

# Neurosurgery Mission Trip Bound for Honduras

Access to Care



*Funded and operated by One World Surgery, the Holy Family Surgery Center is located on the property of the children's home Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos (NPH). The 2,000-acre NPH ranch is located approximately one hour northeast of Tegucigalpa, the capital of Honduras.*

Five members of the UM Shore Medical Group – Neurosurgery team will fly to Honduras in January 2020 to work with One World Surgery to perform 30 life-changing neurosurgical procedures at the Holy Family Surgery Center in Honduras. The Holy Family Surgery Center, opened in 2008, has three operating rooms, seven clinic/overnight bays, a dental clinic, and an eye clinic. Dr. Merlin Antúnez, orthopedic surgeon, is the full-time, on-site medical director. Dr. Antúnez and a team of over 30 Honduran staff provide consults and surgeries year-round, as well as follow-up care for all medical mission patients.

Team members participating in the mission to Honduras include: **Khalid H. Kurtom**, MD, FAANS, FACS, **Wendy S. Towers**, CRNP, first assist, **Tyler Gogoll**, RN, neurosurgical team lead, **Thomas Busch**, RN, surgical nurse and **Robert Brault**, surgical technologist. Surgical equipment specialist **Steve Lykudis** will also travel with the team.

The purpose of the week-long medical mission is to provide minimally invasive neurosurgical procedures to Honduras residents who would otherwise not have access to

quality surgical care. The team will use minimally invasive procedures to treat certain types of spinal conditions including degenerative or herniated disc disorders, lumbar spinal stenosis, instability of the spine and compression fractures of the spine.

In 2017, neurosurgery team members led by Dr. Kurtom traveled to Amman, Jordan to perform life-changing surgeries at the Istishari Hospital on patients who were suffering from a range of debilitating conditions, including injuries related to the conflict in Syria, advanced and untreated spinal disease, and previous unsuccessful surgeries.



*"Nothing can describe the sense of personal reward that I and my team members gain by doing these mission trips," says Dr. Kurtom (center). "We hope our mission will inspire all to give of themselves for the benefit of others." Shown with Dr. Kurtom are (l. to r.) neurosurgery team members Tom Busch, Wendy Towers, Tyler Gogoll and Steve Lykudis.*

"Here, we are all fortunate to have the health care resources we do and sometimes it is easy to take that for granted — most places in the world have limited access to advanced health care, and most have no access to neurosurgical care," says Dr. Kurtom. "Traveling on a mission to one of those places in dire need and providing neurosurgical care is considered a miracle for the people we help. As with our prior mission trip where we helped Syrian refugees in Jordan, our trip to Honduras will be life altering to those we help — and to our team it will be spiritually rewarding."

The anticipated total cost of the medical mission trip to Honduras is \$40,000 and fundraising efforts are now in progress to raise \$20,000 to help defray the costs of the trip. Non-tax deductible donations can be made to Chesapeake Neurological Surgery, Inc., 4346 Southside Lane, Trappe, MD 21673.

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