



# CHANGE A **SMILE** CHANGE A **LIFE**

## Winter 2015 DFA - Comitancillo Trip Report

This February, we had an excellent team of volunteers from all over North and Central Americas join us in Comitancillo, San Marcos, Guatemala. With a team of 21 total volunteers, we had representatives from Nova Scotia, Alberta, Wisconsin, Georgia, Indiana and Guatemala working on the dental mission trip. With a 50:50 mix of new and returning volunteers, we hit the ground running with enthusiasm and hard work.

Over the week we were in Guatemala, this group of volunteers treated 400 patients and performed 1229 procedures in 6 days. Some wonderful school children back in North America collected almost 500 pairs of shoes so that every single patient left their dental experience with a new pair of shoes to take home. The children's eyes would light up when they would get to see the hundreds of shoes they could choose from. The sparkly, Dora and Lightning McQueen shoes were the first to go. It was a wonderful way for our supporters back home to contribute something special for each of our patients.



DFA has been going to Comitancillo to provide care for almost 2 decades now and the results have really become evident in the past couple of years. Having a year round education and prevention program in place has started to show the fruits of our labor. There is a renewed emphasis on better hygiene and the community always knows and trusts the quality of care that Dentistry For All provides. Multiple people returned to have some work followed up on that had been provided on previous missions. They were given an appointment card to return at the next mission to complete treatment that had been initiated. They were always the first ones at the door and they were so grateful that they could return. They guarded over the past 6 months or year a card with a summary of the services provided previously and recommendations for future treatment. It was wonderful to get to return and deliver on those promises.

AMMID and DFA's staffer Edvin has been putting some excellent systems in place for education year round and also to help maximize the working efforts of any mission trip that comes to Comitancillo. Through his hard work, we were able to walk in to a fully set up clinic our first day which allowed us to start working right away and provide dozens of additional patients care.





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## Winter 2015 DFA - Comitancillo Update - continued

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The community made us feel right at home as always. They enjoyed showing the group many aspects of the Mayan culture through a welcome and closing ceremony, tortilla making class, relaxing in the Mayan Chuj (sauna) and deliciously prepared meals. I look forward to returning to Comitancillo again soon with another group of awesome volunteers. If you would be interested in joining us for either October 2015 or February 2016, please get in contact with me soon.



Thank you to our entire team for making this past mission to Comi one of our most successful and productive trips to date:

Indianapolis-Karen Ellis (gen DDS), Stephanie Wright (gen DDS)

Atlanta-Stephanie Trahan (gen DDS)

Milwaukee-Shane Fisher (pedo DDS), Herschel Shane Fisher (assistant), Brandie Henke (hygienist), Mary Ann McCoy (assistant), Eliza Gomez (assistant)

Halifax-Anil Joshi (pedo DDS), Atula Joshi (sterilization), Colleen Pascal (sterilization)

Calgary-Jan Jaffer (gen DDS), Isabel Stanleigh (sterilization), Nicole deGroot (assistant),

Candace Stripling (assistant), Randy Stripling (maintenance/engineer), Warren Mullenix (maintenance/engineer)

Guatemala-Juan Jo and Mariela (interpreting), Edvin (assistant), Alex (assistant)

See you again in Comi soon.

Shane and Shane