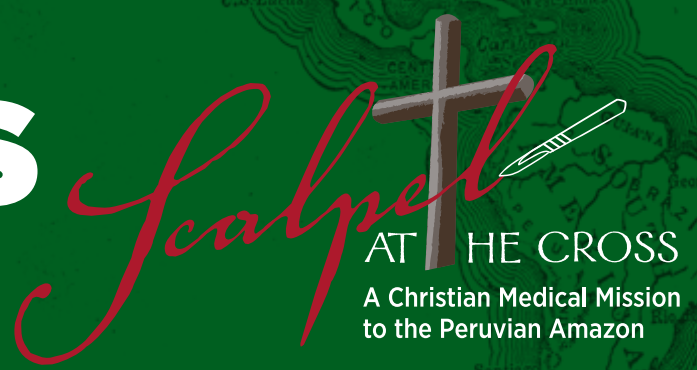


SCALPEL'S EDGE



A GIFT OF LIGHT, HOPE AND SURGERY TO PERU

SUMMER 2023 | ISSUE 40

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“ It took a long 20 months, many meetings and a multitude of recruits and prospects, before God presented us with three **game-changers**. We were desperate and praying with no answers. Seemingly, out of nowhere, inside the past three months, God has answered our prayers in monumental fashion. ”

GAME-CHANGERS

By Peter A. Cole, M.D. - President, Scalpel At The Cross

A Tri-sonic Miracle-Boom is on the near horizon for the Scalpel Ministry, and I can hardly wait. Are you ready for this?!? It is impossible in my mind for one to explain miracles, short of the Providence of God, a disposition which yields a heart of gratitude even for small wins in life and even for your setbacks! When I hear terms like serendipity, coincidence and luck, I feel God is cheated of the credit He's due. Every time someone exclaims, "It must be fate!" it feels to me like gleeful ignorance, if not insecurity. I hope you give my claim consideration, because true knowledge of the source of happenstance will yield more unity for your soul. Understanding that your wellbeing comes from The Creator promotes spiritual health. He sovereignly ordains the particular angle of the flutter of a leaf that falls from the tree and the breeze that knocked it free, as Dane Ortlund expresses (Gentle and Lowly, Crossway 2020), based off Matthew 10:29-30. How can fate outduel providence in a once-in-a-million circumstance which happens for our good, multiplied times three?

God has certainly purposed the following three special individuals for our ministry, and all three are **game-changers**. We could not possibly have programmed better fits and timing for Scalpel's needs during this phase of our journey-



-track with me, and please brace yourself. From 2004-2023 the ministry has been scaling, and its needs are overflowing. For all these years, the organization has run on a deeply committed Mission Director and Coordinator in America north, plus a few employees in America south and a thousand volunteers! Given the bounty of outcome and growth we have realized during this time, I am simply humbled and amazed.

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GAME-CHANGER

The fruit of our ministry vines were straining the trellis of the mission's personnel, to borrow a metaphor from Desiring God, such that we gave the green light to seek and hire two years ago. Even as you are aware that our Miracle Campus is underway in the Amazon, our surgical campaign model has been strained because of the demand for trips and the growing red tape to prep for each campaign. It took a long 20 months,

many meetings and a multitude of recruits and prospects, before God presented us with three **game-changers**. We were desperate and praying with no answers. Seemingly, out of nowhere, inside the past three months, God has answered our prayers in monumental fashion. That three **game-changing** miracles have befallen Scalpel At The Cross is confirmation of our work together, and of course that includes you.

“Even as you are aware that our Miracle Campus is underway in the Amazon, our surgical campaign model has been strained because of the demand for trips and the growing red tape to prep for each campaign.”



Daniel Mueller

Is a German Missionary prosthetist who works in the Peruvian Andes at Diospi Suyana Hospital. I don't know about you, but I never imagined such a thing as a missionary prosthetist. Last year, our builder in Pucallpa, Timoteo, was in the wedding of a best friend who moved far away to a small town in the Andes named Curahuasi. At the wedding reception, it is astonishing that he met a missionary from Germany who was a friend of the groom, and they struck up a conversation, only to realize their mutual interest in our own prosthesis project on the Miracle Campus. We were subsequently introduced by Zoom, 4,250 miles apart. At the age of 17, Daniel traveled from Germany to visit his missionary uncle in Ecuador where he met Rebecca, now his lovely wife. Daniel and Rebecca have served in Albania, Ecuador and more recently in Curahuasi, Peru. They raised four beautiful daughters, Kimberly (16), Kylie (14), Rachel (7) and Devin (3). Inside of eight years, in the small town of 20,000, Daniel built an elegant, functional workshop to make prostheses for amputees while growing an "Ortopedísta" practice with physical therapy, which is dedicated to serving the poor. He recently spent time in Pucallpa with my son Pete and me, studying and informing our Miracle Campus plans, reviewing logistics and supplies, getting to know our Scalpel missionary and hospital communities, visiting SAM Academy and generally exploring housing options and timing for a potential move. Daniel has committed to helping Scalpel, even in an effort to combine resources with Diospi Suyana Hospital, to become a wellspring of patient care providing unparalleled solutions in Peru via Scalpel At The Cross Miracle Campus Centro de Prosthesis y Rehabilitación. No person on the planet is better qualified and suited for such a time as this, can you even imagine? **GAME-CHANGER!**



Lyndi Porch

Born in New Guinea, was 11 years old when she moved with her missionary parents from Senegal, Africa to Minnesota where she lived from 2010-2014. She then moved to Pucallpa (2015-2017) for high school with parents, Dan and Laurie Porch, who were on Scalpel assignment to build a medical and spiritual outcomes program. Remarkable for a young lady moving midteen to a different country, she loved everything about living in the Amazon. She learned the language with incredulous fluency and made a bevy of Peruvian friends until it was time to move back to the USA for higher education. Lyndi attended Wheaton College outside of Chicago, majoring in Business Economics and minoring in Spanish. Upon matriculation, she took a position with Samaritan's Purse, and extraordinarily for a young woman right out of school, served faithfully in the Middle East, East Africa and Eastern Europe (2021-2023). Gee Lyndi, you missed North Korea? With maturity beyond her years, the young Ms. Porch executed the financial accounting for personnel and projects while working in program management under conditions most of us cannot fathom. Well guess what? Lyndi is coming back to Scalpel!! We are dumbfounded, speechless, grateful beyond measure! No person on the planet is better qualified and suited for such a time as this. She will be US-based and provide finance and accounting services to the mission, while managing programs and leading tactical trips to our jungle camp and providing support for the growing campaigns. Lyndi will work in tandem with Mission Director Kara Rodriguez who of course resides in our virtual South Florida home office. **GAME-CHANGER!**



Olger Huaco

Is a Traumatologist with experience in hip and knee arthroplasty, who trained in Lima and practiced in the beautiful city of Arequipa, Peru. Having enjoyed a successful career in orthopedic trauma and reconstructive surgery, God gave this humble man a miraculous calling to Pucallpa when he served on a mandatory, one year government assignment back in 1990. Providentially, 1990 was the year of my and Nancy's first trip to Pucallpa weeks after my med school graduation, wow. Olger did not understand his calling, other than that he learned of Scalpel At The Cross at the height of the pandemic during a Zoom lecture I gave from home in Minnesota on the topic of fracture surgery to the Peruvian Society of Fracture Surgeons. He studied our website, www.scalpelatthecross.org, and promptly moved to Pucallpa last year sight unseen to seek a new purpose through his work. Keep in mind, Olger had not met any of us yet, but he found a temporary staff position at our beloved Hospital Amazónico, and he signed a local contract to be the administrator of a clinic surgery center. On recent trips to Pucallpa, my son and I learned of Dr. Huaco's journey to saving faith in Jesus and pursuit of a higher purpose to serve patients in Pucallpa. We learned of his extensive expertise, humility and passion, and we learned he had come to love Scalpel through the Amazonico staff, our website and newfound relationships built since the February campaign. Dr. Olger Huaco agreed to come on staff with Scalpel At The Cross as our Medical Director, a position formerly held by Drs. Luzmila Cahua and Rosa Escudero. Dr. Huaco will run our Patient Outcomes program, become our primary hospital liaison, qualify patients for surgical campaigns and be the logistics coordinator for supplies. You could not possibly make this stuff up folks, but there is no person on the planet better qualified and suited for such a time as this, can you even imagine? **GAME-CHANGER! †**

A LIFE-CHANGING FINGER INJURY

By Ellen Hanson

April 2023 Scalpel Team Member



When a young man comes hobbling into a screening clinic with severe hip avascular necrosis, you know that a hip replacement surgery will be life-changing...allowing him to walk, work and provide for his family. When a man comes walking with ease into the hospital with a single finger injury, you might not think a surgery would be as life-changing, but...it was. Dr. Elspeth and Dr. John scheduled a young man, Enrique, for right index finger laceration repair and fracture pinning. The history they had was that his finger

had been injured in a boating accident, and he was adamant the finger be repaired, not amputated. The doctors said they would do their best.

Surgery was to be done under a block, the finger would be anesthetized, and the patient would remain awake. While Dr. Elspeth and Dr. John worked on repairing the badly mangled finger, Ashley, one of the local interpreters, sat with the patient during surgery to provide distraction and to pray with him. While talking, she learned Enrique lives in a village 12 hours away by boat, on the

river. He raises chickens and some medicinal plants, which he brought to the city to sell. With the proceeds from the sale, he bought supplies to resell in his village, as well as some life-saving medicines. Since his village is so remote, medical care is quite a distance away. Enrique had some medical training and needed his right index finger, the injured finger, to give injections to villagers when they got sick. Two hours into the 12-hour boat trip home, he rounded a sharp corner on the river and collided with a large barge. His finger was nearly amputated, and he lost everything – his boat, his motor, his supplies and his vital medications. Ashley shared that Enrique, who was a relatively new Christian, didn't dwell on the loss as "those were just things." Instead, he praised God for saving his life, for allowing the accident to happen near a health outpost that provided first aid and assisted in free transportation to Pucallpa and for allowing him to be cared for by hand specialists. "God told me He would heal my finger, that it wouldn't need to be amputated, so I can continue to provide injections for my village." He also shared that his wife, who had stayed home from the trip to care for their young son, was not a Christian despite him sharing Jesus with her many times. "When she sees how good God was to me, to save my life, maybe she will come to love Him too." Thanks to the skills of the surgeons and grace of God, Enrique did not have his finger amputated, and bone and tendon were repaired. He will need prayer for continued healing and protection from infection.

When Enrique thanked the surgeons, he said he wanted to know when Scalpel would be here next year, so he could bring a gift of chickens. He had lost the equivalent of 7-8 years' wages, but yet was thanking God and thinking of blessing our team. What a witness! ✝

A CONTAGIOUS PASSION FOR MEDICAL MISSIONS

By Jason Caron, MD

Vice President, Scalpel At The Cross



As we planned our spring 2023 campaign, I realized the entire list of surgeons assembled for this trip was made up of former or current U of MN residents with training under Dr. Cole. The team included Dr. John Wechter, Dr. Elspeth Kinnucan, Dr. Pete Sanders, current resident Dr. Shea Comadoll and myself. During the trip, the significant relationships and training overlap were apparent, spanning over 20 years. Thinking back to the numerous other residents that have participated in campaigns, I marveled at what an impact Dr. Cole had in developing Scalpel At The Cross and in spreading a passion for this medical mission to the residents he trained.

I can still remember being in the OR with Dr. Cole as a second year resident and him asking me if I would be interested in joining him on a Christian medical mission trip to Peru. Scalpel At The Cross was a fledgling mission at the time, but Dr. Cole's passion for it was evident. It was truly an answered prayer as I had felt a calling in this direction for some time. It took until my fourth year for it to materialize, but it came with the support of the UMN Orthopedics Department through a scholarship initially funded by Dr. Gordy Aamoth. Since then, the scholarship program has been further developed with donations, and numerous residents have

joined Scalpel teams. I am grateful to the University of MN Orthopedics Department, under the leadership of many, but notably Drs Swiontkowski, Clohisy, VanHeest and Cole, for their belief in the value of, and support for, young residents having the opportunity to experience medical missions firsthand.

It is remarkable to me how passion is contagious and can spread to others. If you spend any time at all with Dr. Cole, you will see and feel his passion for the mission work we do in Peru. He has been steadfast in this for the 20 years I have known him. I see this as a clear result of God calling him to do this, and his faithfulness in pursuing it. It has had a major impact in my own life, but also in the lives of many other residents. Where does this passion come from? How do we continue to develop the contagious passion that will make Scalpel a sustainable mission, compelling enough to be purposeful and meaningful to others?

I believe the passion Dr. Cole has comes from a God-given call, rooted in his desire to spread Christ's good news to the world for God's glory. John Piper has said, "The aim of preaching this 'gospel of the kingdom' is that the nations might know King Jesus and admire Him and honor Him and love Him and trust Him and follow Him and make Him shine in their affections." This is God's highest

priority. This is the Good News. This is the goal of missions.

Scalpel At The Cross has at its heart and purpose the intent to be a tangible, loving expression of God's attributes to the people of Pucallpa and surrounding villages. We seek to change lives by meeting physical needs, while being light-bearers of God's Word by example. The medical aspect and experience create a place to plug in others who may or may not be certain in their faith, but who share the common need to find purpose.

Finding purpose in providing care for Peruvian patients with severe pain or disabilities due to orthopedic injuries comes naturally to orthopedic surgeons. And it is in itself a compelling mission. But, using it to point others to the only true Savior, a savior that they admire, honor, love, follow and make shine in their affections, that is the ultimate purpose. And this purpose is what creates a contagious passion. ✝

Scalpel At The Cross & The University of MN			
Last Name	First Name	#Trips	Year(s) Traveled
Cole	Peter	30	2005-2023
Herrera	Diego	1	2006
Caron	Jason	16	2007, 2009-2011, 2013-2020, 2022-2023
Will	Ryan	1	2008
Mejia	Jose	1	2009
Hill	Brian	1	2011
Holm	Jason	1	2011
Lelwica	Amy	2	2011, 2014
Horazdovsky	Ryan	2	2011, 2018
Li	Mengnai	1	2012
Solfelt	David	1	2012
Torchia	Michael	1	2012
Petersen	Erica	1	2013
Van Nortwick	Sarah	1	2014
Wechter	John	5	2014, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2023
Gauger	Erich	1	2015
Shirmers	Joe	1	2015
Dahl	Tyler	1	2016
Sessions	Cody	3	2019, 2020, 2022
Theisman	Jeffrey	1	2020
Comadoll	Shea	1	2023
Kinnucan	Elspeth	1	2023
Sanders	Pete	1	2023

INTRODUCING KIM GUSTAFSON

By Bob Korljan
Board Member, Scalpel At The Cross



On behalf of the entire Scalpel At The Cross team, we are pleased to announce the addition of Mr. Kim Gustafson as Director of Annual Giving. My relationship with Kim goes back more than 12 years when he, a Development Officer with Phoenix Seminary, attended a series of charitable gift planning seminars that I was co-sponsoring. Until his move to South Florida just over a year ago, Kim and I often met to discuss various charitable planning ideas, as my wife Ginger and I have enjoyed many social occasions with Kim and his wife Pam.

Kim comes to SATC with strong organizational and advancement backgrounds, as his career is best characterized as having developed relationships and built trust with people.

He is a Bethel College graduate who used his degrees in Economics and Business in the employee benefits world until 2008, when he joined Luis Palau as Director in his Department of Advancement. Kim has worked for three non-profits in the last 15 years (Neighborhood Ministries from 2013-2021, Phoenix Seminary from 2011-2013, and Luis Palau Association from 2008-2011) whose ministries have varied in nature and mission but have all been Kingdom work. In fact, these experiences have given Kim a breadth of exposure to the world of educating current benefactors and developing new high-capacity donors.

Kim and Pam have also been significantly involved in the local church and community levels, exercising their gifts in various leadership positions, including roles at their

churches, Trustee of The Bethel University Foundation and Chair of Bible Literature International. Kim is a committed disciple of Jesus with solid experience in business, donor relations and advancement, charitable gift planning and church ministry.

Kim is blessed with a 50-year marriage to Pam with three children and eight grandchildren.

Kim has soaked up much about the ministry of SATC — he feels strongly about the importance of what we are doing and wants to support it wholeheartedly with his knowledge and expertise. We look forward to a mutually successful partnership with Mr. Kim Gustafson. †

“ Kim comes to SATC with strong organizational and advancement backgrounds, as his career is best characterized as having developed relationships and built trust with people. ”

THE ONE WHO HEALS YOU

By Maru Burguete
Mission Coordinator,
Scalpel At The Cross

Have you ever been in a situation where you are waiting for a change to happen in your life? Perhaps you feel stuck and do not see anything happening. You are getting impatient because you have tried everything, but your situation is not improving, and you are waiting for a miracle.

The scriptures teach us in John 5:1-18, that a man was in a similar situation. He was standing by the Bethesda Fountain, waiting for a miracle to happen in his life.

The Pool of Bethesda, known as “The House of Mercy”, is one of two sites in Jerusalem where Jesus performed miracles. At the Pool of Bethesda, the Jews believed an angel of the Lord would

occasionally stir the waters, and the first person who entered the pool as it bubbled would be healed of their affliction.

The passage tells us this man had been sick for 38 years and was waiting at the side of the fountain for someone to help him enter the water to be healed. Thirty-eight years is a long time to suffer; to be stuck with something. This situation must weigh him down, and keep him from moving forward.

Jesus went to him and asked, “Do you want to be healed?” It seems like a very absurd question. Of course, he wanted to be healed, but Jesus asked him this question to reveal something to us. Jesus wants him to understand that to be healed, he has to remove his eyes from the pool. His eyes were still focusing on the fountain. He replied, “I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.”

He was in front of “The Healer”, but unfortunately his eyes were set on the fountain. Does it sound familiar? How often have we turned our eyes toward individuals, situations, or rituals? We turn toward idols instead of turning to God.

Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” At once, the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked. He believed, and he was healed. He took a step of faith; he moved, and he was healed.

The Lord didn’t go to Bethesda to heal the masses; He went to heal this man. We have a personal God who cares about us. He has not forgotten us. He knows and loves us intimately and personally. We are His.

I don’t know what heavy thing you have carried for so long, but the Lord wants to heal you. To do that, He desires for you to stop focusing on your situation and to start focusing on Him. Run to Jesus! †

PRAISES & PRAYERS

By Nance Cole,
Director, Prayer Posse,
Scalpel At The Cross

PRAISES:

- April medical campaign with 100 consults, 24 life-changing surgeries and opportunities to pray and share the gospel with patients, families and hospital staff alike.
- June leadership trip to Curahuasi to develop relationship with German prosthetist, Daniel Mueller, who built a rehab center at Diopspi Suyana Hospital in the Andes under Christian missionary doctors, Klaus & Martina John, fiercely faithful and strategic leaders the likes of Paul Brand and Hudson Taylor.
- Strong connection between our Peruvian Medical Coordinator, Isaac Mendoza (fully recovered from long-COVID), and Daniel Mueller.

- Scalpel’s new Peruvian Medical Director, Dr. Olger Huaco, whose faith, personal/professional background in trauma-joints surgery, calling and goals align with our current needs.
- Vital upgrades to Jungle Bunks including a new boardwalk and balcony, increased storage, and improved wi-fi and cell service into our residence.
- Two new Scalpel family hires stateside.
- The blessing of our Cashibococcha campus to non-Scalpel teams helping support other local missionaries.
- Improving political climate and steady economic gains, coupled with cessation of squatting issues for now.

PRAYERS:

- July 13-23 medical campaign with a 19-member team, embarking as this issue goes to print!
- Ongoing construction of our Miracle Campus,

- as well as outfitting and staffing. Ground-breaking for the rehab center is scheduled in July.
- Ongoing administrative trips for progressing our Miracle Campus and fortifying relationships with the Pucallpa missionary, hospital, education and legal communities.
- August excursion for Daniel Mueller (German prosthetist), his wife and four children, traveling from Curahuasi to Pucallpa to consider recreating what they’ve done in the Andes in our jungle area of the country. Pray for marital unity over this recruitment initiative, that it might be a “God-fit” for them as they consider housing, schooling and service in these new environs.
- Discernment and wisdom regarding legal threats to outreaches such as our own due to corruption.
- University of Pucallpa request for Scalpel team visits to practice English skills with Spanish speakers while communicating the gospel.
- The prospering of our alliance with the Tim Tebow Foundation. †

YEAR TO DATE 2023

MISSION VITALS

2



Number of Trips

46



Surgical Patients

30



Team Members

\$548,500



Estimated Value of Care

\$95,693

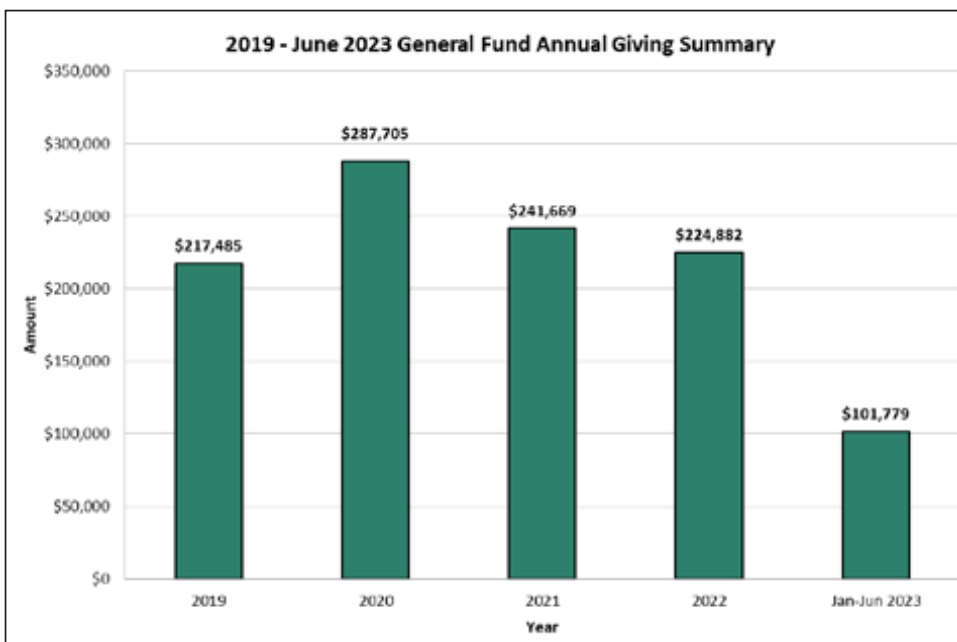


Estimated Value of Volunteer's Time

\$231,734



Estimated Value of Medical Supplies Donated



Online giving is convenient and secure at: giving.ncsservices.org/scalpelatthecross or contact us at: **P.O. Box 558436, Miami, FL 33255** www.scalpelatthecross.org 786-405-9958

