



CAMO

A different kind of aid organization



Winter 2016 • Volume 25 • Issue 3

CAMO is a non-profit, faith-based organization. Bringing Hope to the Forgotten

MEDICAL SERVICES

Neurosurgery

Gratitude

Doña Berta began her 4-hour walk at 3am just to reach the CAMO Neurosurgery Team. But Doña Berta was not hoping for a miracle; she was hoping to thank the neurosurgeons for giving her a miracle healing.

At the CAMO office, Honduras Executive Director Jose Bautista (with his usual gentle spirit) asked Doña Berta if she was a family member of one of the patients.

"No," she replied. "I was a patient last year. I just came to say thank you."

Jose barely kept up with Doña Berta as they walked to the place where the neurosurgery team was screening patients. When she saw Dr. JC Tabet, Dr. Roberto Alvarez, Ed Rhodes, Mary Harris, Marlene Bennett and Deb Sorge, she could no longer contain herself. Doña Berta jumped into Dr. JC Tabet's arms. For twenty years, she suffered with pain. Today she is pain-free! For doctors and nurses, the gift of gratitude is the most memorable gift of all.

CAMO sees patients who come from humble living conditions, who work 12-

hour days making an average of \$2.50 a day, and who walk for miles with the hope of being helped. But it is **impossible** even for a hard-working family to afford surgery which requires more than \$50,000 worth of instrumentation and appliances. This year, some of the cases were devastating for the team to see, beyond anyone's capacity to comprehend in Honduras (including CAMO's). For instance, the lack of resources would condemn a 22-year-old mother to impending paralysis and eventual life support systems due to a vascular tumor in her neck.

So, the CAMO teams are faced with hard decisions. Twenty-five consults are preselected, and then only 12 patients hoping to regain mobility and freedom from pain are selected for surgery. Some people could wait until next year, but others would not survive. These are the decisions faced by Honduran Dr. Robert Alvarez and his USA counterpart, Dr. JC Tabet.

Don José was one of the lucky ones. Five days after having major back surgery, Don José walked out of the hospital, relieved from his previous pain. The smile on his



CAMO counterpart neurosurgeons
Dr. Roberto Alvarez (Honduras) and
Dr. JC Tabet (USA).

wife's face shows the impact this surgery will have on his and his family's life.

It is not possible in one team week to help everyone who is in need, but CAMO is grateful for the opportunity and the means to help 12 people. And CAMO is grateful for the medical professionals who volunteer their own time and money to change people's lives for the better. Their gratitude, like Doña Berta's, is undeniable, and such gratitude is contagious.



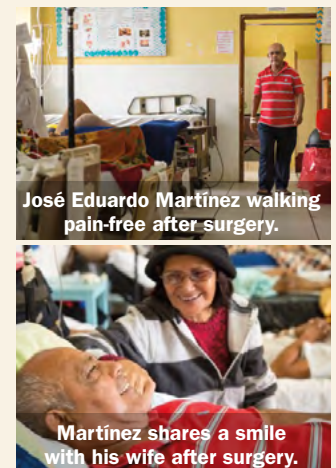
Visit Central American Medical Outreach on Facebook for more amazing testimonies!



With gratitude, Doña Berta hugs neurosurgeon Dr. JC Tabet.



Together in surgery, Dr. Alvarez (Honduras) and Dr. Tabet (USA).



José Eduardo Martínez walking pain-free after surgery.

Martínez shares a smile with his wife after surgery.

Striving to Meet the Need:

Interlinking of talents and service

During CAMO's October 2016 Team Week, the people who did not receive surgery were offered an alternative treatment for their pain. CAMO has maintained its partnership with Teleton (a rehabilitation facility in Honduras) for more than 20 years. This year, CAMO brought USA chiropractor Dr. AJ Rubano and his assistant, Iris Hess, to volunteer their services of continuing education for the Teleton staff. At first, 6 physical therapists wanted to counterpart with Dr. Rubano and Ms. Hess to learn new back strengthening stretches, exercises and therapy. At the end of the week, 15 therapists were staying late, wanting to learn more. They recorded the new techniques on their phones, and they practiced the exercises on their families. The following morning, Teleton staff applied their new knowledge on their patients. The staff's excitement spread quickly and was confirmed in their patients' improvement. After only one week, they could see the impact.



At Left: Dr. AJ Rubano and Iris Hess demonstrate stretching techniques. Dr. AJ Rubano and Iris Hess provide continuing education to Teleton staff.



HELP PARTICIPATE!

Eat at Chipotle
(in Wooster, Ohio) on
November 29 between
5pm - 9pm and help
CAMO raise money!

50%
of all proceeds
go to CAMO!

Reaching Further – Treating & Preventing

In 2015, a new doctor unexpectedly knocked on CAMO's door

Dr. Lester Coello was the first doctor in Neurology to come to the city of Santa Rosa, and he asked if CAMO would help develop his specialty to bring service to the very poor. CAMO agreed, investing \$5,000 in neurological testing equipment. One day each week, Dr. Coello sees patients at the CAMO-Honduras facility.

CAMO's familiarity with the specific needs of the poorest populations reaches across 13 cities. Collaboration with these cities' governments allows CAMO to identify patients, make appointments for them and get them to the right specialties for treatment.

“Many of the neurological conditions are due to prenatal care and malnutrition.”



Dr. Lester Coello with Griselda, deaf and mute as a result of Spina Bifida.

One such patient is a little girl named Griselda, who was branded as deaf and mute. Griselda also suffers from other neurological problems as a result of Spina Bifida. But because of Dr. Coello's willingness to serve and CAMO's dedication to its mission, Griselda is

receiving treatment and education in sign language to help her to communicate.

“Many of the neurological conditions are due to prenatal care and malnutrition,” Dr. Coello stated. His concern was echoed by CAMO's neurosurgical team, as two more babies were born with spina bifida during the October 2016 team week. Prenatal vitamins would have made all the difference in the world for Griselda and those two new babies. But when a family only makes \$2.50/day for 8 hours of work (which must feed an entire family), purchasing vitamins is not an option.

Good prenatal vitamins in Honduras cost \$6.00 per 30 tablets (or \$54.00 to cover an entire pregnancy). One way you can help is to provide funding for prenatal vitamins for one woman during her pregnancy. Imagine giving the gift of a healthy baby to a mother in need!

Education Begins With a Willingness to Learn

Sometimes the true needs are surprising

After serving Honduran people for 23 years, CAMO still is surprised by what the Hondurans themselves identify as needs. A CAMO-conducted survey of the public hospital nurses revealed what they felt would help them the most: classes on treating a patient with dignity. How is this taught? USA volunteers Monica Coventry and Linda Pratt stepped up to the challenge, creating a 3-hour course and an environment where the nurses could speak freely and explore solutions to patient issues. Team week began with an enrollment of 6 nurses in (2) 3-hour sessions/day. Soon, more nurses were requesting to be allowed to take the course. By the end of the week, the course had grown from 6 to 11 nurses who learned to create viable solutions to a variety of conditions and problems which robbed patients of their dignity. Many times, simply creating an environment where dialogue can happen is a catalyst which produces real change.

Monica Coventry is a Neonatal Advanced Life Support (NALS) instructor, and she recertifies the Honduran nurses in NALS every year. It is typical to be monitoring five neonates

at one time, all on ventilators, so having trained nursing staff is crucial. This year, the most experienced nurses took the instructor course, and 6 out of 6 became certified NALS instructors. This is another demonstration of CAMO's Model: (1) identify the need; (2) help meet the need; (3) provide education; and (4) train up trainers who will continue to help meet those needs in the future. A special thanks to the public hospital nursing staff for their desire and willingness to become instructors. Their effort and commitment will benefit future nurses and will save lives.



A few of the 16 nurses who participated in the family treatment course led by Monica Coventry and Linda Pratt. Monica also certified 6 NALS instructors in Honduras.

Where Are They Now?

JUANA MARIA



The summer 2016 CAMO newsletter (p3), featured the story of Juana Maria who suffered from two broken legs after a retaining wall collapsed on her. The hospital in her region refused to care for her because she couldn't afford surgery. Since she was unable to work, her young sons dropped out of school to beg for food. But CAMO intervened, making sure she received the care and dignity she deserved.

Since then, Juana Maria has had quite a turn of events. A taxi cab driver, moved by her situation, began to help Juana Maria during her recuperation post-surgery. He stayed by her side, and the two fell in love, eventually marrying. Juana Maria is walking again, and her boys are back in school. Now she lives with her new husband and her children in his home. *What a happy ending!*

Experience Makes All the Difference

Knowing vs. Understanding

"Sky over grass."

"White cable above green cable."

Simple terms help nursing staff remember proper placement of EKG pads. When placed incorrectly, mistreatment and misinterpretation of the heart rhythm can have deadly results. Nanette Sprunger has been coming to Honduras for years and has witnessed codes in the wards and the errors of treatment due to this simple mistake. So last year, her goal was to make

sure the lead placement was correct. And the nurses remembered what they were taught. In fact, those same nurses corrected other staff when they saw an error in lead placement. The challenge this year was to make sure they fully understood what they were seeing on the monitor. Although simple goals seem so basic to hospital nurses and doctors in the USA, some of this information has never been taught in Honduras. That's why it is so important to bring this education to them.



Nanette Sprunger educates Honduran nurses on correct lead placement and proper reading of an EKG monitor.

How Is CAMO Different?

There are other international medical missions, but...

Few mission organizations focus on the quality of medical care. In fact, many medical “Band-Aid” brigades provide inferior services in rural areas because they do not have a relationship with the receiving community’s health system. For example, some mission teams come and only pull teeth instead of providing cleaning and fillings of secondary teeth (when such care is available). Other medical mission eye teams hand out eye glasses without providing full medical eye exams, leaving people with undiagnosed glaucoma at high risk for blindness. Again, such care can be made available. Supporting CAMO is different. Since 1993, CAMO has been “the” organization with the experience, the relationships and the networks to provide quality services and education to people in under-served Honduran communities.



The October 2016 CAMO volunteer team.

On behalf of the poor, underserved people in Honduras, thank you to everyone who participated in the October 2016 CAMO volunteer team! Special thanks to photographer, Ken Cedeno, whose eye continues to capture the need in Honduras and the heart of CAMO.

Biomedical Engineers

CAMO’s “Unsung Heroes”

When a phone app, a computer or even a garage door opener malfunctions, the whole day can be affected. Imagine the incredible frustration when life-saving equipment malfunctions – an ultrasound machine or an echocardiogram – with no one in the entire country who knows how to maintain it or make repairs. This is why CAMO’s biomedical department in Honduras has been vital. Over 7,000 ultrasound exams are performed every year in the 5 maternal health programs CAMO supports. This resource would be impossible without CAMO’s biomedical engineer, German Barcenas and CAMO’s volunteer and partner, Nick Giarelli.



German works with Nick and his company to repair high quality ultrasound machines and put them to use. In turn, Nick has been the key to providing training to others and putting together “hero kits” for quick repairs of machines. During the October 2016 team, biomedical engineers were able to get an ultrasound machine up and running for the first time in a small clinic in the village of Belen Guacho. They also traveled to San Pedro to maintain the echocardiogram machine used for the children’s cardiology program. CAMO supports over 300 pieces of life-saving equipment, which costs roughly \$2,000/month. But without the biomedical team, CAMO could not do neurosurgery under fluoroscopy, or hook patients to heart monitors, or utilize ultrasound machines in an operating room. So, a special thanks goes out to the biomedical team – the “unsung heroes” who keep machines and equipment running so lives can be saved.

CAMO supports over 300 pieces of life-saving equipment, an impossible task without biomedical engineers.

UPDATE ON HOSPITAL DECENTRALIZATION

Waiting in the wings

CAMO continues meeting with political groups in Honduras concerning decentralization, but each political group sends a different message. The Minister of Health initially said (in writing) that CAMO would be the organization taking over the decentralization of the public hospital as of January 2017.

At this time, though, there is no guarantee the Ministry of Health will stand by this promise. Apparently, since 2017 is a political year for Honduras and election primaries are in November 2017, political officials are suddenly “unsure of funding” (due to campaign costs).

Nurses, doctors and other hospital staff of the hospital, however, are confident CAMO will do a much better job than the present management. So CAMO stands strong, ready to act when the opportunity resurfaces.

Breast Cancer Awareness in Honduras

The pain of loss does not discriminate

When it comes to losing a loved one, everyone feels the pain of loss. And too many people have had to deal with loss as a result of a friend or relative affected by breast cancer. In Honduras, breast cancer is the third leading cause of death in women. To help decrease this statistic, Honduran men and women must be educated on the importance of breast self-examinations. Also, people in Honduras must learn that they can benefit from early detection through CAMO's Mammography Program.

So, on October 22, Santa Rosa was dressed in pink. In a Breast Cancer Awareness effort, business balconies were decorated with pink ribbons and balloons (some even were decorated with pink bras!). The awareness campaign was joined by 45 Honduran-local businesses, with volunteers all wearing the same pink-ribbon t-shirt proclaiming, "Let's Celebrate Life."

Centro Park was teeming with volunteers sharing brochures which illustrated self-examination techniques and listed places where people could find services for breast health.

Judith Escobar, a youth volunteer in Honduras, was active in the breast cancer awareness campaign. She started volunteering with CAMO in the summer of 2016 when Ohio's Salem Mennonite youth group visited Santa Rosa. Since then, Judith continues to volunteer. Her efforts in the breast cancer awareness campaign inspired 44 students from 3 universities (University Center for Western Region CUROC-UNAH; Catholic University; and Metropolitan University of Honduras). Together they stopped cars and pedestrians, handed out stickers and initiated conversations about breast health. Everyone who passed by was asked to donate funds for breast cancer research and treatment. This event alone raised \$1,221. In Honduras, each mammography costs \$19. Although this does not seem like much money state side, the amount raised translates to providing 62 mammography exams.

No one cared about skin color, gender or political party preference on October 22; and no one cared about it being a cold day. Everyone had a common reason to come together: to raise awareness and make an impact. The marketing volunteers and staff did a tremendous job. Thank you!



Santa Rosa Local Business, Copan Dry



Santa Rosa Local Cafeteria, Cristy



Health Care Center Staff



Santa Rosa Local Business, Exprocci



Patricia Toledo



**Did you know that one
16oz water bottle filled
with dimes = \$100?**

Fill a "dime bottle" and help bring hope to the forgotten! Call the office at (330) 683-5956 for information on how to get a "dime bottle" label.



Youth volunteer Judith Escobar inspired other students to get involved.

Academy of Higher Learning

CAMO's goal for 2021

CAMO's goal for 2021 was to open an educational facility which would provide continuing education in the medical field. But in March of 2016, CAMO was propelled five years into the future with the donation of (1) land and (2) a shell of an educational facility. Since then, an advisory committee in the USA has been formed, with two of its members (Brent Devore and Nancy Nikiforow) spending 5 days in Honduras with CAMO during the October team week. Together in true counterpart fashion, CAMO-Honduras staff, board members and strategic leaders met with Patrica Scarpatetti (director of the organization, "Yo Quiero Ser," which donated the educational facility) to explore the levels, needs and gaps within Honduran education. Conversation consisted of many energetic and thought-provoking moments, but the word used most often was "gaps."

Meeting the present educational needs in Honduras will involve filling gaps

of non-existent education in the fields of specialty areas including respiratory therapy, cytotechnology and critical care nursing. There seems to be a direct link between these gaps in education and the leading causes of death in women and children in Honduras (the leading causes being cervical cancer



Academy of Higher Learning strategic planning session (in true CAMO counterpart fashion).

and respiratory failure respectively). Further, CAMO presently is forced to find host locations every time American Heart Association course programming is held. These courses include basic Coronary Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Advanced Cardiopulmonary

Life Support (ACLS), and Pediatric and Neonatal Advanced Life Support (PALS and NALS). The Academy of Higher Learning not only will allow CAMO to have a state-of-the-art training lab and materials housed at one location, but CAMO will also have the ability to run these courses constantly. CAMO is also in the process of examining other Latin American and Spanish-speaking countries to see if they have any set curriculum in these areas and/or would like to partner with CAMO.

The brick and mortar part of the Academy of Higher Learning is nearing completion, and it will open its doors to the public in March of 2017. The February 2017 CAMO team will assist in the installation of the telephone and security systems. The first programs to move into the Academy will be the short-term educational courses which include CPR, ACLS, PALS and NALS. At this point, pending items are parking areas, landscaping, telephone systems, security systems, furnishings and an emergency generator.



#GIVINGTUESDAY
11.29.2016

SUPPORT CAMO
on Giving Tuesday
NOVEMBER 29

Commit to a donation,
Volunteer your time,
or simply
Eat at Chipotle in Wooster
between 5pm-9pm!

Take an "un-selfie" telling the world how you supported CAMO on Giving Tuesday and post the "un-selfie" to social media with the hashtag

**#UNSELFIE. #GIVINGTUESDAY,
#CAMOBRINGSHOPE**



HAVE A DESIRE TO VOLUNTEER, BUT WANT TO STAY CLOSE TO HOME?

Consider "CAMO in a Box," a way to support CAMO without heavy lifting or traveling long distances. Host an awareness event wherever you are – "CAMO in a Box" will supply you with everything you need. **DETAILS COMING SOON!**

CAMO Saves Lives...and Changes Lives!

CAMO depends on the generosity of donors to fund its mission. And as 2016 has been a year of change for CAMO, 2017 looms ahead with even more opportunities to make a greater impact on people in need. Although CAMO saw a monetary decrease in 2016, your help CAN make up the difference. Please consider contributing to CAMO's Year-End Campaign. Every donation counts!

Hope for the Future

HONDURAS

Both at CAMO-USA and in Honduras, youth are looking for ways to serve. It is exciting to see youth become more involved with the world outside of their immediate surroundings!

University volunteer support has grown as well, and students have been vital in activities such as unloading containers and organizing medical supplies in the CAMO-Honduras warehouse. University Center West Region of Honduras (CUROC) students are always looking for ways to get involved. Many request CAMO to be the location for their one-month practical, the next step after they complete their coursework. For many of those students, CAMO's mission even becomes an inspiration for them to continue volunteering.

The Catholic University of Honduras (UNICAH) maintains its relationship with CAMO. This year, UNICAH students gave 12 hours of volunteer work cleaning and organizing the warehouse. In addition, these students volunteered with CAMO to train their student body in CPR.

On November 5, a group of 21 marketing students from the Metropolitan University of Honduras hosted a "Celebrating Life to Fight Breast Cancer" promotional dinner. The goal was an attendance of at least 250 people, and all proceeds were donated to the CAMO Mammography Program.

USA

Many young volunteers love CAMO's mission and are a critical part of CAMO-USA. High School senior AJ Miller, who always has a smiling face, helps a few times a week with data entry, sorting, boxing and loading containers. College student Erik Brown is a contagiously energetic volunteer who hopes someday

to be a biomedical engineer. He not only helps the biomedical team in the USA, but he also has been instrumental in bringing other groups onboard. Passionate new volunteer, 15-year-old Elle Norman, was inspired after hearing a CAMO Board member speak. Although Elle does not live close enough to volunteer onsite, she has agreed to do a large research project for CAMO. The fruits of her labor will help raise awareness and funds critical to CAMO's mission. Hannah Moore is working on a "CAMO in a Box" project which will take CAMO into every U.S. state. Several smiling youth groups, including Salem Mennonite and Smithville Mennonite, also happily volunteer at CAMO-USA. They are critical in keeping the facility and vehicles clean! Wooster Montessori School students are learning the power of volunteering and the impact they can make as they sort school supplies for Honduran children. CAMO also continues its relationship with Aultman College of Nursing and Wayne County Schools Career Center, recently hosting groups of nursing students for an entire day of sorting donations. Kelly Miller and Jen Rue's Business Professionals Association (BPA, WSCC) classes have decided that they can win a BPA award and have chosen CAMO as their charity of choice. They have committed to 500 hours of volunteer time this year, which also will include an onsite fundraising event. Plus, each of the 40 students has agreed to fill a dime bottle!

CAMO-USA loves young volunteers! Their excitement and enthusiasm are contagious, and they are the future hearts of CAMO.

YOUTH VOLUNTEERS



Although she lives too far away to help onsite, 15-year-old Elle Norman volunteers from a distance.



WSCC nursing students volunteering at CAMO-USA.



Founder and International Director Kathy Tschiegg explains the impact of volunteering to Wooster Montessori Youth.



**Volunteers
Needed
at the USA Site!**

Please contact CAMO
at 330-683-5956
or email us at
camo@camo.org



Youth volunteers from a Santa Rosa local church.



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CAMO

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Orrville, OH 44667

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Address Service
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Upcoming Events

Giving Tuesday November 29 • *Commit to GIVE or VOLUNTEER*

Chipotle Fundraiser November 29 • 5-9pm, Wooster, OH

Volunteer Appreciation Day December 7 • 10am-2pm, CAMO-USA

February Teams February 18–March 5, 2017

Golf Outing June 10, 2017 • *SAVE THE DATE!*

Salsa Sizzle August 26, 2017 • *SAVE THE DATE!*



CAMO is accredited
by the Better
Business Bureau
and meets all 21
standards.

*When you are done
with this issue, please
pass it along to
someone you know
who may be interested
in our mission.*

Visit camo.org or call the CAMO office **330-683-5956** for more information.



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See CAMO's story as it unfolds.
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and SHARE with your friends!



Be a part of CAMO's exciting
journey by subscribing to the
CAMO USA channel

WAYS YOU CAN HELP

Make a donation • Host a fundraiser!

Need ideas? Call the CAMO office or email camo@camo.org!

Volunteer onsite or offsite

CAMO needs volunteers!

Your legacy could include CAMO!

Consider planned giving!

Know someone who would like to learn about CAMO?

Please send us their contact info!

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Invite your friends to learn about what we do!

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