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NEWS RELEASE

IMAHelps RECRUITS DOCTORS, DENTISTS AND SURGEONS FOR A MEDICAL HUMANITARIAN MISSION TO NICARAGUA

23 Coachella Valley residents will join a team of more than 80 doctors, surgeons, nurses and dentists from throughout Southern California on the Aug. 4th to 14th mission to Estelí, Nicaragua

RANCHO MIRAGE, Calif., July 18, 2011 – IMAHelps has assembled a team of more than 80 doctors, surgeons, nurses, dentists and support personnel for a 10-day medical mission to Estelí, Nicaragua next month.

“This will be our largest medical mission since we started organizing medical humanitarian missions 11 years ago,” said Ines Allen, president and co-founder of Rancho Mirage-based IMAHelps.

A small team of volunteers will depart the Coachella Valley for Estelí in late July to prepare for the Aug. 4th to 14th medical mission.

This year’s team of volunteers includes plastic, maxillofacial, orthopedic and general surgeons as well as cardiologists, obstetricians, general physicians, pediatricians, gynecologists and support personnel, including four pharmacists. A prosthetist who can fit patients with donated artificial limbs, a dermatologist, dentists and a specialist in endodontics will also be on the mission.

IMAHelps organizes medical missions each year. Founded in 2000, the group started with medical missions to South America, but has since broadened its efforts to include medical missions to Central America and Asia. The group is currently organizing a medical mission to China in September.

During their 10-day medical mission to Somoto, Nicaragua last August, IMAHelps volunteers provided medical services to 8,446 people, including 120 cleft palate repairs and other life-changing surgeries; 695 dental procedures, as well as 949 pediatric and 1,465 internal medicine consultations involving everything from urinary tract infections to ear aches, stomach aches, joint pains, tropical skin rashes and allergy related ailments.

This year’s medical mission to Estelí, Nicaragua is being made possible with a \$38,000 grant from Hedco Foundation, which was used to purchase anesthesia equipment, including Propag monitors, as well as an EKG machine.

Hospitals and more than 300 individual donors from the Coachella Valley and throughout Southern California have also made significant donations of equipment and supplies as well as monetary contributions, all of which are used to pay for medicines and supplies.

In the Coachella Valley, Desert Regional Medical Center in Palm Springs and John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital in Indio have both donated equipment and supplies for the Nicaragua mission.

Other Southern California hospitals have also donated critical equipment and supplies for the mission, including Mountains Community Hospital in Lake Arrowhead, which donated thousands of dollars worth of maternity ward equipment and supplies as well as Lompoc Valley Medical Center in Lompoc, which donated medicines and pharmaceutical supplies.

Centurion Medical Products of San Bernardino also donated surgical and OBGYN supplies.

Dr. Doriana Cosgrove of Desert Med Aesthetics and Dr. Daniel Cosgrove of Well Max in La Quinta also coordinated a fundraising effort that helped raise \$9,000 worth of donations, which were used to pay for the shipping of medicines and supplies from California to Nicaragua.

Rotary International District 5330, which includes Rotarians from clubs in San Bernardino and Riverside counties, also raised \$8,200, which was used to purchase a portable X-ray machine.

Dentists from the Coachella Valley, Temecula and Oregon also donated thousands of dollars worth of dental supplies for the Nicaragua mission in an effort led by Dr. Rene' Dell'Acqua, a cosmetic dentist from Palm Desert.

Several individuals also made sizeable donations, including \$10,000 from Mike and Amy Rosenfelt of Austin, Texas, and \$6,000 from Roxana Smiekel of Indian Wells. Allen said these donations would be used to cover the costs of transporting the volunteers within Nicaragua as well as for medicines that are purchased both here and in Nicaragua for use during the mission.

Justin Post of Palm Desert, Calif.-based ALT9 Design has also donated website hosting and design services for the IMAHelps website, while the Lions Club of Palms Springs and students from the Rotary Interact Club at Cathedral City High School donated teddy bears to be given to Nicaragua children.

The IMAHelps volunteers will be paying for their own airfare to and from Nicaragua, although their food and hotel expenses will be covered by the Lion's Club of Estelí as well as a non-profit group called Unidos Por Nicaragua (United for Nicaragua).

Rancho Mirage-based IMAHelps is a registered non-profit organization that depends exclusively on volunteers to make a difference in people's lives. Formerly known as International Medical Alliance, Ines Allen changed the organization's name to IMAHelps earlier this year so that her organization's efforts would not be confused with those of other organizations with similar names. For more information, please visit www.imahelps.org.