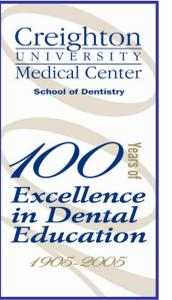




All Things Ignatian



ILAC Dental



Creighton Dental Students and Faculty provide Dental care in the Dominican Republic

The Institute for Latin American Concern began in the early 1970s as an immersion experience for Jesuits. By the late 1970s, Ernesto Travieso SJ, Narcisso Sanchez SJ and Raymond Shaddy DDS began sending health care teams to rural campos in the Dominican Republic. During these summer programs, teams would consist of Medical, Dental, Nursing and Pharmacy students and professionals. This program had a dental component from the earliest days, typically consisting of a dental professional and a dental student at each campo. At that time, the only dental service provided was extractions, with teams taking only surgical instruments and anesthetic.

Since that time, the ILAC program has expanded to include many programs in health care and education in the Dominican Republic throughout the year, but the summer program in the rural campos has continued.

During this time, the dental needs of the patients in these campos has changed. While extractions continue to be one of the leading services provided, many patients now need only fillings or cleanings. To meet this need, the ILAC summer dental program began to acquire portable dental equipment in the early 2000s, adding more equipment each year.



Dental Senior Matt Masaki, Las Cruces 2011

At the present time, the summer ILAC program continues to send teams to six rural campos. These teams each include two dental students, and a volunteer professional, often a faculty member. We now have portable generators, compressors, dental chairs and other equipment which allows teams to provide fillings, sealants, cleanings and other normal dental services. This amount of equipment and supplies has greatly increased the logistic challenges of providing these services, but the Creighton Dental School and other companies have generously provided much of the necessary support. During the summer of 2011, approximately 1500 patients were provided dental services.



Dental Senior Brooke Smars



Challenges

The ILAC dental program continues to add equipment in order to provide more comprehensive dental care. As well as dental students, the program is considering the addition of dental hygiene students to the teams. Funding and professional recruitment continue to be challenging, but overall the program has succeeded in providing a much-needed service, as well as offering a life changing experience to students and professionals.

Sponsored by the Creighton University Jesuit Community, in association with the Deglman Center for Ignatian Spirituality.



Celebrating the Spirit of Creighton

