



Otology Missions for Teaching and Training

Physician education is the cornerstone of improving ENT health services for indigent communities, and there is a growing need for longer-term volunteers to provide training to physicians, specialist trainees, and allied health workers.

A number of Academy members work alongside local ENTs and other physicians to train them in advanced surgical techniques. They also give lectures and workshops at universities and local teaching hospitals. Richard Wagner, MD, of Global ENT Outreach, has conducted several temporal bone laboratories in Honduras and Ecuador, along with residents and medical students. Ashkan Monfared, MD, a former travel grant awardee, writes: "Chronic ear disease is endemic to Ethiopia and it afflicts close to 10 percent of the population. The primary goal of the trip was to familiarize and train local ENT doctors in the art of middle ear surgery...There is a critical need for long systemic training.

"In a country of 77 million people, there are only nine otolaryngologists, only one of whom is proficient in otology. The government of Ethiopia has identified as a priority the need to train general otolaryngologists in ear surgery. Through the transfer of knowledge, this training program, which...heavily relies on foreign medical experts for complex operative training, will enter the next decade as a sustainable residency program."

Other otology-centered missions include those of the World Hearing Network, under the guidance of David C. Kelsall, MD. The network has sponsored more than 20 missions, including Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru, and Vietnam. Academy volunteers with REL, led by Byron J. Bailey, MD, Brent A. Senior, MD, David S. Parsons, MD, and Craig P. Hedges, MD, have visited Vietnam and Cuba for eight years to teach local physicians and set up residency training programs.

Juan J. Garro, MD, travels often to Ethiopia and Peru, training the local surgeons in advanced otologic surgery. Anna H. Messner, MD, presents lectures at Ecuador medical schools and local hospitals. For several years, as a visiting professor in Singapore, former HE committee chair James D. Smith, MD, worked with local faculty to improve the residency training program, in addition to his teaching in Papua, Indonesia, Mongolia, and China.

To sum up, in Dr. Wagner's words: "The only way to improve the situation in the long term is to provide complete training for current ENTs and establish a program for training future ENTs and otologists in particular. Given the magnitude of the problem, it is obvious that treating a small group of patients alone will not have a significant impact. What is required is a comprehensive, sustainable program to provide services, materials, and otologic training."

If you are interested in joining an otology mission, both to teach and to provide clinical and surgical care, please contact humanitarian@entnet.org or call 1-703-519-1556.

Humanitarian Volunteers at 2007 Annual Meeting

Thanks to the enthusiastic volunteers at our Humanitarian booth in Washington, DC! The committee was represented by Jose E. Barrera, MD, Steven L. Goudy, MD, Nazaneen N. Grant, MD, Daniel Hwang, MD, William B. Lewis, MD, Lily P. Love, MD, Eric J. Moore, MD, Alfred M. Newmann, Jr, MD, James L. Netterville, MD, David S. Parsons, MD, Linnea Peterson, MD, James E. Saunders, MD, and Merry E. Sebelik, MD.

Other humanitarian activists included Vishal Banthia, MD, James R. Flynn, III, MD, Drew M. Horlbeck, MD, Robert Sean Miller, MD, Michael J. Reilly, MD, Sara L. Retsema-Richer, MD, Mrs. Cynthia Tucker, Trang Vo-Nguyen, MD, Richard Wagner, MD, and Erik H. Waldman, MD. If you volunteered, but your name is not on the list, please contact Humanitarian@entnet.org, so we can thank you!