

JAMAICA OUTREACH PROGRAM

REPORT TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS & other interested parties

Re: Dental Mission to St. Pius—Kingston, Jamaica; September 24-29, 2023

From: Michele LaBasi, MEd, BS, RDH

September 2023 Clinical Team



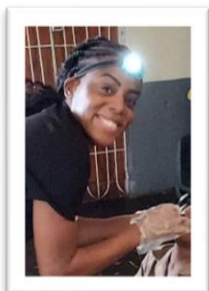
CLINICAL New: Shanetta Pickens, RDH (IL), Jessica Silva, RDH (NC), Denisha Stewart (JA), Nick LaBasi, Layperson (OH) **Returning:** Dr. Renee Batts (JA), Ayjha Smith (JA), Keváun Harvey (JA) Michele LaBasi, RDH, (OH) We are missing many of the JA support team from this photo due to availability and timing. This photo was taken indoors while a heavy tropical downpour was occurring outside.

Background I arrived two days ahead of the team in order to take a trip to Seaford Town (ST) where JOP has a remote clinic which also holds medical and optical missions. I was accompanied by my husband, Patrick our expert driver, and Boxer who knew which roads to take for the three-hour journey from Kingston. The last dental mission in ST was in 2018 and expired materials needed to be sorted through and disposed of. An inventory was taken in order to assess what would need to be ordered for a future mission. Arrangements will need to be made to evaluate how well the dental units function due to reported issues on the 2018 missions and determine which pieces of equipment (curing light, triturator (mixing unit for fillings), and radiographic) could possibly be loaned from the clinic in Kingston. This would avoid the need to purchase for infrequent use in ST. I suggest the same is done for dental materials to avoid having them expire before they can be used. It may require arriving early prior to the next mission to Seaford Town to take what is needed and return after its use. Other suggestions are welcome.

The July mission in Kingston ended knowing we would need to find a replacement sensor for taking dental radiographs (see July Report). The images are essential for the dentists to diagnose prior to providing care such as fillings and extractions. The JOP board voted to approve the purchase of a new sensor at the August meeting which was obtained early in September and installed on the clinic laptop prior to the mission. It performed brilliantly. The September team was intentionally kept to a smaller number in order to allow repairs to be made to a wall in room #1 where a large hole needed to be repaired following the removal of the old x-ray unit. Nick LaBasi (first time layperson) volunteered his time and home repair skills to complete that task as well as other small jobs around the clinic.

The Mission

School Program



September is traditionally the start of a new year of missions to coincide with the beginning of a school year. We held a four-day mission utilizing the first day for screening three classes of 6th graders for a total of 112 students receiving an oral hygiene presentation, screening and fluoride varnish application. Mrs. Morris James, Vice Principal at DuPont Primary stopped by the clinic and shared how the teachers report the effectiveness of the school oral health program. Over the years, they notice their students not being in pain and discomfort from dental disease as they had in previous years. There were six 6th graders identified for receiving dental care in the clinic.

Photos: Shannetta, RDH and Jessica, RDH screening for oral disease.

Marie Mattai, a faithful regular volunteer to the dental missions records the findings when called out by the RDHs.



Clinic

Dr. Renee Batts returned as well as Keváun Harvey and Ayjah Smith (dental students at UTech in Kingston) as dental assistants. Denisha Stewart, a Jamaican dental assistant from Dr. Sarah Tibby's office (Friend of JOP) was also available. The three assistants worked in shifts as their schedule allowed. We are grateful for the local support from these dental professionals.

Total Patients- 67, RDH patients: (periodontal procedures)- 37, all hygiene patients received an oral hygiene kit (toothbrush, interdental aid, and toothpaste) for home use. Dentist patients: Fillings – 17, Extractions- 21, Patients were given post-op instructions, dispensed OTC pain medication, and an antibiotic as determined from need by Dr. Batts. Not seen due to medical contraindications – 3 (1. B/P too high and 2. Child did not collaborate).

Shanetta provided triage and local anesthesia while Jessica took care of the majority of the hygiene patients until she needed a break from the physical demands required of a dental hygienist. The mission accomplished a lot in terms of preventive and therapeutic periodontal (gums and bone) health.

There was also an area wide black out which disrupted operations for a time one afternoon, but Dr. Batts was not deterred and kept working by flashlight.

Due to the Immaculate Conception Hostel being closed for the month of September, the non-residents in Kingston stayed at the Stella Maris Hostel which is nearby. Sr. Mary Andrew was our gracious host and made sure we were comfortable by having our needs met.



Going Forward

Preparations for the November mission began well before August as it will be a larger team and we anticipate seeing the majority if not all of the remaining students at Dupont Primary School. This will help us identify the most immediate needs for dental care before they become dental emergencies. We have a full team of Registered Dental Hygienists and three dental assistants. Dr. Batts will be returning for the days she can spare from her busy schedule and **we are in desperate need of 1-2 more dentists for the November mission.** A pedodontist and/or oral surgeon would be ideal but truly, anyone with a heart for providing dental care to those in need are welcome.

I will be requesting some replacement equipment for the board's approval in the upcoming weeks to assure the clinicians have what they need for everyone's benefit (clinicians and patients).

We have a good supply of adult size toothbrushes thanks to a generous donation from GEHA in the US (initiated by Marilyn Brantley) but we are in great need of youth size toothbrushes, small toothpaste, and floss for the oral hygiene kits given to each student. Please let me know if you are able to donate these and I'll find a way to get them to Kingston. – mlabasi.jop@gmail.com

We are also in need of updated curing lights, ultrasonic scaling units, and polishing handpieces such as Prophy Pal or cordless.

A tax-deductible receipt will be gladly issued! Please contact JOP at Info@JamaicaOutreach.org on how to donate.

If you or anyone you know would like more information about serving with JOP on a dental mission, contact:

Roger Plante rogerplante10@gmail.com

Michele LaBasi mlabasi.jop@gmail.com or Info@JamaicaOutreach.org.

It's been a joy to serve with Jamaica Outreach Program for my 10th Dental Mission. I've made many friends from around the United States, Caribbean, and the world as a result of being involved with the outreach. It's helped me grow as a person and deepen my faith as I rely on God for our needs. When I shared with Mr. Rowe, the school principal how many missions I've been on, he replied, "Why not make it 15 or 20?" So, on to the next milestone.



Truth be told, there was some time for indulgence and we were able to stop by the world-famous Devon Ice Cream shop and enjoy a cone.