

Mission UpReach Newsletter

What is a “Brigade”?



Many may wonder why we use the term “brigade” for visiting short term mission teams. Brigade is generally a military term but can also mean “a group of individuals organized for a particular purpose”. When the Waldron family moved there in 2009 they realized that in Honduras the term “brigade” was being used to refer to groups of North Americans that would come to serve in the form of medical teams, construction teams, or VBS teams. Since that time Mission UpReach has used the term.

In the past 8 years, thousands have been served with general medical attention, dental work, and vision checks through our medical brigades. These are generally conducted in small outlying villages where the most needy people live and where access to good medical attention is scarce. Hundreds have visited us to participate in construction brigades that have completed projects from improving local school buildings, building new church buildings, and more recently specific construction projects at our Moses Project farm. One of our most popular brigades is our VBS brigades that work alongside our DESEO program in local public schools. When VBS brigades come they get to go into the schools with fun activities and crafts centered around a specific Bible story. The participants really enjoy the interaction with the children and teachers and become a part of helping us demonstrate the love of Christ to the 1,500 children we serve each week.

Many of the thousands of participants over the past eight years have testified to the life-changing experience participating in a brigade has brought into their lives. Many say that they couldn’t grasp the magnitude of all that God has done and is doing until they came and saw it with their own eyes. Many participants are impacted on a deep spiritual level and return home with a greater passion for the lost and needy in their own communities. And a few actually decide to make foreign missions their life’s passion. As a mission, the service these brigades do and the love they exude through their kindness and generosity all serve to reinforce what we are doing on an everyday basis.

Many non-profit organizations focus solely on humanitarian work and recruit teams for that end. At Mission UpReach we are determined to utilize the efforts of our visiting teams toward the goal of building the John 1010 generation. This means we have a great responsibility to direct the good intentions of the brigades toward the strategy of doing good in the name of Jesus, stewarding the good works of the brigades for eternal purposes. For this reason, each visitor pays for his/her expenses and any expenses related to the work they do while in country. No donations given to Mission UpReach are ever used to fund brigades, although the infrastructure in place provides the logistical support to ensure a safe, productive, and well organized experience for all participants.



A life changed *(a Note from Donna)*

In June 2016 a brigade from the Burnt Hickory Church of Christ from Kennesaw, Georgia came to serve a village by the name of Crucitas. It was during that brigade that I first laid eyes on Iris, a 9 year old girl born with cerebral palsy. I was giving our usual translator a break and was translating for Dr. Robert Lester.

That day Iris was very close to death. She had pneumonia and was severely malnourished, weighing only 27 pounds. Iris' mother was burdened, knowing that she needed to take Iris to the hospital but as a single mom of three, one of whom was a newborn still nursing, she was forced to decide for the good of her entire family. Without family support to tend to the other children, she could not take her daughter to the hospital because the hospital would require her to stay with Iris at all times and would not allow her to have the other children there with her.

I cried with her that day. Her pain felt very real and personal to me after our experiences with our own son. Unlike Iris, Harrison had experienced incredible support, the best medical attention, and was thriving in spite of his traumatic brain injury. How could I ignore this child's need for good nourishment and help after having been blessed so abundantly? I was blessed to see the compassion and understanding of Dr. Lester and we did what we could under the circumstances.

After Iris and her mother left the clinic, I called Phil and told him that I had to do something. One of Iris' issues was her need for liquid nutrition because of her inability to chew and eat regular food. We are presented daily with needs and we simply can't meet them all, but I knew that it was no coincidence that God had placed me with Dr. Lester in that very moment and that I had to respond. Phil went right away to purchase the first of many cans of Ensure for Iris. In no time, the antibiotics we had given her along with her new form of nutrition brought Iris back from near death to thriving.

All we had to do was share her story

and God began to provide. The source of that provision was from two precious young girls, annual participants with their parents in brigades. Unbeknownst to their parents, these girls had been saving the portion of their allowance that was designated for their own spending in order to give it to someone more needy. When they heard the story of Iris, they gave their savings to their parents for them to send to buy food for Iris. One of the girls actually asked that her birthday gifts this year be in the form of money for the purpose of giving to Mission UpReach.

Iris' story is just one of the many lives that have been impacted by brigades. And what about the lives of the two young girls who came and saw and were changed? It is a privilege and honor to join God in what He is doing



to bring a little of heaven to earth. Meanwhile we all wait for that glorious day when all will be made right. Iris will be made perfect and her family, along with many others who daily suffer from poverty and oppression will enjoy the riches of heaven because someone cared enough to share the good news of Jesus with them.

North Atlanta group blesses families, preaching team

This month Don McLaughlin and Nelson Galarraga held a week long preaching workshop for our male staff members. It was both intensely practical and inspiring. The week ended with each participant giving a short 10 minute talk using the techniques that they had discussed during the workshop. After each man finished Don and Nelson gave them feedback and encouragement on what they did well and where they

might improve. Each of the men who shared in the experience expressed great satisfaction with what they were taking away. We were also blessed by Nelson Galarraga as he shared his knowledge and talent in teaching a seminar to 25 couples in the local church to help strengthen their marriages. These seminars contribute greatly to our overall effort to build leadership and strengthen families.





MUR well represented at Baxter Seminar

Every year Mission UpReach sends a bus with staff and students to participate in the annual Baxter Seminar in Tegucigalpa. This year, under the direction of Steve Teel, Baxter set the theme as: Families in Crisis, How does God’s Word address the crisis that grips the family today? Topics that were covered where; child sexual abuse, premarital counseling, counseling principles, marriage and sexuality, and the family in Biblical times.

All of our group that participated (seventeen from our CREO and CRESCO programs plus five of our Moses Project boys) reported that it was both challenging and practical. We appreciate the good work that Steve and Diana Teel are doing as the leaders of the Baxter Bible Institute. Visit their website at: baxterinstitute.org for more information on all that God is accomplishing through their ministry.

Jeremiah Santos, one of our staff members, participated in the seminar

and while there he took the opportunity to distribute the new A Capella CD produced by the local Barrio Belén church vocal team. Part of our “sales pitch” is that we ask those who receive the CD to commit to copying and distributing it. Our goal in doing so is to help proliferate quality A Capella music throughout the churches. Our dream is to one day have an A Capella Festival in Santa Rosa de Copán where churches can send singing groups to compete for recognition and prizes. Of course our ultimate goal in doing this type of promotion is to equip churches to sing A Capella better so that

their worship time is more uplifting.

Here at the local Belen church we have cases of non-churched people who have attended church with us for the first time and come back over and over again because of the singing that we do in worship time. May God grant us the same experience in all of our churches here in Central America.



Why we decided to do surgical missions with Mission Upreach (by H. Kendle Yates, M.D.)

Across the globe there are a number of opportunities to do surgical missions. My wife and I are concerned with people’s physical health, but we are even more concerned with people’s spiritual health. Mission UpReach allows us to address both. Restoring physical health, no matter how successful an operation, is only a temporary benefit. One’s spiritual health is eternal.

Even after removing humanitarian-only organizations, there are still many faith-based organizations from which to choose to do a surgical mission. In medical school there is a phrase every doctor learns: “First, do no harm.” As doctors we weigh the risks and benefits before we intervene; because sometimes patients are harmed. What we intend for good sometimes turns out bad.

The same is true in missions.

Sometimes, well-meaning faith groups have good intentions but end up harming the people they serve by creating dependency. Mission UpReach’s philosophy of self-led, self-sustaining, self-replicating churches aims to avoid dependency and instead empowers local populations to be more effective in reaching souls.

Jesus’ ministry on earth was multifaceted. He has been appropriately called The Great Physician who provided both physical and spiritual healing. It didn’t take long for us to learn that Mission UpReach is also remarkably multifaceted. We believe in its spiritual vision and are impressed with its multifaceted outreach... outreach to the poor, to women, to children, to the deaf, to those needing medical care... just like Jesus’ ministry.

While not unique to Mission UpReach,

a great benefit for trips like the planned October surgical trip is the opportunity to outreach to everyday healthcare providers in America. Developing a heart of compassion and service to others is a great way to reinforce the love of Christ to all of us. Most of the busy doctors, nurses, and techs that committed to going this October have never done anything like this before. It’s exciting to see God already at work.

It is fitting to close with Mission UpReach’s scriptural signature (John 10:10). Sometimes physical illness simply makes living difficult. Worse yet, spiritual illness makes a full life impossible. We envision this new surgical outreach as a natural expansion for Mission UpReach to continue its mission for the people of Western Honduras to have life, and have it to its fullest.



The fourth generation of AIM (Adventures in Missions) volunteers arrived in Santa Rosa on May 24th. They will be spending the first several weeks studying Spanish in Antigua, Guatemala to better prepare themselves to serve with us here in western Honduras.

Teaching workshop

This past month, as part of Mission UpReach’s ongoing commitment to equipping and educating our church members, we invited Jorge Guillén, who is originally from Managua, Nicaragua, to come and give a four-day workshop on the Science of Teaching. A total of twenty-three people participated in the event that was held in our CREO facility in Santa Rosa de Copán. We are excited to share with you that this kind of training, that we offer regularly, is really making a transformative impact. More leaders equipped means more people eventually brought into a saving relationship with the Master.

Word of the Month

E M P O W E R: the dictionary definition for this word is to enable or to permit. Here at Mission UpReach one of our core values is EMPOWERING others. We do this through teaching values to young children in the public schools, by recruiting boys to live and work in our Moses Project farm project, through CREO and CRESCO which equip and train men and women in the Bible and leadership skills that they need to be effective leaders in the church and community. All of this is essential for realizing our dream of training enough teams in the next twenty years to plant 1010 new congregations.

Memorial Gifts in May

Michele Breeden Stubblefield
In Honor of Peggy Stubblefield

Dorris Shelton Gulley
In memory of Filma Shelton Hill

2017 Brigades/Visiting Teams

February 11-18	Tusculum CofC	Medical and Construction
February 25-March 4	LA Tech Student Ministry...	Construction
March 11-18	Southside CofC.....	Medical/VBS/Construction
April 8-15	VCOM.....	Medical
May 27-June 3.....	North Atlanta CofC.....	Marriage Seminar/ Preacher Training
June 17-24	Pinetree CofC.....	Medical/VBS/Construction
June 24-July 1.....	Burnt Hickory CofC.....	Medical/Construction
July 1-8	Lexington CofC	Medical
July 8-15	Disciple Trips	VBS/Construction
July 15-22	University CofC Youth	VBS
July 22-29.....	University CofC Youth	Medical
July 29-August 5.....	Belton CofC	Construction
August 12-19th	Open Group	Construction
September 16-24th	Open Group	Construction

Please contact us:

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Please send all checks, donations and correspondence to this address.

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Donna Waldron, Santa Rosa de Copán
Phil Waldron, Santa Rosa de Copán

Other Giving

Mission UpReach is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. We can assist you to designate MUR in a corporations’ matching gifts program, or giving through a United Way campaign, or as you prepare wills for your estate.

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