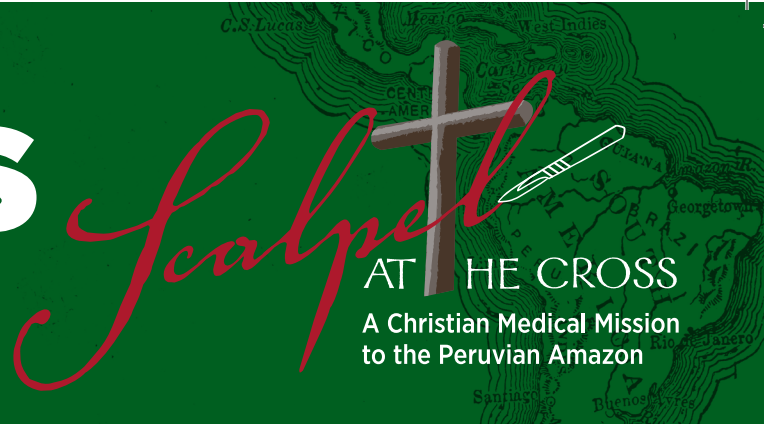


SCALPEL'S EDGE



A GIFT OF LIGHT, HOPE AND SURGERY TO PERU

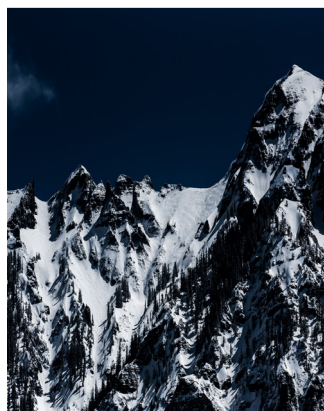
SPRING 2019 | ISSUE 27

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“ When I make bold decisions in which I anticipate great risk, and then I experience success, my faith emboldens. ”

—Peter A. Cole, MD



FAITH EMBOLDENED

Do bold actions embolden faith or conversely does greater faith yield bolder actions?

by Peter A. Cole, M.D. - PRESIDENT, Scalpel At The Cross



It occurs to me that both can be true, and both scenarios were true for our still young mission in its 14th year. We had some major realizations as a Board of Directors, that we were straining our staff and leadership under mounting pressure to meet both stateside and Peru-side medical needs. In most cases, these were not needs and initiatives that we defined or pursued, but rather “they” pursued the Scalpel Mission. Overnight, we realized we had a staffing structure built nicely for the first decade but quite inadequate for our impending future. Our goal was never to attain a great scale or become major, per se, but rather to be prayerfully open to God’s leading

and follow it! Such an approach worked well for incremental growth until now. I outlined the wonderful increments of the first decade in the last edition of Scalpel’s Edge, which provides a feel for hard-fought slopes we have scaled with modest means.

Now, however, I am alluding to a strong pull from our Peruvian partners to expand our mission for more medical purposes—amplifying our campus facilities and capabilities. I am alluding to the emergence of greater Peruvian involvement in Scalpel At The Cross, creating a bi-cultural rather than uniquely American organization. I am implying a stronger magnet for

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FAITH EMBOLDENED

more trips and teams to render surgical care. We now have growing energy and a template for increasing the donated medical equipment to jungle hospitals. More people know about Scalpel At The Cross and desire its extraordinary orthopaedic treatment and compassion-filled care, even in other parts of the country. Consider also, that when we began in 2004, neither Google, Facebook nor iPhones had emerged; whereas in 2019, a sophisticated multi-media platform seems nearly essential for function if not survival. The implications of all these realities yield a sink-or-swim prospect for the next decade of ministry. Faced with all these realities, imagine the funds and resources necessary to fulfill our mission over the next 5-10 years. Either we needed to take some bold survival strokes and pray that God would bless these, or we simply needed greater faith to embolden our decisions.

Notably, in 2018, we hired Esteban Cardona to lead our mission communications. We hired Danielle Ellerbe to implement a new philanthropy strategy and rework our patient outcomes program. In addition to these hires, we forged a strategic relationship with Stewardship Planning Partners whose own mission is to empower charitable organizations through enhanced fundraising and stewardship. We purchased an optimally located parcel of land to expand our medical work in Peru. And we mounted a fundraising campaign in the final two months of the year to raise a quarter million dollars to support these steps-God blessed us. I need to pause to take a breath here!

After careening down the black diamond slopes of 2018 as a modest skier at best, I am at the bottom of a thrilling run looking back up the glorious mountainside. It is beautiful yet in a treacherous way. The moguls look smaller and the trails less daunting now, but the peaks are still covered in clouds. Does this “we-did-it!” sensation embolden our faith? Is it one more experience conquered by God’s grace? Or did I have faith based on my experience and conditioning, that I would hammer that run, even if it hammered me?



“We now have growing energy and a template for increasing the donated medical equipment to jungle hospitals. More people know about Scalpel At The Cross and desire its extraordinary orthopaedic treatment and compassion-filled care, even in other parts of the country.”

In the Bible, Jesus was speaking to His disciples who claimed to be unable to heal a boy with chronic seizures, brought to them by a desperate father who had known they were followers of Christ. Jesus explained to them, “Because of your little faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, move from here to there, and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.” Jesus proceeded instantly, to cure the child of his infirmity. I suppose in this instance, Jesus was both rebuking and encouraging his disciples in Mathew 17: 20. A good mentor will call you out, educate and demonstrate; how much more will Christ who loves you ultimately, do all three and embolden your faith along the journey.

Given that a mustard seed is but a millimeter in diameter, Jesus was simply conveying that faith has incalculable power, if only we would exercise it! I reflect back to September when our young, godly, faith-filled new team members, Dani, Peggy, and Esteban, staked a bold end-of-year



fundraising goal; and they explained to the Board of Directors, who had just voted on the new land purchase, “We have faith that God is gonna do this, but we need your help!” They went to work, hard, and employed tiered strategies. By golly they did it, but they were quick to give the praise to God in whom they had complete faith. I do believe it was their mustard seed or more that manifested in a fiscal quarter of giving, exceeding that of all other years. But I did observe that other team members who gave a thumbs up for this campaign, were shocked beyond their wildest imagination... and their faith was emboldened! Indeed we all at Scalpel At The Cross experienced emboldened faith, albeit with different starting points, and that is the dynamic growing body of Christ working this “faith thing” out together. It’s real, and it’s vivid.

“When I make bold decisions in which I anticipate great risk, and then I experience success, my faith emboldens.” It is also great to work with people who exercise faith through bold actions which beget even greater faith. The next time, my decisions become more fearless. Perhaps I am less concerned with the outcome, or I know the outcome is God-purposed, or I am more focused on following He who is sovereign over the outcome. Ultimately, the consequence is freedom, freedom which comes through faith to make bold decisions.✝

FROM THE NATURAL — TO THE — SPIRITUAL

By Isaac Mendoza

Translated by Esteban Cardona

When I sat down to write my testimony I was hit with a huge wave of nostalgia. Contemplating where I was born, what my childhood was like, how my teenage years played out, brings about profound memories filled with joy and sadness.

So why the natural? Because God granted me the gift of life and a second birth. The first birth was from my mother; the second was a spiritual birth brought about by the Holy Spirit because of Jesus.

My Origins

I was born in a small village (it’s not even visible on a map) called Cuypirmarca, located in the Northern region of Peru in a department called La Libertad in the province of Pataz. My parents were Tito Mendoza and Claudia Ruiz. I attended primary school in a small building with a teacher who taught all three grades. My father died when I was nine, and it was a devastating hit to my then short-lived life. Things were never the same without my dad. My mother sacrificed immensely just to be able to feed us. Those were extremely challenging times, and that is what led me to a radical decision. At the age of 14, I left my mother and my little sister in search of a better future. I traveled from village to village trying to find purpose and meaning in life. The years went by, and I became a youth full of sadness and confusion. I wasted the better years of my life, and at the age of 24, I decided to sell drugs. One day in July of 1984, while eating breakfast with a friend, I noticed a huge commotion in the small village where I lived (in the department of San Martin near the coast). The Shining Path arrived



for the first time in the village and began rounding up all the people and taking them to the Amazon.

Their plan was to rule Peru, and we were to be part of their new government. The government at the time was killing us by starvation. What The Shining Path said was true... we were living the greatest crisis in the history of Peru. Hunger imprisoned the poor population, and riches were only for the few bourgeois. In our depravity, we saw The Shining Path as the solution to our troubles.

A Turning Point in Life

The commander asked, “How many of you young men want to join our cause?” Many of us raised our hands. I was one of them. It seemed like I

had finally found what I was looking for. I felt that I had found my purpose. The first six months were spent indoctrinating us and teaching us the philosophy of Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin, and Mao Zedong. We became experts in the doctrine of The Shining Path, ready to take down the bourgeois. We were trained to kill and not to forgive. We became beasts. We did not feel pity for other humans. We began to attack the government by destroying bridges, taking down electrical towers, tearing down government buildings and private companies. It was at that time that I decided I wanted to leave and have a normal life.

That’s when the real problems began. I was afforded the opportunity to leave The Shining Path and go back to my old job of buying and selling drugs. The Shining Path sent two representatives to our village to see what their ex-guerilla warriors were up to. One horrible day, the two representatives conspired against us to kill 12 kids who had decided to leave The Shining Path. They gathered all the commanders of the villages and concluded that they had to kill us all. They accused us of being anti-revolutionary. There was no judge or jury. We were handed down a death sentence. The next day they were waiting for me when I went to go pick up drugs I was to sell. They immediately detained me.

A couple of hours later I found myself facing two armed men with rifles and pistols. I saw that death was right around the corner, and there was nothing left to do but die.

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FROM THE NATURAL TO THE SPIRITUAL

As I saw one of the soldiers prepare the rope to tie our hands something miraculous happened. At the moment I didn't understand what was happening; it was only once I became a Christian that I understood. Do you remember when Jesus called Saul on the road to Damascus? He said, "Saul why do you persecute me?" The voice was heard only by Saul and not by the men he was traveling with.

That was exactly what was happening to me. The voice I heard was saying, "Isaac run, Isaac run, Isaac run." The second time I heard the calling, I looked for where I might run to, and it was impossible to do so. In front of me were two armed men ready to bind my hands. By the third time I heard the voice I had kicked off the sandals I was wearing and made a run for it. For some miraculous reason, they did not seem to chase me. All I heard was screaming coming from behind and the sound of bullets whizzing by. At that point, I got lost far enough into the jungle where they could not follow me. I traveled by night, following a small river.

Throughout the day I could not travel so I would rest. I knew that they had strategic zones they controlled, where they would be waiting for me. I was on the run for three days in the middle of the jungle without food or shoes. At the same time, my sister and friends saw that I did not appear and presumed I was dead. They went ahead and held a funeral on my behalf. Family and friends poured in and lit candles near a picture of me. Meanwhile, I was nearing a broad river named Huallaga. It was nearly 7:00 at night and it was nearly 7:00 at night, and it was already dark. The great river passed near the village where I had been living.

Divine Intervention

I was about 20 kilometers away when I asked myself, "What do I do?" It was then that God sent a small boat along with an elderly man inside. As

he neared he asked me, "Where are you headed?" I responded, "I'm going down to the village of Toache." The elderly man beckoned me onto the boat and told me he would take me. As soon as I got on the boat I collapsed of exhaustion. The elderly man woke me when we arrived at the port of the village, so I asked him, "How much do I owe you?" "Nothing," he replied.

When I arrived home I saw the picture of myself and my clothes with all the candles lit. Everyone was crying, and my sister was inconsolable. When everyone saw me they were afraid; they could not believe it. They thought I was a ghost. I quickly told them how I managed to escape. Even though I managed to escape I was in terrible shape. My feet were raw and full of splinters from the jungle, and I was severely dehydrated. I turned to them and told them that I had to go back to the port and pay the elderly man and offer him food. When I walked back to the port the old man wasn't there. I asked around, and nobody had seen the man. Years later I understood that God had sent an angel to save my life because

God had a plan for my life. The next day I left my village and traveled to the city of Pucallpa. All these events happened in the year 1988. Three months after arriving at Pucallpa I dedicated my life to Jesus Christ. God has been good to me. He forgave my sins and changed my heart. Nine years after coming to Christ he blessed me with a beautiful wife, who was also a believer.

Second Birth

God blessed our marriage and gave us three beautiful daughters. Lindsay is 19 years old, Tracey is 18 years old, and Miley Salem is 3 years old. My wife's name is Landys, and she is a professional nurse. and she is a professional nurse. Today, I work as a coordinator for an American ministry called, Scalpel At The Cross, and I am part of our pastoral staff at my church. This is an account of my life. God bless you. ✝

LIFE THAT IS TRULY LIVED

By Danielle Ellerbe

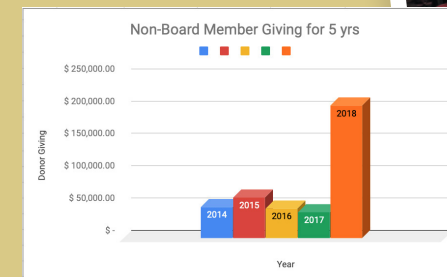
"Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life!"

~ 1 Timothy 6:17-19 ~

These words, newly introduced to me by fundraising partners, have given me a new and fresh understanding behind the fruit of fundraising. All people living on this earth who have riches are given the command to do good, be rich in good deeds, be generous and willing to share. This command is attached with a promise then that, in living generously we will have life that is truly life, abundant, joyous, fulfilling. What a joyous thing fundraising becomes when it is framed rightly as an invitation, welcoming partners into the joys of giving, which leads to a purpose-filled life!

Scalpel partners, we want to thank you for walking in this calling with us and to encourage you by what the Lord has done through giving to Scalpel in 2018.

The greatest variety of fundraising campaigns were put into play throughout this past year, including a fundraising benefit event hosted by Scalpel partners in beautiful Asheville, North Carolina; many team members creating fundraising letters on Scalpel's behalf; money donated in loving memory of someone. We also had our greatest Facebook campaign successes, with various birthday fundraising campaigns and Giving Tuesday. These were in addition to our first Lighthouse Moment series where team members from different trips shared about a moment in which they experienced or saw God, just as Scalpel strives to be "a lighthouse for Christ through a medical ministry in the Peruvian Amazon region of South America". Our Board Members held various critical conversations where they shared about Scalpel's vision and created invitation to others in partnering with



Scalpel. We had post-card and phone-call thank you's, as well as our first ever match opportunity, thanks to our largest ever one-time donation!

There were many milestones reached, and it made us as a Board of Directors and staff reflect in awe; first, for God's faithfulness no matter the numbers throughout all these years at Scalpel, and second, for vision of new heights where God wants to take this ministry in the future. You make that possible, and for that we are increasingly grateful!

In 2019, we are invigorated to invite more partners to give. Our goal is to increase our monthly donors from 8 people to 25 people! We value each contribution, as again we believe it is in line with Scripture and an invitation to an abundant and fulfilled life as we live generously. I have experienced this in my own life through monthly planned giving. It helps me focus all of the things I value most, my "first fruits" so to speak, towards others and the Lord; and to do it consistently and reliably. Please consider being one of those 25 monthly donors through whom the Lord expands Scalpel's reach!

God is consistently opening doors for Scalpel to grow. We have made a recent land purchase with aspirations of expanding our medical facilities. We desire to further our educational reach to the local Peruvian surgeons by doing more scholarship programs to the US to supplement the education we already provide locally. We want to expand spiritual discipleship and relationship with our patients through a new role for our local Peruvian pastor. These are all opportunities God has led us to, but we need continued partnership to move on them. We trust Him, and we believe you too are excited about the work expanding in the Peruvian Amazon for Scalpel At The Cross. Our thanks to you for contributing to this precious mission. We pray your life is more fulfilled, purposeful and abundant as you, alongside this Scalpel family, pursue giving and living with extravagant generosity, for the glory of Christ. ✝

PRAISES & PRAYERS

By Nancy E. Cole

These past twelve months as a ministry have been incredibly rich and fruitful ones... perhaps our most robust ever! We find ourselves overwhelmed by your “covenant” partnership in remaining steadfast in praise & prayer. Your stance, with us, in these matters has yielded God’s abundant favor for which we humbly give thanks.

Psalms 145:18 “The Lord is near to all who call on Him in truth.”

We praise the Lord for~

1. The opportunity to purchase more land in Pucallpa around the perimeter of our current property which will aid us in protecting our home, medical clinic, and fellowship hall from ongoing threats of squatters. The transaction was recently completed after having been given a “too good to be true” deal from Swiss missionaries who are neighbors currently owning that land.. They are eager for it to be used for ministerial rather than industrial purposes, so are delighted that we are aligned in our thinking.
2. The fact that this purchase is opening up doors for us to progress along the continuum of a “relief” model of mission involvement in Peru to that of a “development” model. Towards that end, we are intentionally coming alongside the native Peruvians and regional tribal folk and beginning to integrate them into the Lord’s sustained plan for this land. After building a protective wall to dissuade squatting, we are giving consideration to numerous structural possibilities: the establishment of an office for our Peruvian Scalpel Coordinator to use in tracking outcomes with patient follow-up appointments; space in which to conduct educational conferences we would host for Peruvian nationals in addition to medical school students there in Pucallpa; and across the next decade or so...building our own Scalpel surgery center or hospital, as the Lord leads.

3. The enthusiasm of both Peruvian medical personnel who desire to have us co-labor with them with greater regularity as we plant more stakes in the ground in Pucallpa, as well as local missionaries who are able to benefit from our medical expertise.
4. Successful onboarding of Danielle Ellerbe, who, coupled with her nursing work at Boston Medical Center, will be serving as Scalpel Program Manager in the capacities of electronic medical record/patient outcome tracking, medical supply inventory, & development/donor relations. Successful onboarding of Esteban Cardona, who, alongside completing his undergraduate degree, is now serving with us as Communications Coordinator assisting with: correspondence, database management, & website/social media marketing.
5. The addition of another board member, Mr. Tim Lindquist, to our board of directors (electrical engineer turned corporate patent attorney from MN), bringing our board number to nine with the prospect of yet another orthopaedic surgeon joining us in this capacity later this year.

6. A restructuring of our responsibilities as a board to allow each member to devote their greatest efforts to areas of natural strength, and in so doing, even out the workload across multiple layers.
7. Our February Peru team, consisting of four Covenant Presbyterian Church members from Cole’s church family in Seattle during Peter’s fellowship year at Harborview Medical Center.
8. Upon our February team’s entry to Peru, three suitcases containing a SIGN Nail set for fracture management and implants were confiscated by Customs. This confiscation posed a challenge for our team during the trip, but we praise God for His protection and provision to us in retrieving all three suitcases when returning to the states.

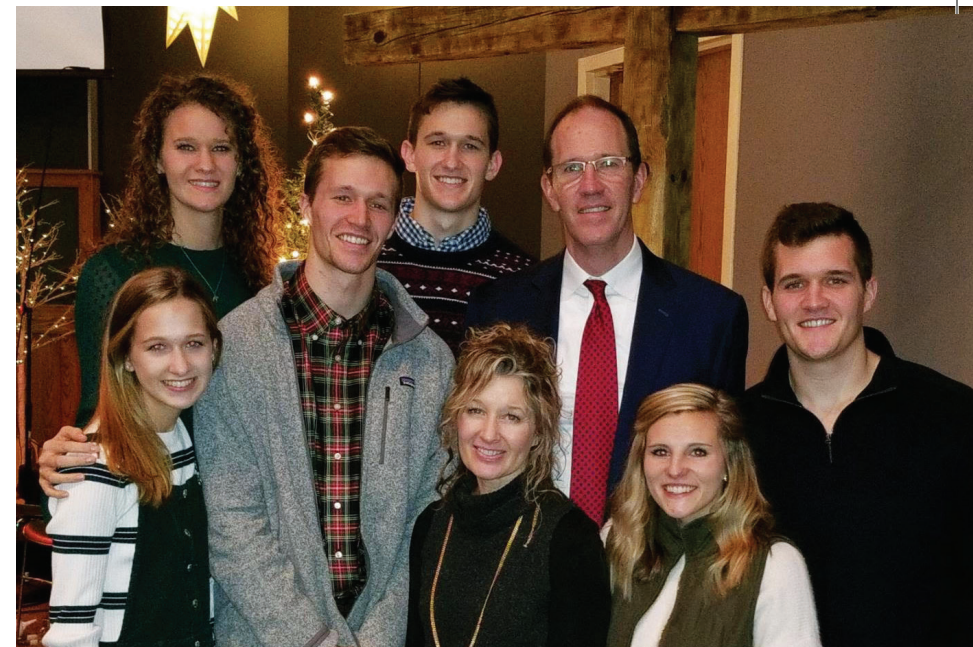
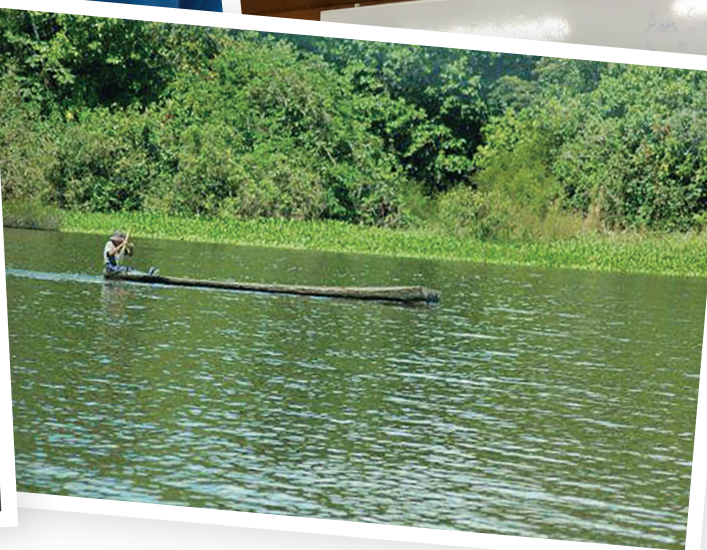
Having said all this, we still prayerfully ask for~

1. Ease of travel and other preparations for our upcoming July and October Peru-bound teams, consisting of at least 3-4 Covenant Presbyterian

Church members from Cole’s church family in Seattle during Peter’s fellowship year at Harborview Medical Center.

2. Ease in getting much-needed equipment through Peru Customs in July, as we will try again to take down hardware (including the SIGN Nail set and other implants) that was held by Customs on trips in September 2018 and February 2019.
3. The forging of a relationship with Stewardship Planning Partners who are working alongside us on how to better advocate for our financial needs as a ministry with the express purpose of building of a stronger donor base.
4. Another generous season of giving as we devote time and attention to securing the means to begin building that protective wall on our new property, followed by whatever the Lord wills for that land upcoming.

Colossians 4:2 “Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.”✝



WELCOMING TIM LINDQUIST TO OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS!

By Derek Eitheim

Tim is the father to five great kids, has a beautiful wife, Suzanne, and welcomed a new daughter-in-law to the family.

Tim practices law as a Patent Attorney and started a practice (Carlson Caspers) in Minneapolis a number of years ago. Tim is also an athlete; 2-time tennis state champion; plays pretty much anything that involves a ball. His love for sports has been passed on to his kids, and he and Suzanne have spent countless hours cheering them on at soccer, football, basketball and lacrosse games over the years. Their “escape” is to head to their cabin when the opportunity presents itself.

■ **Favorite movie:** Princess Bride.

■ **Favorite snack:** Cheese on rye bread.

■ **Favorite team:** Cornhuskers football.

The most important attribute Tim possesses is a deep love for Christ and desire to serve God and people well. Love him like a brother and thrilled to have him join the Board.✝

2019 SATC YTD MISSION VITALS



1 **TRIP**
FEBRUARY

\$20,000

ESTIMATED VALUE OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES



17 **TEAM**
MEMBERS

\$41,827

ESTIMATED DONATED TIME OF PERSONNEL

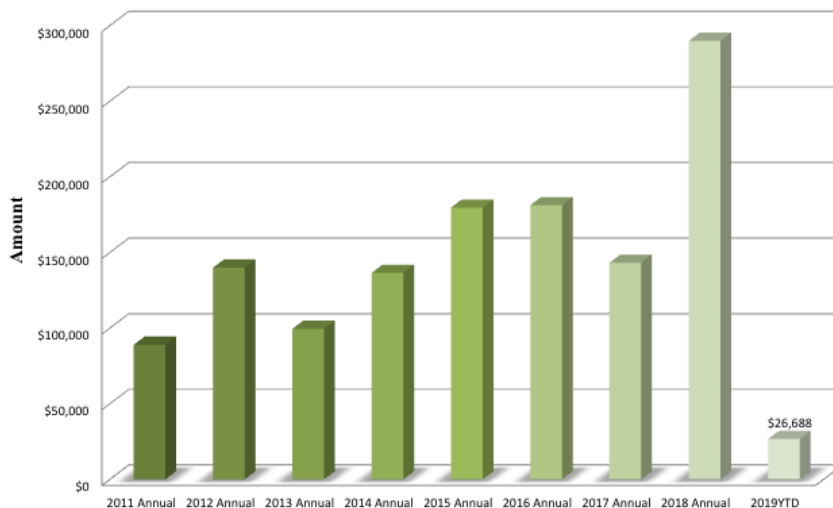


22 **SURGICAL**
PATIENTS

\$9,580

ESTIMATED AVG MEDICAL VALUE PER PATIENT

2011-2019YTD* Annual Giving Summary
(totals shown include board giving)
*YTD thru 2/28/2019



please support our mission

Online giving is easy and convenient at:
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or contact us at:
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