

HVO Celebrates 20th



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published by:

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REFLECTIONS ON 20 YEARS AT HVO

In December of 1984, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* published an article by Dr. Ralph Crawshaw, a physician in private practice in Portland, Oregon. In "Doctors Across the Sea," Dr. Crawshaw called for the establishment of an organization that could facilitate international medical professional outreach and exchange. In this article, Dr. Crawshaw cited the "enviable record of accomplishment" of Orthopaedics Overseas, "a graphic example of overseas' medical needs being met without government involvement, at minimum cost, with maximum return."

He concluded by stating:

You, as a concerned individual physician, can make a substantial difference to your colleagues in developing countries. If you genuinely wish to know how physicians in distant lands practice their brand of your mutual branch of clinical medicine, you can find out in understandable, personal terms. In fact, you may learn a great deal about the practical problems of resource allocation, the prudent use of high technology, and the capacity of human beings to work through and survive difficult complications without heroic medical intervention. Yours is the hand that may reach across international boundaries, to help others in the practice of medicine, certainly to help yourself. What it takes to make the difference is the will to act out of your curiosity, humanity, and concern.

Much has changed in the world in the intervening years. Nonetheless, the sentiments expressed by Dr. Crawshaw are as true today as in 1984. This article is an important part of HVO's history - it sounded the call for action and provided a road map by suggesting the involvement of medical societies. In the spring of 1986, the Orthopaedics Overseas Board of Directors, at the urging of Dr. Garry Hough and Dr. James Cobey, approved a motion to become the founding division of the newly incorporated Health Volunteers Overseas.

This year the World Health Report, a document issued annually by the World Health Organization (WHO), is focused on the global shortage of well-trained health workers. Entitled *Working Together for Health*, the report documents the extent and impact of the problem in considerable detail. Fifty-seven countries, primarily in Asia and Africa, face a severe crisis. According to WHO, more than 4 million additional health workers are needed to fill the gap. Africa faces the greatest challenge of any region of the world - with 11% of the

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People are a vital ingredient in the strengthening of health systems. But it takes a considerable investment of time and money to train health workers... Countries need their skilled workforce to stay so that their professional expertise can benefit the population. When health workers leave to work elsewhere, there is a loss of hope and a loss of years of investment.

***Working Together for Health
World Health Report 2006***

world's population and 24% of the global burden of disease, it has only 3% of the world's health workers.

WHO outlines numerous strategies to address this shortage and key among them is more direct investment in the training and support of health workers. For twenty years now, HVO has been designing clinical education programs that meet the needs and priorities of health care providers in over 40 countries around the world. These programs are staffed by committed and highly qualified health care professionals from the United States, Canada, and beyond - individuals who share those characteristics of "curiosity, humanity and concern" so eloquently stated by Dr. Crawshaw.

Today, of course, HVO sends not only physicians, but also dentists, nurse educators, physical therapists, nurse anesthetists, and other skilled professionals interested in sharing their time and expertise. Today HVO has programs in child health, primary care, trauma and rehabilitation, essential surgical care, oral health, infectious disease, nursing education and burn management. Over the past twenty years, HVO has sent more 3700 volunteers overseas and they have completed more than 5300 assignments. These volunteers have worked side-by-side with their colleagues providing new insights and techniques. They have introduced new teaching methodologies, updated or created teaching curricula, and inspired new ways of thinking. A great volunteer, of course, is open to learn-

ing and to engaging in a dialogue with their colleagues. As Dr. Margaret Nakakeeto, a pediatrician in Uganda, stated in an interview in the summer of 2005, "After knowing HVO's work, I saw that I could do more. There was hope and there are things we have managed to change. The training aspect is the most exciting and most important."

HVO has also been instrumental in the development of libraries at many sites and has facilitated on-line access for many sites. HVO also, thanks to generous donor support, has been able to facilitate the attendance at educational meetings and workshops of health care professionals from HVO training sites. These meeting and workshops not only further enhance the professional development of our colleagues from program sites, but also provide critical networking opportunities opening new avenues for communication and support.

Where do we go from here? HVO conducted a strategic planning exercise this spring and reaffirmed its commitment to the mission of education and training. The needs are immense and our challenge continues to be the development of strong programs that can effectively utilize the skills of our short-term volunteers. We need to look at new ways of delivering our programs. We need to identify the next cohort of volunteers. We need to look at how we evaluate our programs. We need to expand our donor base. In other words, there is still a lot to do....we hope you will be part of HVO's next twenty years.

HVO Milestones



- 1986** HVO incorporates with Orthopaedics Overseas as founding division
Anesthesia division establishes first program in Ethiopia
Dr. James Cobey serves as first Chair of the Board
- 1987** New sponsor - AAOMS
First oral surgery program starts in Nepal
90 volunteers serve at 13 program sites
- 1988** New sponsor - ACP
- 1989** Receives grant from USAID for rehabilitation training project in Uganda
- 1990** New sponsor - ADA
Dental programs start in Grenada, St. Lucia and Trinidad
Receives grant from USAID for rehabilitation training project in Mozambique
- 1992** New sponsor - AANA
Receives grant from USAID for rehabilitation training project in Vietnam
- 1993** New sponsors - AAOS & AAP
USAID-funded project in Mozambique ends
First nurse anesthesia program starts in Uganda
- 1995** New sponsor - APTA
First physical therapy programs opens in South Africa & Vietnam
First pediatric training program open in Fiji
Internal medicine training programs open in Kenya & Uganda
Jose Aponte becomes Chair of the Board
- 1996** 278 volunteers served in 34 programs
- 1997** Nurse anesthesia division receives award from the AANA Council for Public Interest in Anesthesia
- 1998** Dr. Elizabeth Kay becomes Chair of the Board
Dr. Cynthia Howard is HVO's 2000th volunteer
USAID-funded project in Uganda ends
- 1999** New Sponsor - ASSH
Orthopaedic Education and Research Foundation funds fellowship for senior orthopaedic residents
Receives *US Surgeon General's Certificate of Recognition* for enriching the lives of disabled Vietnamese through rehabilitation services
- 2000** New sponsor - AACN
Dr. Barry Gainor becomes Chair of the Board
353 volunteer assignments completed at 50 programs
- 2001** Dr. Jill Derstine is HVO's 3000th volunteer
- 2002** Receives *Daily Point of Light Award*
Receives *AAA Award for Excellence* from the American Society for Association Executives for nurse anesthesia project in Belize
- 2003** Dr. David Frost becomes Chair of the Board
372 volunteer assignments completed at 57 programs
- 2004** New sponsors - AAD, AOFAS, & ASDS
- 2005** New sponsors - ABA, AAHS & SRS
383 volunteers completed 411 assignments
Total value of educational materials & medical equipment sent since 1986 exceeds \$18.4 million
- 2006** First burn management program started in India
Dr. Louis Rafetto becomes HVO's 5,000th volunteer placement