

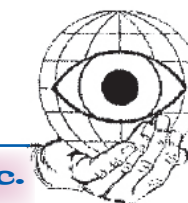
World Blindness Outreach, Inc.  
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Lebanon, PA 17042

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# IN Sights

A Newsletter For Friends of World Blindness Outreach, Inc.



2020 Edition

Greetings Friends & Supporters,

John Lennon once opined: "Life is what happens while you are busy." All the many talented and dedicated volunteers who have ever been part of a WBO mission, understand that statement very well. During the course of our missions, we are often making adjustments to work around obstacles or issues. But we always seem to find a way to get the job done.

Each of you who support WBO in some way, are very special to me and together, we have made a very special collective impact. We have been blessed with incredible support, in so many ways. I have had the pleasure of working shoulder to shoulder with some incredible people, watching them work and adapt to any issue - both large and small. This past year was no exception as you will read in the mission reports.

This Corona virus has forced all of us to make adjustments to our personal, professional and family lives. We want you to know that WBO will also make those adjustments and move forward – with your help.

We hope this newsletter finds you and your family well. World Blindness Outreach remains focused on our mission work. We continue to plan, as the need for our service is one of the few things that has not been affected by the pandemic. However, we know plans may be modified as necessary to ensure the safety and security of our volunteers and the patients we serve.

Flexibility is a job requirement for WBO teams – it's almost second nature. We carefully prepare and plan for each trip and we've learned how to adapt. We have even been forced to cancel an entire mission.

Many trips, especially those to Ecuador and the Dominican Republic, have become fairly routine. But the impact we make is far from routine. For those on the receiving end of your support – it is literally life-changing!

We established World Blindness Outreach in 1990, because we learned that 80% of the blindness in developing nations is either preventable or curable. Since that time, we have helped cure thousands and have trained countless surgeons who continue our legacy. But the need remains and there are many areas around the globe that lack facilities and resources.

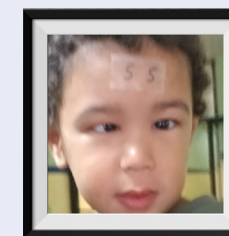
While some might rest on their laurels, we are blessed with many supporters who remain committed and focused on the future. We hope to continue to serve those in need - as long as we have the ability and resources to help them.

However, we must also remain vigilant and be prepared to modify our plans as needed to ensure the safety and efficiency of our volunteers and the patients we serve. Updates on all future missions will be posted on the WBO web site or feel free to contact our office anytime for an update.

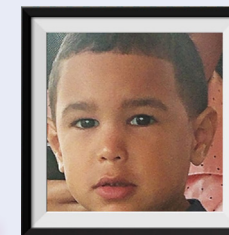
Thanks again for your continued support and helping us to continue to bring light into darkness for those in need!

## The Need Remains...

Without your continued support and the dedication of our team, this young boy, might never have normal vision...



Before



After

Thanks for helping us change lives!

## Golf Tournament Announcement

Due to the current restrictions in place, we will be unable to enjoy many of the traditions that make our event special. Therefore, the Tournament Committee has decided to postpone our 30th Anniversary Event until 2021. Additional information will be forthcoming on how you can help support us this year!

### Please Show Your Support For:



A post-op patient and local volunteers in the Dominican

Dr. Drew Stoken, assisted by  
Kristen Bailey



Dr. Iftikhar Chaudhry  
assisted by  
Ellen Dreibelbis

### For Those In Darkness...



With Hope That WBO Will Return

[www.worldblindnessoutreach.org](http://www.worldblindnessoutreach.org) • (717) 273-0662

Bringing Light Into Darkness For Over 30 Years!

[www.worldblindnessoutreach.org](http://www.worldblindnessoutreach.org) • (717) 273-0662

Albert A. Alley, M.D.

Founder & President, WBO

# Looking Back: Another Incredible Year In Review...

## Ecuador Mission Team

Albert A. Alley, M.D.  
Michael J. Bartiss, M.D.  
Drew J. Stoken, M.D.  
Cindy Poucel, R.N.  
Eileen Geiss, R.N.  
Tricia Lawrence, L.P.N.  
Martina Spivey, Surgical Tech  
Kristen Bailey, Surgical Tech  
William Cluley  
Kyle Ryland

Dr. Michael Bartiss, from North Carolina, filled the pediatric ophthalmology spot, when our original team member had to cancel, due to an illness in the family. He also recruited Martina Spivey, his wonderful surgical nurse, who was a pleasure to work with. On their first mission, both made an immediate and powerful impact on our team.

Similarly, Dr. Drew Stoken, a seasoned WBO veteran, also jumped in to cover for Eduardo Romo, who was not able to join us as he had planned. Dr. Stoken also recruited a newcomer, Kristen Bailey, another asset to the team. We are fortunate to have such a wealth of talented and dedicated volunteers!

However, the biggest adjustment we made was the result of a sudden illness to one of our team while in Ecuador. Bill Cluley, another WBO veteran, developed shortness of breath. The team quickly made alternative plans and Dr. Alley escorted Bill back to the U.S. for diagnosis and care.

It turned out to be a very good decision, as Bill was diagnosed with a bi-lateral pulmonary embolism – a very serious health condition. After proper care and a brief recovery, we’re pleased to note that Bill is doing fine and considering his next mission.

## Dominican Republic Mission Team

Albert A. Alley, M.D.  
Cynthia Alley, M.D.  
Iftikhar Chaudhry, M.D.  
Cindy Poucel, R.N.  
Ellen Dreibelbis, R.N.  
Denise Hileman, Surgical Tech  
Jenny Kim, DNP, CRNA  
Robert Ramirez-Rodriguez, A  
Scan Tech  
KellyAnn Wissler  
Robert Anspach  
Joseph Rudzinski

## Ecuador Vision Mission XXI

*Mission Dates: December 8-15, 2019*

Our 21st annual visit to Ecuador was another success, but not without its share of twists and turns. We chose to postpone the date originally scheduled for October, due to civil unrest in Ecuador. The government reduced long-standing fuel subsidies, causing prices to rise and tensions as well. As tensions eased and we felt it was safe, we moved forward and our mission team was able to perform over 200 cataract and 20 strabismus procedures.

Because of the delay in our trip, it caused conflicts with many schedules and plans. But the surgical team was fortunate and pleased to welcome two “pinch-hitters” who jumped in to fill the void.

## Dominican Republic Vision Mission XXVI

*Salcedo/Mission Dates: January 12-18, 2020*

Our 26th annual visit to the Dominican Republic, relative to the Ecuador mission, was far less disruption and very successful. We were again blessed by the support of many local Lion’s Club volunteers, led by stalwart Jose Tabor. The Salcedo Rotary Club President, Adanmery Garcia Bloise, also was instrumental in responding every time we asked.

These local volunteers are invaluable and helped our team conduct 10 corneal transplants and over 75 cataract and 25 strabismus procedures. Dr. Iftikhar Chaudhry led the transplant team and my daughter, Cynthia coordinated all of the pediatric surgeries.

The Dominican volunteers are a tremendous asset and always make us feel very welcome and right at home.

# Looking Forward: Mission Planning For 2020...

As we stated earlier, the safety of our patients and team remains our highest priority. As we compile this newsletter, we are planning our annual trips to both Ecuador and the Dominican. The need for our help is there and we remain committed to providing that help. Any final decisions about the timing and specifics related to those missions will be made later in this calendar year.

## Life Enhancement Awards

In 1999, World Blindness Outreach (WBO) created the Life Enhancement Award to assist individuals living in Southcentral Pennsylvania who are visually impaired. The award is designed to provide equipment or aid to enhance/improve the quality of life for an individual with a vision impairment. Over the past 21years, WBO has provided computers, software, video magnifiers, home modifications and educational toys to deserving recipients. Each of these items or services helped these individuals gain more independence and made a substantial difference in the quality of their lives.

So far this year, WBO has been able to provide an accessible scanner, portable video magnifier, an iPhone with accessible software and a custom-made computer to our awardees. These items make it easier for the individuals to read their mail and recipes, be more efficient at work, participate in various community programs and to stay connected with friends and family, ultimately enhancing their lives.

## In Honor of Our Departed Friend and Colleague...

*“There are some special people who willingly share their time, talents and treasure with others. Rita Hendrickson not only did this, she shared her heart with everyone who had the privilege of interacting with her.*

*This loving wife, mother, daughter, sister, friend, colleague, and ophthalmic technician was a truly wonderful person, bringing joy to all while going above and beyond the expected to serve others. Professionally, she was known as an ophthalmic technician extraordinaire, the one all other Kaiser Permanente technicians sought to emulate, Kaiser ophthalmologists sought to work with, and Kaiser patients wanted as their tech.*

*Rita’s ophthalmic skills were exceptional, and she not only used them on the job, she shared them with countless patients on multiple World Blindness Outreach trips throughout the world. She truly helped bring sight to the blind.*

*Rita, you are sorely missed by many. We love you. May you rest in peace.”*



**Rita Hendrickson**

*Submitted by*  
**Sue Carlson, M.D.**

## In Recognition Of Mr. Robert Boyer

We recently learned of an estate gift donated to WBO by Mr. Robert Boyer, after his passing. Mr. Boyer was a lifelong resident of Lebanon. While he lived in Philadelphia briefly, Lebanon was his home. He was a longtime patient of Dr. Alley’s and supported World Blindness Outreach since the early days. I’ve been told that he was very adamant that Dr. Alley was the only doctor that he would allow to work on his eyes!

*Submitted by:* **Bryan Stevenson**