

Report to Board of Directors and Friends of Jamaica Dental Missions

Re: Mission conducted February 21-25, 2016 at the VanDomelen Dental Clinic

From: Roger Plante (with feedback from Michele LaBasi)

March 3, 2016

Unfortunately, I was not able to attend this mission and as I understand from Michele, who was the mission leader, she felt this was one of our best teams ever. I really missed not being there with them. The team was composed of several members from the Travis Air Force Base in Northern California and one member from Hanscomb near Boston. We are ever thankful to our Air Force buddies who continuously return to be part of our mission movement.

The February 2016 team consisted of:

Michele LaBasi, RDH, Akron, Ohio, mission leader

Dr. Ileana Townsend, Miami, FL., Oral surgeon

Dr. Kim Burford, USAF Travis, California, Dentist

Dr. Derek Owens, Nova University, Davie, FL

Emerald Sabecky, USAF Travis, California, Dental Assistant, Prophy Tech

Bronson Coles, USAF Travis, California, Surgical Dental Assistant, Prophy Tech

Daniel Jang, USAF Travis, California, Dental Assistant & Prophy Tech

Jaleesa Minor, USAF, Hanscomb, Boston, Dental Assistant

Stephanie Scott, USAF, Travis, California, Dental Hygienist

Merlene Sullivan, Jamaica native, Dental Hygienist

Patreace Lindo Sawyers, Jamaica native, Dental Assistant



THE Dream Team: Clinical

School Program

This mission although extremely successful was not without its issues. It seems that three weeks before this mission and after all missionaries had already booked their flights, the Jamaican

government announced its election day would be February 24, 2016 which was right in the middle of our mission; as Miss Bradford advised and we quickly found out, elections are very “spirited” in Jamaica. Due to this, they had to shut down our clinic early on two of three days so they could get back to Immaculate Hostel safely before the rallies (action) started.

Michele happily reported that this team worked in a diligent, yet relaxed and comfortable manner and that the missionaries quickly gained the trust and warm rapport with the patients because of their calm demeanor. As you will see in the tabulation of patients, 13 patients did not receive treatment because they needed so much work and had complications that they had to be referred either to return to the next mission, or to a hospital setting where general anesthesia could be used for more complicated procedures.

Many patients who presented to have teeth extracted were pleasantly surprised when the doctors informed them the tooth could be saved with restorative work, which we were able to get done because we had three working dentists on this team.

Relating to hygiene work, for a great number of our patients this was their first visit to the dentist and as Michele put it, “...calculus deposits were so tenacious it was difficult even for the most seasoned hygienist to remove.” In many cases the RDH was only able to clean one or two quadrants of the mouth because of time constraints, but this is a beginning and the patients were asked to return next month for follow up work at the March mission with the Boston team.

As relates to our work at the local schools, we had a long standing request for our dental people to deliver services at the Saint Peter Claver, a nearby school, also in an extremely impoverished area of Kingston. Because we had such a mobile and energetic staff of missionaries, we were able to see and treat 272 patients at the school. Thanks to Father Raphael and Miss Bradford who helped coordinate transportation, setup etc. which made this effort possible. There are 580 students at the St. Peter Claver School and hopefully we will see the rest of them soon at another mission---possibly in March. The administrative staff at this school was extremely helpful and well organized, as they provided persons from the parents’ pool to aid in the facilitation of the project.

Although our actual work hours were cut short because of the elections, very satisfactory results were accomplished.

The patient tabulations are as follows:

	Monday 2.22.16		Tuesday 2.23.16		Wednesday 2.24.16		Total	
	Patient s	Procedures	Patient s	Procedures	Patient s	Procedure s	Patient s	Procedure s
Cleaning Patients	21	21	19	19	24	24	64	64
Restorative Patients	14	23	16	26	17	26	32	75
EXT Patients	16	32	14	24	20	31	50	87
Consultation/Referral	6		3		4		13	
TOTALS	57	82	52	72	65	85	159	226

School Program								
OHI, Eval, Fl tx	111	111	111	111	50	50	272	272
Treated in clinic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Clinic/School	168	193	163	178	115	130	431	498

To quote from Michele’s report, “I have names and images of patients’ faces embedded in my mind of their beautiful smiles and polite mannerisms. I arrive to work with strangers and leave having made new friends. I have developed relationships with the Jamaican support team and look forward to seeing them each time I return. I will continue to recruit for volunteers and seek used and new dental equipment to help bring dental care and compassion to those who don’t have access to dental care in Kingston.”

As usual, we always are looking for qualified persons to work in our mission programs and for financial support of our mission work. As it stands now, the March 30 team and the May 22 team are fully staffed and we are booking to complement our returning July, September and November teams.

If anyone would like to see Michele’s detailed report, it is available. Just let me know and I’ll forward it. Also if you look up Michele LaBasi on face-book, you will be privileged to see hundreds of photos of this mission team.

