

Orthopedic Team Performs Over 63 Free Surgeries In Guatemala

Operation Walk Pittsburgh team provides life-changing hip and knee replacements to the disabled

PITTSBURGH, Sept. 8 /PRNewswire/ -- The Operation Walk Pittsburgh team, consisting of 50 healthcare providers from Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, Boston, and Philadelphia recently returned from an extraordinary mission abroad to Antigua, Guatemala.

Volunteer team members performed more than 63 successful hip and knee replacements on 50 patients suffering from debilitating joint disease. This trip to Guatemala served as Operation Walk Pittsburgh's inaugural mission. Due to the success of this inaugural mission, the team will return to Antigua, Guatemala in August 2010.

"Our team had representation from all healthcare systems in Western PA, and these healthcare professionals devoted their time and skills to make an immeasurable positive impact on so many lives during our time in Guatemala," said Dr. Anthony DiGioia, head Physician of the Operation Walk Pittsburgh team. The Operation Walk Pittsburgh team also includes Drs. Michael Weiss and Anton Plakseychuk (surgeons), Drs. Saryu Desai and Anne Uskova (anesthesiologists), and Operation Walk Pittsburgh team co-leaders Janice Harmon, RN, and Tom Maidens, RN.

Founded in 1994 by Dr. Lawrence Dorr, Operation Walk is a private, not-for-profit volunteer medical services organization that performs free hip and knee replacement surgeries for impoverished patients in developing countries. Operation Walk team members donate their services, skills, and time to the organization. While some medical supplies are donated, dedicated individual donors and sponsoring corporations subsidize the majority of the costs associated with the program.

"This experience is one none of the team members will soon forget," says Dr. DiGioia, "We are anxious to build our program not only through the planning and execution of new mission trips, but also through the involvement of the Western Pennsylvania healthcare community and public citizens." Operation Walk Pittsburgh will continue "granting the wish to walk" both abroad and here at home. In November 2009, team members will perform several free joint replacement surgeries for patients at Magee-Womens Hospital of UPMC in Pittsburgh. The Operation Walk Pittsburgh team is one of the only chapters in the country providing surgeries within their own community in the United States.

Operation Walk Pittsburgh, an initiative of the AMD3 Foundation, is a non-profit,

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volunteer medical service program that provides free surgical treatment to patients with disabling arthritis in developing countries.

Operation Walk also educates in-country orthopaedic surgeons, nurses, physical therapists and other health care professionals on the treatments, processes and surgical techniques for diseases of the hip and knee. Pittsburgh is one of only nine Operation Walk sites across the country and Canada.

The mission of the AMD3 Foundation is to promote education, research and other related charitable activities in patient and family centered care while advancing the art and science of performance in order to improve the delivery of care.

To learn more about Operation Walk Pittsburgh, please visit www.operationwalkpgh.org [1]. To learn more about the AMD3 Foundation, please visit www.amd3.org [2].

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Links:

[1] <http://www.operationwalkpgh.org>

[2] <http://www.amd3.org>