, nationally, and internationally. We realize the importance of serving patients, but also acknowledge the impact of serving our volunteers by providing them with opportunities to give back. By instilling a heart for service, our hope is that our volunteers are inspired to take this generosity back to their communities where they will continue to serve.

“It’s a humbling experience. The impact that we leave on the community as a whole is indescribable,” says volunteer Miriam Coney, RDH.

“The people here in Guatemala are so thankful, it is unbelievable,” said volunteer Dr. Deepika Dhama, DDS.

Learn how the PDS Foundation impacts communities by visiting our YouTube page.

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