

# SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

Working Together With Our Communities and You

The Newsletter of Shoulder to Shoulder and Hombro a Hombro

April 2013

## Brigade Builds Healthy Smiles



Third-year dental students from The Ohio State University joined us from March 10-18 to hone their skills and provide free care to 241 patients in our Concepción and Santa Lucia dental clinics and visited area schools to provide check-ups, education and fluoride care.

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## Staff Profile – Dr. Rodas



We sit down with Dra. Dairamisse Rodas Martinez, 25, one of Hombro a Hombro's social service doctors in her final year. We find out why she's wanted to be a doctor since she was seven, and why Equipos de Atención Primarias (EAPs) are her favorite part of working with Hombro a Hombro.

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## Check out our New Website!



We are pleased to announce our redesigned website is officially live. Our program information is up-to-date and the site is synched to our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages. All financial and personal information is secured with Salesforce, which will also allow us to be much more responsive to our donors' wishes and needs. Please visit the new page at <http://shouldertosoulder.org/> and tell us what you think.



## WATER FILTERS: PROVIDING CLEAN WATER TO THOUSANDS OF FAMILIES

Access to clean water is a major public health concern throughout the world. In Intibucá, poor water system infrastructure allows contaminated surface water to enter the water supply. The water in our area contains high amounts of parasites, bacteria and viruses.

For the last twenty years, we have worked to improve our communities' water quality through a variety of methods. Initially, we developed slow sand filters. These were made from local products, including concrete and sand. However, due to the low

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The first guests of our hogar in Concepción cut the welcome ribbon.

## Concepción Hogar: A Place of Respite for Expecting Mothers

On February 28, we opened a new hogar, or home away from home, in Concepción. The six-bed hogar offers pregnant women from rural areas a free place to stay as their due date approaches. Often, these women arrive with nothing in which to clothe their newborns.

We are working with the local *comites*, which administer our hogares in both Concepción and Santa Lucia clinics, to solicit community donations so the mothers receive a newborn gift basket. The basket includes reusable diapers, blankets, and clothes for the children.

## Hombro a Hombro Stats

March Clinic Births: 28

Dental Patients (to date): 960

Composite and amalgam fillings (to date): 1190

Prophylaxis/Extractions (to date): 297/517

School Dental Health: 611 students in 10 schools

New Water Filters Purchased (March): 250

## Water Filters (Continued from Page 1)

quality of local cement, many of these filters cracked and failed.

In the late 1990s and 2000s, we teamed up with John Gaeger from Toledo, Ohio and Rotary International to acquire and distribute 1,000 Potters for Peace clay water filters. These filters are easy to maintain, and have a two-year lifespan. Initially, Gaeger distributed 80 test filters in homes and returned after three and six months to conduct microbiological tests. The filters held up well, and all of the negative results were due to operator error. We then incorporated proper use and maintenance training into our distribution efforts.

Using the processes designed by Gaeger, we created a demographic surveillance system that collects information on the local population and environmental factors that we can also use within the medical delivery system to detect localized outbreaks of bacterial infections, parasites, and other water-related health issues. Using our health database, we can target populations that have poor water quality and high disease rates.

The local government and communities also share responsibility in maintaining local water and sanitation systems. Beginning in 2012, we partnered with a group of local Intibucá mayors to conduct a pilot project in the community of Agua Zarca. We provided the filters and data to target the neediest families, and the government assisted in distribution and maintenance of 70 filters and construction of new latrines. Recipients pay a small amount toward the filter, which is then held by the water board to fund maintenance and replacement efforts.

The health implications for some of the most vulnerable members of our communities – children – are grave. Diarrhea is the number one cause of death in children between the ages of 2 and 5. Those types of incidents can be greatly reduced by using clean water for drinking and cooking in the homes. Further, clean water reduces prolonged and repeated illnesses, which deprive children of physical and mental development at a crucial age.

The water systems in Intibucá are experiencing major stresses due to population growth and the age of the existing systems. The pipes are beyond their lifespan and many people create unauthorized taps, further degrading the water quality. Ultimately, Intibucá will have to invest in major infrastructure upgrades to meet its population's needs.

You can provide a family with clean water for two years with a \$45 donation. For more information on how you can help the project and updates on our distribution and monitoring efforts, please visit [our website](http://www.shouldertoshoulder.org).



## Dental Brigade Brings Healthy Smile

In March, six OSU dental students joined us at both our Concepción and Santa Lucia dental clinics. Led by Drs. Larry Tepe and John Burns, the students had the opportunity to increase their confidence, speed, and flexibility by working in different environments and seeing six or more patients a day.

This brigade would not have been possible without the tremendous efforts of Dr. Jan Tepe. The Tepes, longtime Shoulder to Shoulder supporters, have played a principal role in making the dental program what it is today. With the latest brigade, Jan spent countless hours planning, organizing, teaching, and preparing the dental students for this trip. She also negotiated with OSU before ultimately proceeding as an independent brigade with Dr. Burns graciously volunteering.

The students provided a tremendous benefit to the local communities, seeing hundreds of needy patients for cleanings, extractions, fillings and root canals free of charge. Part of their trip included visits to 5 local area schools, part of our in-school health program. The dental students provided check-ups and fluoride care to 150 children in four schools and taught them dental health and prevention skills. Our local dentists, Drs. Flor Amaya and Idalia Ramos took time to speak about the dental profession, education system, and life in Honduras as a dentist. They also learned about Honduran dental access and attitude challenges. Thank you to the dental students and their mentors for a successful brigade visit!

## Intibucá Bilingual School of the Frontier

Classes at the Intibucá Bilingual School of the Frontier in Camasca are in full swing. Currently, we have 28 students in Kinder (pre-school) and Preparatoria (Kindergarten). 11 students attend on scholarships, which are offered to all students on a need-based sliding scale. The school would not be a success without the generous and continuing support of the Good Shepherd Community of Cincinnati.

The frontier bilingual school operates on the American school calendar and utilizes many American teaching methods. The school has already garnered a positive reputation despite completing construction just this year. Currently, we are evaluating partnering with the Ministry of Education to operate the school as the first State-sponsored bilingual school that caters to underprivileged and indigenous students.

For the 2013-14 school year, we will increase enrollment to 20 students per class in 1<sup>st</sup> grade and Preparatoria. We also welcome the addition of Victoria, a local licensed teacher who graduated from university this past December. Victoria is passionate and great with the children. She is currently assisting the other teachers this semester before she begins teaching full-time next school year.



OSU dental students rebuild a young girl's tooth and provide check-ups at the local schools.



Dr. Martinez stitches up an elderly woman who injured her knee.

## Dra. Dairamise Rodas Martinez

Growing up, Dr. Rodas was regularly sick with allergies, asthma, and illnesses. She grew close with her doctor. When they saw one another, he would draw a piece of steak on her wrist and tell her that she needed more meat in her diet to be healthy. Seven-year-old Daira, a lifelong vegetarian, pledged that when she grew up, she would be a doctor and draw carrots on children's wrists, telling them to eat their vegetables if they wanted to be healthier. Today, Dra. Daira has twin passions in drawing and medicine.

Working for Hombro a Hombro in Santa Lucia allows Dra. Daira the opportunity to develop her clinical skills while also directly engaging the community with [EAPs](#). She has seen a full range of patients in the field, from caring for pregnant women with no prior prenatal controls, to seeing an eight-year-old who stays home to care for her mentally challenged older sister to a family with nine children who decided to adopt a child with cerebral palsy when girl's family would not care for her. This family, although desperately poor, still manages to feed and care for all of the children. In the months since her new family has adopted her, the cerebral palsy patient has greatly improved her flexibility, health, and happiness. Dra. Daira continues to visit the family and observe the patient's improvements.

After she completes her social service year, she plans to specialize in pediatrics or psychiatry.

### EVERY DONATION MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Shoulder to Shoulder/Hombro a Hombro and the people of Intibucá continue to benefit from your support in the areas of healthcare, education, public health, and quality of life. We are working toward sustainability in each of our programs. However, as we expand our care, we continue to rely on the generous contributions of your time, energy, money, skills, and supplies.

#### Ways to donate:

- Please check our website for all of the ways to contribute to the organization and to specific programs.
- Send a tax-deductible contribution to our accounting firm at: Shoulder to Shoulder Pohlman & Talmage CPAs 3445 S. Dixie Dr. #200 Dayton, OH 45439
- Provide a scholarship for a local student.
- Donate Spanish-language medical textbooks or journals for our physicians.
- Donate directly to a pre-selected patient needing high-risk or specialized care. See our website for details.
- Help our bilingual school and libraries by donating books of any level in Spanish and entry-level English books.
- Donate equipment, supplies, or medication. Check our website for a list of needed medications and supplies.
- Travel on a brigade or volunteer with us.
- Shop on Amazon through our website and Shoulder to Shoulder will receive up to 6% of your total purchase at no cost to you.
- Graduation is right around the corner – Provide a gift in someone's honor!



### SHARE YOUR STORY!

- Do you have a story you'd like to share about your experience with Shoulder to Shoulder, public health, or medicine?
- Recent accomplishment or publication you want us to know about?

We'd love to hear from you! Contact us on our website or e-mail Scott Reinstein at: [scott@shouldertoshoulder.org](mailto:scott@shouldertoshoulder.org).

## Shoulder to Shoulder/Hombro a Hombro

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Questions? Comments?

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Honduras Locations:

Clínica Hombro a Hombro  
Concepción, Intibucá, Honduras

Clínica Hombro a Hombro  
Santa Lucia, Intibucá, Honduras