

IMAHELPS

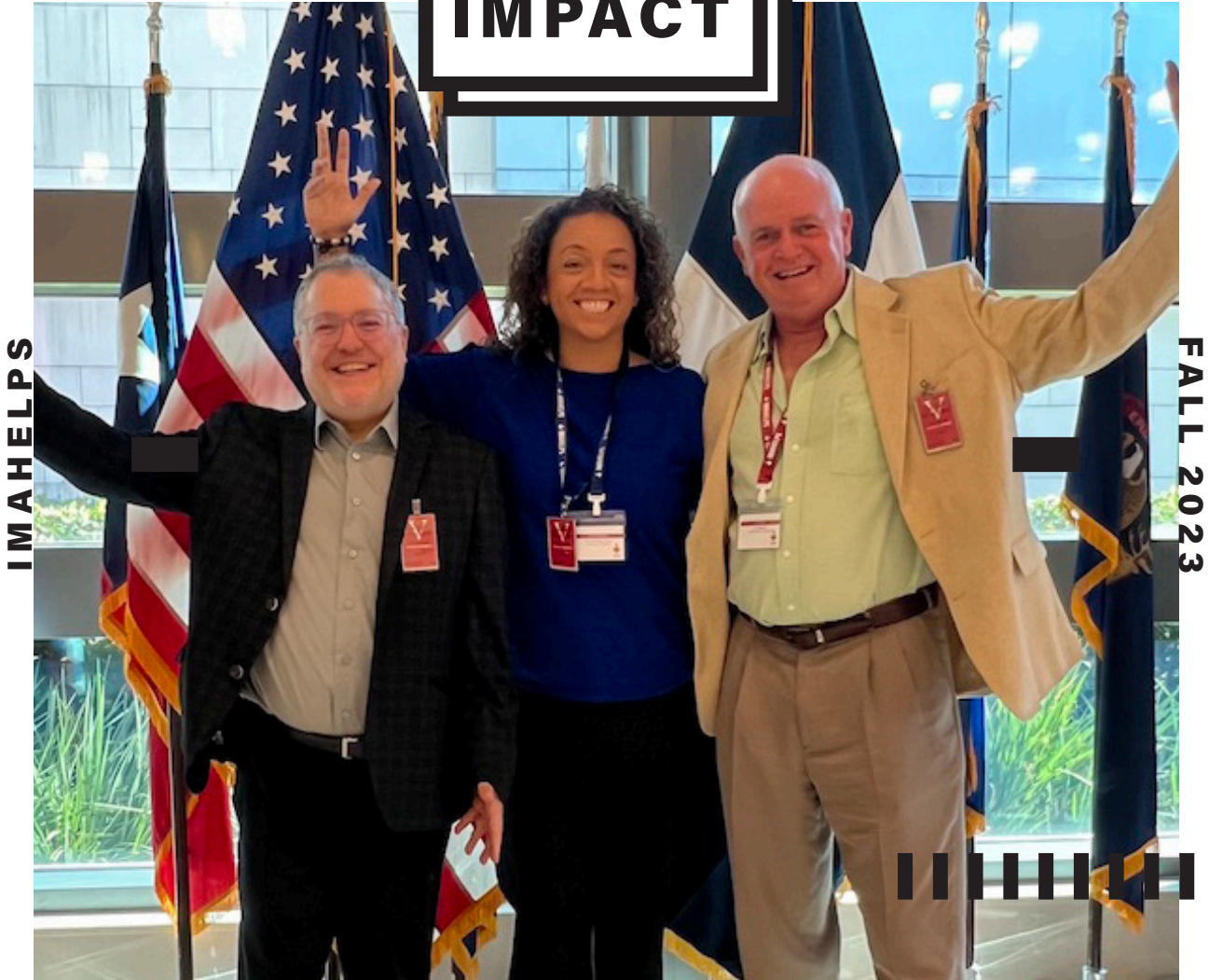
FALL 2023

Missions, Prosthetics, and Narratives

Illuminating IMAHelps' Path of Care and Hope

By Annika Allen & Jeff Crider

**MAKING
AN
IMPACT**



IMAHelps

FALL 2023

Welcome to the IMAHelps Newsletter

Join us as we journey through the heart of IMAHelps in our quarterly newsletter. Discover inspiring stories and the unwavering dedication of our volunteers, all echoing the essence of IMAHelps.

Stay connected with us as we share our mission of bringing hope and healing to those in need.



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*Designed by Annika Allen.
Photos courtesy of Angelo DiFusco, Jodie Roure
& Jeff Crider.*



**Finalizing Details for 2024
Spring and Summer Missions**

Early Preparations and Focused Missions

In January 2024, IMAHelps sets its sights on the Dominican Republic, where a dedicated team will work tirelessly to lay the foundation for two pivotal medical missions in Santo Domingo. First, a specialized surgical mission from April 29 to May 3, with 20 skilled volunteers, will provide vital care to skin burn patients. Then, from July 25 to August 4, a larger mission will unfold, boasting over 80 volunteers across various medical fields, delivering patient care from July 27 to August 2.

Educational Initiatives, Cross-Border Care, and Finalizing Logistics

During a preliminary visit, IMAHelps' leaders identified a strong local interest in collaborative education, particularly focusing on advanced surgical techniques for burn patients. The July mission will feature educational seminars benefitting Dominican surgeons. Additionally, this mission may extend its care to Haitian patients seeking medical services in the Dominican Republic. Late January will see the meticulous finalization of logistical details, from identifying local suppliers for surgical and pharmaceutical needs to streamlining mission operations in close collaboration with local nonprofit organizations and officials.



Join Our Mission

We invite passionate individuals to sign up at [IMAHelps.org](https://imahelps.org) by January 1, eager to make a profound impact. Early registration is pivotal in our planning process, ensuring that all necessary medical specialties are covered. Join us in these transformative missions to Santo Domingo, where together, we can change lives for the better.

Read more about our 2024 missions at

► imahelps.org/2024-missions

Learn more about the Dominican Republic at

► imahelps.org/mission-2024-dominican-republic

PROSTHETICS AND HOPE

Preparations for Change

As IMAHelps gears up for our medical missions in the Dominican Republic, our impactful work in Ecuador continues. In late January, team members Gloria Soto-Reyes and Jeff Crider will revisit Quito, Ecuador. They'll deliver prosthetic arms and hands, crafted by Cleveland high school students, to several children and adults. These prosthetics, designed by students under the guidance of retired NASA educator JonDarr V.T. Bradshaw, are made using 3D printers at the Great Lakes Science Center.



A Story of Resilience

Among those awaiting the team's return is Jefferson Aguirre, a 27-year-old quadruple amputee. Aguirre's life was transformed during IMAHelps' last visit when he received prosthetic legs, helping him walk independently. The upcoming visit promises to further aid his rehabilitation by delivering mechanical arms and hands, fulfilling a commitment made by the robotics team. Aguirre's journey, marked by newfound hope, is encapsulated in his own words: *"You have given me a reason to live,"* a sentiment that deeply moved the IMAHelps team.

Continued Collaboration

This visit underscores IMAHelps' ongoing collaboration with the Cleveland robotics team, blending technological innovation with humanitarian aid. The success of our joint efforts is not just in the physical aid provided but in the emotional and psychological upliftment of individuals like Aguirre. IMAHelps plans to share more updates on this life-altering mission in our forthcoming newsletter, highlighting the profound impact of our work.

Read more at

► imahelps.org/prosthetics-and-hope



FIRSTHAND ACCOUNTS

Discover How IMAHelps Missions Transform Lives

As every IMAHelps volunteer knows, participating in a medical mission can be as life-changing for our volunteers as it is for our patients. While we work tirelessly to provide healthcare, we don't always get a chance to reflect on how these missions impact us personally and professionally.

In each newsletter, we will share firsthand accounts from IMAHelps volunteers. This newsletter includes personal accounts from Carolina Vasconcelos, a dental assistant from San Dimas who now oversees our dental team, and Dr. Jessie Davis, an emergency department physician from JFK Memorial Hospital in Indio.

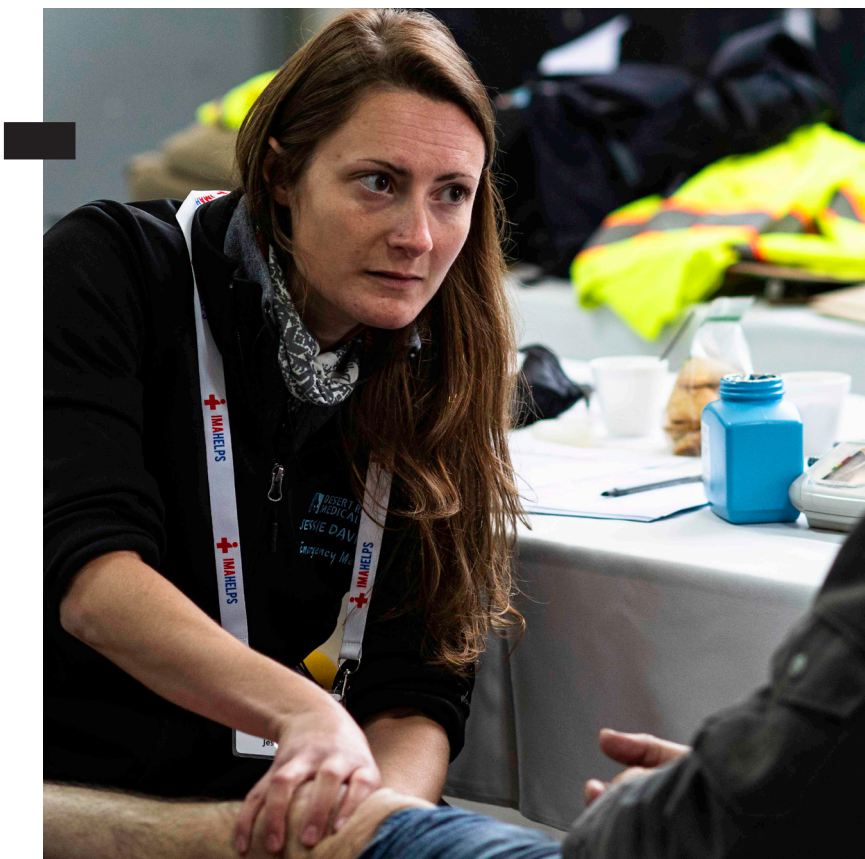


Carolina Vasconcelos: "The Car Crash That Changed My Life"

Carolina Vasconcelos, a life-changer and IMAHelps volunteer, shares her story from a life-altering car crash to dedicated service. After reconstructive surgeries, Carolina's gratitude for making a difference shines through: *"His gratitude after we treated him was so great, and that tight sincere hug he gave me is one of the reasons why I love being part of this organization. It's a priceless feeling."* Carolina's journey with IMAHelps has not only impacted lives but has profoundly changed hers, reinforcing the transformative power of compassion in action.

Dr. Jessie Davis' Evolution with IMAHelps

Dr. Jessie Davis recounts her initial uncertainties before her first mission with IMAHelps in 2018. As an emergency medicine resident, she questioned her ability to contribute effectively. Initially joining to assist orthopedic surgeons, she discovered her true calling in triage. The impactful experiences from her first mission, witnessing unmet medical needs, gratitude, and kindness, fueled her commitment. Over the years, Dr. Davis deepened her involvement, eventually becoming Team Lead during the 2023 Ecuador mission. She acknowledges the organization's transformative impact, stating, *"This organization has shaped my perspective on life, purpose, meaning, and relationships. I know I would not be the physician, nor the person, I am today without IMAHelps."*



Captivating Narratives

Witness firsthand the impactful journeys of these dedicated IMAHelps volunteers and the lasting connections forged in their humanitarian missions.

Read the full stories of Carolina Vasconcelos and Dr. Jessie Davis to discover the transformative power of compassion and service.

► imahelps.org/firsthand-accounts



**UCI SURVEY
INSIGHTS**

Patient Satisfaction in Quito

In the aftermath of IMAHelps' medical mission to Quito, Ecuador, survey results conducted by UC Irvine medical students reveal positive outcomes. Over 80% of the 935 surveyed patients expressed satisfaction, stating that their healthcare concerns were effectively addressed. Notably, 81.7% felt their problems were resolved, 80.3% reported meeting their expectations, and 83.9% felt more informed about their health post-visit. While 59.6% deemed wait times acceptable, Dr. Cristóbal Barrios, Jr., IMAHelps CEO, acknowledges the need for improvement. Efforts will be made, including potential staffing increases and triage enhancements, to address concerns identified by the survey.



Addressing Patient Wait Times: IMAHelps' Commitment

In response to patient concerns about wait times, IMAHelps President and CEO Dr. Cristóbal Barrios, Jr. emphasizes our commitment to finding solutions. Acknowledging the impact of wait times on patients who take entire days off work, Dr. Barrios plans to test new check-in and triage arrangements during our summer mission in Santo Domingo. The survey, reflecting the experiences of one fourth of the patients treated in Quito, provides valuable insights that IMAHelps aims to leverage for continuous improvement. The commitment extends beyond patient care, as UCI medical students plan further research during IMAHelps' summer 2024 mission to Santo Domingo, with the intent to share findings at conferences and publish in medical journals for the benefit of global healthcare organizations in developing countries.

Read the full story at

► imahelps.org/UCI-survey



IMAHELPS HISTORY



"You gain your dignity and mobility when you receive your artificial leg. What a gift, to receive to stand upright, leave that wheelchair and enjoy that liberation! Your baby receives cleft palate surgery, improving your child's health, as well as cleft lip surgery. Your child is a beautiful, normal child, no longer looked upon with pity. Thank you, Ines and Tracey Allen. You have been angels for over 20 years, delivering that "Vision of Hope" to those who need it most."

Rudy Westervelt
Rotary District Governor 2015-2016 for District 5330
Convener of Rotary World Peace Conference 2016 and 2020

Celebrating IMAHELPS' Heritage

Jeff Crider, a devoted IMAHELPS volunteer, encapsulates the nonprofit's impactful history in his book, "A Vision of Hope: The First 20 Years of IMAHELPS." This heartwarming narrative delves into the organization's origins, missions, and the transformative impact on countless lives. All sales directly contribute to IMAHELPS, ensuring ongoing care for those in need. Generous support from Jeff's clients covers the book's printing costs, redirecting all proceeds to procure medicines and supplies for IMAHELPS missions..

Get a copy of this impactful book at
► imahelps.org/store

Please Share Your Thoughts With Us

The leadership of IMAHelps wants to be as responsive as possible to our volunteers and donors, which is why we actively publish quarterly newsletter to keep everyone up to date on our activities.

If you have an idea of an article you would like to see in a future newsletter, please email **Jeff Crider** at criderpublicrelations@gmail.com

If you have ideas on ways we could improve mission planning, outreach and fundraising, we'd love to hear your thoughts and suggestions. Below are names and emails for each of our volunteer staff and board members with their respective titles and areas of responsibility:

- **Dr. Cristobal Barrios, Jr., President and CEO:**
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- **Yardena Trevino, Secretary and Director of Donor Relations:**
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- **Ines Allen, Chairwoman Emeritus:**
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**THANK
YOU**