



I realize that there are still people willing to help, to work hard, to change the world for the right reasons and I feel very happy and proud to have had the opportunity to work alongside these people: the CAMO staff, volunteers, and CAMO USA brigadiers.

Before I got involved with CAMO, I had little information about its mission and vision since I am originally from a different city where CAMO's warehouse is located; I wanted to know more, so I researched about CAMO and I was overwhelmed with all the information I found. Finally there it was: my first day with the CAMO staff. New faces and a new journey to begin with CAMO. As a dentist, I was given the opportunity to do my internship at CAMO's dental

clinic. I joined the work team a year ago working alongside the dental team and visiting more than 60 rural communities with the dental brigades during this time.

Once I got my feet wet I was so surprised to see how different CAMO was from what I read before; all the programs and services that CAMO offers and the daily impact in the health care system was way bigger than what I expected. I was happy for the experience with the dental brigades, having the opportunity to meet kind and friendly people as well as beautiful communities. I was able to see firsthand the endless need for dental care in my country. I saw how bad children's oral health was and the poor knowledge that they had about this subject. As part of dental brigades, I saw children, so cute and clever, but without access to basic needs and good education. One day during a brigade I asked one of the children, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" And he said: "I'm going to sell coffee to take food home." His answer hit me hard but at the same time I was touched that his greatest aspiration was to have enough food to eat for his family. I imagine the living conditions of his family and I liked hearing that his aspiration was something as noble and selfless as that his family would not be without food.

The work that the dental team does during the brigades is hard and sometimes feels like if we are throwing salt into the sea because there are so many people with so many needs and we have so little time and so little energy. We sometimes feel discouraged. It is almost impossible to help everyone and we feel powerless. But then we recognize that we need to start at some point because we can't eat a whole elephant at once; we have to eat it bite by bite. Despite the fatigue and tiredness after a brigade, we feel grateful to see a child who thanks us or smiles at us without covering their mouth anymore, who no longer hides their smile because they feel embarrassed of their dental cavities. It is all worthwhile.

I am very happy to have been part of CAMO for a year. The experience opened my eyes to things that otherwise I would not have been able to see firsthand. I was able to give a little and it makes me feel better now as a person and as a professional. Besides I have learned so much from everyone. I have so much to be grateful for. I know the doors will be open, even though I am going back to my hometown in San Pedro Sula, I'll continue studying to become a better professional because the work is not over yet.