

FALL 2008

# VOSH

California

Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity

## MY TRIP TO CHENAI, INDIA

*By Elizabeth Lee, O.D.*

**Travel Dates:** June 14-June 21, 2008

**Location:** 1 Hour south of Chennai, India at Little Flock Children's Home

**Partner:** Twin Lakes Church (Santa Cruz) Medical and Dental Team

**Clinic days:** June 17-20

**Patient count:** 140 (mostly elderly women + 15-20 Little Flock kids)

**Cataract referrals** (list given to Little Flock's Director): 50



Appropriately dressed in casual saris, we opened the Optometry clinic from Tuesday to Friday (four 8 hour workdays), seeing a total of ~150 patients. We were able to help many with prescription glasses that we brought from the U.S. However, many of our older patients had dense cataracts, for whom we made a list for referral to the Chennai Eye School. We also gave out a bottle of artificial tears and/or a bottle of Patanol (kindly donated by Alcon and VOSH-CA) to most patients. Little Flock and the TLC medical team provided us a translator, flowed the patients through the Optometry clinic, and dispensed medications. We learned how to ask "like this, or like this?" while taking rotating E visual acuities. And we even learned how to communicate by boggling our head side-to-side to indicate, "yes, ok, uh-huh, yeah, good, hi, and bye!" In addition to the clinic, a few people from the TLC team helped put together a children's English program for Little Flock's 41 children in the afternoon. Thanks VOSH-CA and Alcon for your help in making this trip possible!

Interested in becoming a member, or participating in a teleconference?

Contact:

Julie Forister, O.D.

[juliefy.vosh@gmail.com](mailto:juliefy.vosh@gmail.com)



[www.vosh-california.org](http://www.vosh-california.org)

# UCB VISITS PANAMA

*By Josephine Sandoval*

The UC Berkeley Student VOSH members conducted a trip to Panama from June 13-23, 2008. It was a very successful trip. Our group was comprised of eight first year students, three second year students, and two sponsoring ODs. We brought approximately 2016 glasses and of those 600 were sunglasses.

We spent day one at a local school in El Pantano and days two and three at La Clinica de Salud in Santiago. Our vision screenings included health histories, VAs, refraction, ocular health, and dispensing. Referrals were made for many patients with cataracts, pterygium, and some other sight threatening conditions.

The local OD, Dr. Sandra Wang-Harris, is currently working on a case study to analyze the overall impact our group made in the community based upon sampling a number of patient charts. Over three clinic days, we saw approximately 650 patients. We donated the remaining sunglasses and eye drops to the Santiago Lions Club for future vision screenings.

Some patients walked days through hills and valleys to then wait another day in line with no break to eat, hide from the heat, or to sit down. Despite all this, they still waited patiently and were full of smiles when it was their turn to have their eyes examined. I also have to say, the children were so well behaved that you'd wish that all your patients are children! They don't squirm, complain, or run away from your ophthalmoscope. The Panamanians' gratitude leaves you



feeling that this is a place where a little bit of your time can make a big difference in someone else's life.

Panama is a place worth visiting on its own. The landscape is unlike anything around Berkeley. The countryside locals were incredibly friendly (though I can't say the same about the city folks). One of my memories that captures my experience in Panama was during our post-clinic excursions. There were five of us making our way back towards Panama City. We were exhausted after clinic, bumpy bus rides, and sleepless nights of angry crowing roosters. With no public transportation to our hotel, we prepared ourselves for a long daunting walk down the gravel road under the scorching sun. By luck, a taxi passed by and our well experienced Peace Corps companion was able to flag it down. Relieved and without hesitation, we threw our oversized luggage (previously jammed pack with glasses) onto the truck. After hopping on ourselves, we asked how much for the ride to the hotel. The startled and confused driver then told us he wasn't a taxi driver but he'd take us anyway!

## SCCO's Annual Trip to San Salvador, El Salvador

- Aug 2– 9, 2008 (5 day trip)
- Leaders: Dr. Judy Tong and Dr. Mark Sawamura
- Host: My Father's House International
- Volunteers: 2 Doctors /12 students in total,
- Total patients seen: 500
- On hand: 2,000 pairs of SRx, 500 pairs of plano sunglasses

# Upcoming Trips:

## 2008 – Recruiting

- Thanksgiving (Nov. 22–24): Tijuana, Mexico by Dr. Barry Leonard
- Thanksgiving (Nov. 22–30): San Salvador by Dr. Greg Pearl

### Interested in Leading a Trip:

- Flying Sam (Baja, CA)
- CIVA vision (Nepal/Cambodia)

## 2009 – Recruiting

- Feb 27– March 5: Danlí, El Paraíso, Honduras by Michael Deegan from Mercy & Justice Outreach Ministries  
Contact: 310-275-0123 x115
- March 24–28: Loreto, Baja Sur, Mexico by Deb Wright-DeMaderios
- Summer 2009: Possible vision screening at earthquake area with Chinese Ophthalmologists
- Summer 2009: Possible Kenya vision screening hosted by Christian

### Donate Today

Your tax-deductible donations can help provide funds for student travel on SVOSH trips and support VOSH vision screenings abroad. We are also a donation collection location for Optic/ophthalmic text books and functional exam equipment for a new Optometry school in Mexico.

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### REMEMBER THE DATE

- October 22-24, 2008: American Academy of Optometry (Anaheim, CA)
- October 26, 2008 : VOSH-Int'l conference (Anaheim, CA)

### Board Members

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**2009 MEMBERSHIP DEADLINE: JANUARY 31st, 2009**

I WOULD LIKE TO ....

- BECOME A MEMBER OF VOSH-CALIFORNIA
- RENEW MY MEMBERSHIP
- MAKE A ONE-TIME DONATION

**INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP: \$50 per year**

\* Please make your check payable to "VOSH / CALIFORNIA"  
 Mail to: 14425 Chase St., Panorama City, CA 91402. Tax Receipts provided.