

MISSION OF HOPE, BOLIVIA NEWSLETTER

Volume 7, Issue 1

Spring, 2006



Patient with Dr. Ashish Mathur

On March 31, 2006, a team of faculty, residents, and medical students from the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Oklahoma at Tulsa arrived at the Mission of Hope clinic in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. During the week that followed, **every patient who came to the mission was examined. No one was turned away!**

Normally, we are able to attend about 100 patients each day, but there are usually more than 100 waiting in line each morning to get in. With the team from Tulsa, we were able to set up extra exam rooms and take care of everyone. This was a great blessing for our patients!

One of the patients who came was a young lady, 13 years old, named **Maria Gisela**. Maria is one of 4 children. Her mother is a single parent and earns about \$12 per week by washing clothes when she has work.

About one year ago, Maria began having episodes of **dizziness, shortness of breath, chest pain, weakness, and passing out**. Since developing these symptoms, she has been **unable to go to school**. Maria's mother knew that her daughter had a serious problem. She was very worried, but she did not have the money to get treatment. During this time, Maria's mother was often without work, and she would have to buy their food on credit.

The team of doctors from Tulsa examined Maria and found that she had an **abnormality of her heart**. The team paid for Maria to have an echocardiogram, which revealed a

hole in her heart between the ventricles.

If left untreated, this condition **can result in heart failure and death.**

After hearing the results of the echocardiogram, Maria and her mother were in a state of shock and did not know what to think. A few days later, they came back to the mission to ask if we could **help Maria to get the surgery she needs**. In Bolivia, a specialized heart surgery like the one Maria needs costs between \$5,000 and \$10,000. We prayed with Maria and her mother, asking God to calm their fears and provide the funds that are needed for this surgery. Gifts for Maria's surgery can be designated on the memo line of your check. We will put Maria's story on our web site so that you can follow her progress.



Maria Gisela waits for surgery



Patient with Dr. David Wiegman



Camilo arrives at the clinic

Camilo's Story

Late one afternoon, a young man named **Camilo** arrived at the Mission of Hope clinic with his father. They were hot and tired from their long journey. **They had ridden the bus for 18 hours** from their hometown of Tarija **to find medical help.**

Camilo is 26 years old and one of five children. His father is unemployed and his mother sells candy and empanadas in the street. They are **very poor** and live with relatives.

About one year ago, **Camilo noticed a lump** on his left thigh. Being young and athletic, he did not pay much attention to it. As time went on, he noticed that it had not healed and, in fact, was getting larger. One day while playing soccer, the lump

was torn open. The wound did not heal. Finally, he went to several different doctors where he lived, but **no one seemed to have a solution for his problem.** The wound remained open and did not get any better. He decided to go to Santa Cruz and seek medical help. Camilo's friends got together and collected enough money for him and his father to buy bus tickets.

When Camilo and his father arrived in Santa Cruz, they first went to the cancer hospital. The cancer hospital was closed for a vacation, and no one there could help them. Then someone directed them to Mission of Hope. They arrived at the clinic tired and discouraged, almost at the point of giving up, but here they found the help they needed.

A biopsy of **the tumor was positive for cancer.** Camilo was admitted to the hospital for surgery to remove the tumor. He thought that he might lose his entire leg. Mission of Hope staff went to the hospital to pray with Camilo. As they prayed, Camilo said that he felt heat pass through his body and a feeling of peace came over him.

The tumor was easily removed during surgery, and none of the rest of his body was affected. The doctors commented that normally the lymph nodes are affected at this stage of cancer, and they were very surprised to find no evidence of cancer beyond the tumor itself. All of the lymph nodes were cancer free. **Mission of Hope, Bolivia paid for all the expenses related to Camilo's surgery and post-operative care.**



Camilo's father telling his story to encourage other patients in the clinic

Mission of Hope, Bolivia

P.O. Box 4001
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Tel. & Fax: 434-977-4748
Email: cindytha@cstone.net
www.missionofhopebolivia.org

Mission of Hope, Bolivia is a
501c3 tax-exempt organization.

Camilo's father was so grateful for the care that Camilo received through Mission of Hope that he has been helping at the clinic, working as a volunteer, while Camilo recovers from his surgery. **We praise the Lord for Camilo's successful treatment and recovery!**

The Mission of Hope clinic officially opened its doors July 4th of 2002. As we complete the fourth year of operating our free clinic, we want to thank all of you, our supporters, for all of your prayers and gifts to the mission. We are making a tremendous impact, not only in the city of Santa Cruz, but also, as evidenced by the story of Camilo, in cities all over Bolivia. **Thank you for your faithful support of this mission!**