



December 21, 2009

Dear Medical Aid for Children of Latin America Supporters:

On a steamy, hot Monday morning an American surgical team worked screening potential patients for reconstructive plastic surgery in a decayed hospital in Las Matas de Farfan, a poor Dominican town in the hills near the Haitian border. An uncombed, but energetic young Peace Corps Volunteer (PCV) trekked down the Dominican mountainside from his remote working site to visit the clinic. He wanted to engage some Americans whom he hadn't seen for months. He principally inquired about a patient he knew that needed help. It was March of 1985 and the MACLA surgical team was about to meet our first Peace Corps Volunteer's (PCV) patient. Meeting that volunteer and patient would forever change the focus and success of our MACLA missions.

Pat Raycraft, the PCV, returned to his site and brought back Francisco DeLa Cruz, a 35 year old man that Pat thought had an ax wound to his mid face. Francisco was ostracized by many and lived as a self-sufficient loner and farmer. He actually had a huge, unrepaired cleft lip and palate deformity, mentioned in a previous MACLA letter. His saga continues.

Since the Peace Corps was launched in 1961 by President Kennedy's administration, over 200,000 representatives of the United States, Peace Corps Volunteers have worked in 139 countries. They are the grass roots of our successful surgical/medical teams. The PCVs help screen patients from their villages, act as interpreters, work with the medical teams in clinics and hospitals, operating rooms, warehouses, postoperative clinics and on the streets. We would like to recognize their incredible dedication to our patients in this year end letter.

Working with over 500 PCVs in the last 25 years has helped us appreciate the rigors of their hard work and the adventures they live. These mostly young women and men offer their knowledge and a good chunk of their lives just to make a positive impact on this earth. They teach, dig, plant, harvest, and improve the lives of the foreign countrymen they live with. MACLA's excellent medical care depends on them.

During this last February's reconstructive mission a young female PCV was in a corner of our postoperative room crying with a young patient. She brought Lidia in 2 years ago from her village for ear reconstruction (Lidia was born without a left ear). The final 4<sup>th</sup> stage was completed that day. In the last stage an earlobe was reconstructed on her new reconstructed ear and she was ready to hang an earring from it. Lidia now 13 was becoming a young woman ready to face the world feeling normal. Tears discussing earrings were tears of joy. Men may not understand this.

Francisco had his cleft lip repaired that first year, his palate the next, and his life was changed forever. Pat, a successful photojournalist for the Hartford Courant and a professional photographer, has returned several times to his old working site and returned this year to see Francisco and his old Dominican friends. His new photos are included as well as many other Peace Corps Volunteer patients.

Your MACLA surgical/medical volunteers have had another successful year operating on over 300 patients and medically helping a 1000 more. In 25 years operating on 7000 patients and treating ten of thousands more we continue to be humble and honored to do this work. The September ear reconstruction team was a huge success. View results on the photo page. We're readying for our February 2010 work in Santo Domingo and a ton of supplies was sent this month. We're returning to Bolivia this summer provided it is a safe haven.

Through your generosity, functionless hands now work, faces look more normal, ears are reconstructed, deaf ears hear and patients can walk and move about in a more normal life.

If you meet up with a Peace Corps Volunteer someday, hug them and shake their hands for us. They are indeed the most amazing ambassadors of good will our country has ever produced. We continue to embrace your kindness and, of course, we need more (kinda like our spoiled children). Thanks for your support.

Sincerely,

Thomas E. Geraghty M.D.

TEG:ml

PS: Added thanks to ex-PCV Pat Raycraft for his dedication, photos and follow-up. Ken, Kathryn, Denett, Terry and Gerry for their terrific warehouse work and Maja for organizing us. Thanks to Mike McQueeny for letting us use his warehouse por nada.



# MACLA 2009 – Successful because of our Peace Corps Volunteers



1985



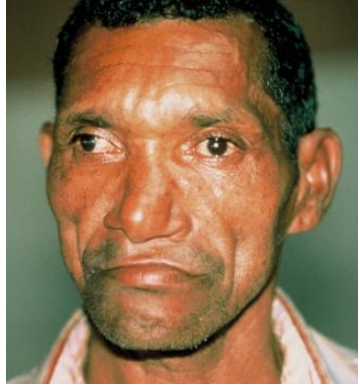
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2002



1986

# Francisco & Pat 2009

## 2009 Ear Reconstruction



Bilateral Otoplasty



After the First Stage of a Four Stage Ear Reconstruction

Below is a copy of a recent e-mail from one of our Peace Corps volunteer heroes:

Dr. Geraghty,

I hope you remember me, but I realize you've worked with hundreds of Peace Corps Volunteers through the years. For some reference, I was the Indian guy who went to the University of Texas (GO LONGHORNS!!!!) and worked in your clinics during 2000 and 2001. Life has been, and continues to be, an interesting path since those years.

I earned a degree in Finance, so after my time in the Peace Corps I went to work for Goldman Sachs as a banker in San Francisco. It was an interesting job, but my sense of morality kept me from staying on Wall Street for too long. I applied to Harvard Business School and finished my MBA in 2006.

I started a company last year in India based on something I had learned in your clinics. I remember one of your physicians telling me something that I will never forget: "most people suffer from simple problems – basic health information could have changed their outcomes." Getting the correct first aid info, learning the correct immunization schedule, accessing basic physical therapy, getting accurate information about diseases, etc. can make a tremendous impact on a person's life. However, most people in emerging markets don't get this information. It was a lesson I never forgot.

My start-up provides basic health information delivered via mobile cell phones in India. Since our March 2009 launch, we've reached over 150,000 users with basic information on diet, nutrition, maternal health, family planning, diabetes, H1N1, first aid, and women's health information. Several of my ol' Peace Corps friends have helped with content. We continue to grow and recently closed our first round of venture capital funding to continue expanding our business.

Anyway, on this Thanksgiving I feel joy that my productive efforts are put into building a company that is aligned with social good. I thank you for the inspiration. Our website is being revamped at the moment, but I've attached more info about the company here. Take care and Happy Thanksgiving!

Best,  
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