



## Doctors Giving Back



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Within the city and beyond borders, Dallas area physicians give their time and talent to those who need it most.

by Jennifer Sander Hayes

**D**ALLAS AREA PHYSICIANS AND surgeons are sharing their expertise, knowledge, and compassion with those in serious need of medical help. From treating general medical issues to helping patients manage life-threatening illnesses and disease, these doctors have provided their time, energy, and resources—even risking their own safety at times—to make sure proper medical care is available for all who need it.

#### **DR. HAN PHAM-HULEN, M.D., MEDICAL DIRECTOR LAKE POINTE WOUND CARE CENTER, ROWLETT**

Dr. Hulén is a wound care and infectious disease specialist as well as medical director of Lake Pointe Wound Care Center in Rowlett, a wound care center affiliated with Diversified Clinical Services. Many patients who visit the Wound Care Center have either had an amputation or multiple amputations due to an unhealed chronic wound and are hoping they

can prevent the amputation of another limb. Dr. Hulén sees patients who may qualify for advanced wound care treatments such as regenerative bio-engineered skin substitutes and possibly hyperbaric oxygen therapy to prevent amputations that could occur as a result of diabetic foot ulcers, acute arterial emboli, chronic osteomyelitis, radiation injury, compromised flap or graft, crush injury, and necrotizing fasciitis. Dr. Hulén has been instrumental in starting a local Dallas chapter of Save A Leg, Save A Life, a nonprofit foundation that works to reduce amputation rates and improve limb salvage techniques and wound healing by educating physicians through continuing education programs. The foundation also brings greater awareness of advanced wound healing occurring in the region. “There is a true need for wound care education for both patients and physicians in our area,” Dr. Hulén says. “I see so many patients who have had limbs amputated that probably could have been saved with the proper initial treatment. Also, many of the conditions that lead to amputation

TOP: Dr. David Markham with UT Southwestern treats a patient in a rural area of Haiti.

can lead to other health issues, such as heart attack or stroke. With early intervention and appropriate wound care, you're not only potentially saving a limb, but also a life. My goal is to preserve the quality of life for all of my patients by bringing more awareness and education about the importance of quality wound care."

**DAVID MARKHAM, M.D., INTERNAL MEDICINE AND CARDIOLOGY, UT SOUTHWESTERN**

Dr. Markham, a heart failure/transplant cardiologist, volunteers his time in Haiti with an organization called Friends of Fort Liberte. "Most of my volunteer work takes place in Northeast Haiti, a rural area that suffers from extreme poverty. I have volunteered in Haiti for about 10 years, and my most recent trips have been to treat refugees from the earthquake who have been left homeless or near homeless with no access to medical care. Much of my work in Haiti is in primary care medicine treating general medical issues, but I also take part in a project treating patients with peripartum cardiomyopathy at Hospital Albert Schweitzer in Deschapelles, which is in the eastern part of the country. This is a condition in which women suffer from heart failure during or immediately after pregnancy, and its cause is unknown. There is an increased incidence of this condition in Haiti, which can be devastating because children can be orphaned in this incredibly poor place. I evaluate the women, perform ultrasounds to check out their hearts, and assist them with their medications so they can manage their heart failure. In many ways, the work in Haiti is gratifying because you know you are helping people in tremendous need. Haiti has an amazing culture, language,



Dr. David Markham with two of his patients in Haiti.

and history. Also, the Haitian people are wonderful. In other ways, it can be frustrating because resources are limited, and there is often only so much we can do. I always return to Dallas and marvel at our vast quantity of diagnostic and therapeutic resources. In Haiti, you diagnose with just your eyes and a stethoscope, and you treat with what is available."



Dr. Brett Johnson checks on one of his patients in Honduras.

**BRETT JOHNSON, M.D., PROGRAM DIRECTOR OF METHODIST HEALTH SYSTEM FAMILY MEDICINE RESIDENCY PROGRAM**

Dr. Johnson volunteers on a mission trip to Honduras each year organized by the Dallas Catholic Diocese. He and fellow volunteers provide a variety of family medicine services to people in need. "Most of the conditions we treat are related to poor living conditions—malnutrition, anemia, parasitic infections, back pain, and asthma," Dr. Johnson says. "We are there for about a week and see as many people as we can—often 60 to 80 patients a day per physician. We set up clinics in remote villages in the mountains. It's definitely not a vacation for us. There is no air conditioning in our facility, and it's very easy to get sick, so we take malaria medication before we go. It's difficult to come back and realize there are still so many people there who need our help, but we at least make a dent every time we go. Fortunately, we have a liaison there who helps us, and we can refer serious cases to a surgical team who comes in after us. We really have the good life in Dallas, and it's not always recognized until you go to a place where good medical care just isn't an option. They can't afford it, they can't access it, or it doesn't exist. These trips will really awaken you to the global picture and make you understand the differences in health care that exist throughout the world. It's so rewarding to have them accept us with open arms and really appreciate what we are trying to do for them. It provides a sense of fulfillment."

**JIM WALTON, D.O., VICE PRESIDENT OF HEALTH EQUITY AND CHIEF EQUITY OFFICER, BAYLOR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM**

Dr. Walton, an internal medicine physician at Baylor, is dedicated to serving the economically disadvantaged and working to improve health care access for all. Dr. Walton has traveled to Haiti, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Sri Lanka, and Bulgaria providing primary health care as well as medical relief after natural disasters. However, the majority of his work focuses on local charitable efforts. Since 2000, he has served as the medical director of Project Access Dallas, a network of more than 2,000 physicians and 15 hospitals providing comprehensive health care access to more than 3,000 un-