

Honduras Rural Healthcare Program Begins

In January 2017 HMA's Honduras Rural Healthcare Program began operation out of the home-clinic of Saira Giron in La Boquita, Honduras. This program represents the culmination of the vision of Dr. Howard Braby, who returned from a health mission to Honduras in March 2016 challenging HMA to hire Saira full-time when she graduated University as a Professional Nurse in December 2016. Hiring Saira would allow her to continue the healthcare she provides in her own village and begin serving a number of surrounding villages which have little or no access to a healthcare professional. In Honduras nurses are able to provide treatment independent of doctors, who are few and far between.

In the first six months of operation, Saira treated 1,405 patients from 18 different villages. Twelve percent of those patients were two years old or younger. She

regularly travels to four villages and as roads permit to a few others. As word has spread about her home clinic, many from other villages are finding their way to La Boquita.

HMA has also invited Community of Christ Central American Mission Center leadership to identify nearby congregations where Saira can offer health services and educational classes.

Funding for the program's first year of operation comes from a Community of Christ Tangible Love grant, a very generous donation from the Mission Road Congregation in Prairie Village, KS, and several individual donors. In addition, the North Georgia Volunteers are providing \$2500 of medications each year of the estimated \$6000 needed annually.

The program costs approximately \$2,000 per month to pay Saira's salary, and buy medica-

tions and supplies. We are currently raising the funds for year two of this important program. Your donations to the Honduras Rural Healthcare Program will help continue the care of over 2,000 villagers in this impoverished part of the world .



Saira getting a medical history from a young patient.



El Refugio Children's Home

Outside the city of San Pedro Sula, Honduras is the children's home, El Refugio. El Refugio is one of the places where HMA Health teams visit to provide well-child exams. This past March when the HMA team of Dr. Ron Edwards, Sue Edwards, RN, and Beth Franklin, RN (pictured on the left), visited El Refugio they brought more than medical expertise. They brought the children much needed funds donated by the Salem Illinois Community of Christ congregation .

Meet Saira

Saira Giron, the Professional Nurse who runs our Honduras Rural Healthcare Program has a long history with HMA. In 2010, as an auxiliary nurse she began seeing people in a bedroom in her home. In 2012, HMA raised funds to add a room onto her home so she could have dedicated space for exams, medicines and supplies. The program is based out of Saira's home clinic in La Boquita, Honduras.

Saira is married with four sons. Her husband, Hector, is a teacher at a nearby rural school. Their oldest son has completed

university in Tegucigalpa, the capital of Honduras. The second son is a senior at university studying to be an electrician. The next son graduated high school and is also working as an electrician. The youngest son is in high school.

When her boys entered school, Saira entered a vocational program to become an auxiliary nurse. She received financial assistance from donors through the "Friends of Education, Honduras," an organization, which has close ties to HMA.

While working as an auxiliary nurse Saira enrolled in university to pursue a professional nursing degree. She had to travel long distances to attend classes and clinical rotations. HMA, through a generous donor, was able to provide scholarship funds for her transportation costs until she graduated in December 2016. In January 2017 Saira began her employment with HMA.

HMA is blessed to have such a talented, dedicated individual to run our healthcare program.

HMA + CAMC = 1st Camp Nurse

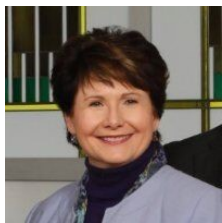
HMA is working with the Central America Mission Center (CAMC) to provide Saira's services as the first ever camp nurse for youth camps, reunions, and other gatherings of the Mission Center at the La Buena Fe facility in Honduras. After serving as the camp nurse for their youth camp in late January, Mission Center President Gonzalo Mejia wrote, "Sister Saira brought a good work and attended each one of our needs in the best way possible, demonstrating a spirit of humility, collaboration and above all great friendship with the youth and the ministers who participated in the event."

During the week of camp, Saira treated 59 patients among the youth and adults in attendance. She also provided private counseling to some of the young people with questions ranging from maintaining good relationships with parents to STDs. In addition Saira was able to provide public health inspection of the kitchen, bathrooms, sleeping areas, and water supply for safety and cleanliness.



Saira with girls attending the CAMC youth camp

Becky Savage joins HMA Board of Directors



HMA welcomes Becky Savage to our Board of Directors. She was elected to the Board at HMA's Annual Members meeting held April 15 at the Auditorium in Inde-

pendence. Becky, who holds master's degrees in Nursing and Religion, recently retired from Community of Christ appointment. She brings a wealth of experience in the areas of health and ministry including Clinical Nurse Specialist at Children's Mercy Hospital in

Kansas City, MO, Instructor of Nursing at Graceland University, Community of Christ Field Appointee, and member of the First Presidency. We look forward to her contributions to the Health Ministries Association.

First Time in Honduras: A Mission of Love

Dr. Mike Duke traveled with his first health team to Honduras in February 2017. He had an opportunity to work alongside our program's Professional Nurse Saira Giron at her home clinic and in several villages including Las Crusitas and San Francisco. He reported how impressed he was with Saira's commitment to compassionate care. Saira's presence also alleviated one of his concerns about health teams: Continuity of care. Health teams are good at providing care for health issues that are treatable with a single visit of the doctor, but lack the ability to provide continuity of care for chronic conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, and depression. Individuals receiving medications for such chronic conditions need ongoing monitoring for effectiveness and side effects. Saira provides that continuity of care broadening the type of illnesses HMA health teams can address.

Dr. Duke's trip was filled with memorable moments. One in particular was a 94-year-old man, nearly deaf, seeing the doctor because the pain in his knees, shoulders, and hands were preventing him from working in the fields as well as he had. He was provided with Tylenol to ease the



Dr. Duke and Saira examine a young patient

pain. But during his exam it was discovered his ears were filled with wax. Saira spent an hour cleaning his ears of the majority of the wax. His smile was huge after the procedure; he could hear again! He thanked Dr. Duke and asked him to come again so he could give him a chicken.

In a report about his trip Dr. Duke stated, "The experience was a reminder to me that sometimes providing caring medical service does not require the latest medications or the most advanced technology but compassion, time, and love."



Saira cleaning the wax out of the old man's ears while kids look on

Healthcare Education Endowment Fund Slowly Growing

Our Healthcare Education Endowment Fund is intended to guarantee many scholarships are given for years to come. The fund now stands at a little over \$12,000 towards our goal of \$100,000. Endowment interest earnings plus donations to our Indigenous Healthcare Education Scholarship

Fund allow us to offer 2-3 scholarships every year.

We currently have 3 students on scholarship; two medical students in Honduras and a professional nursing student in Guatemala.

Please help us by giving to this fund so, together, we can as-

sure an uninterrupted flow of trained healthcare professionals who can improve the lives of some of the poorest people in the world.



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Your donations to Health Ministries means...

The Honduras Rural Healthcare Program provides healthcare and camp services in rural Honduras



Health teams make well-child visits to El Refugio Children's Home.



scholarship funds are available to educate healthcare professionals in the 3rd world

Donations can be made in several ways:

- Go online to our website: hmacofchrist.org
- Mail us a check made out to HMA
- Call the office with a credit card donation