



W. 505 St. Thomas More Way
Spokane, WA 99208

FAMILY TO FAMILY NEWSLETTER Third Quarter - 2019

Guatemalan Child Brought To Spokane for Orthopedic Surgery

Last summer, Miriam Devaney, Director of FTF, was contacted by Sister Elizabeth Judge (Sisters of Charity, New York), with concern about an 8 year old Guatemalan girl who was born with congenital deformities, leaving her without a left hand and partial left foot. Joselinne Quiche was enjoying most activities at school and home, but was experiencing increased hip and leg pain due to the inward rotation of her left leg which was also several inches shorter than the right leg. Sister Elizabeth asked if *Family to Family* would be willing to help Joselinne and her mother, Maria, seek medical treatment at Shriners' Hospital, a well-known children's hospital that treats children from all over the United States and internationally.

Family to Family has traditionally provided financial and organizational support for medical teams to travel to Guatemala. In 2004, FTF and the Sisters of Charity, NY, collaborated to send a dozen medical professionals and volunteers to Novillero, Guatemala, where patients were screened for vision loss and cataract surgery. Along with the medical team, more than \$100,000 in equipment and supplies were transported to Guatemala. Ultimately, there were 27 individuals who benefited from cataract surgery.

One young mother was able to see her six month old daughter for the first time. In 2006, a second medical team traveled to Solola, Guatemala, where they set up a surgical center from what was formerly a military detention camp. Twenty individuals benefited from cataract surgery during that time. Those who received the gift of sight were overwhelmed with gratitude as they could never have afforded treatment on their own. Since *Family to Family* had established a presence in Guatemala already, it was no surprise that Sister Judge sought our help. There was still one question that needed to be answered, and that was "how do we get the patient to Spokane for treatment?"

After consulting with Shriners' Hospital and the FTF Board of Directors, it looked like it was not only possible to bring Joselinne to Spokane, but strongly encouraged! After Joselinne was approved by Shriners' as an international patient and funding allocated by FTF, preparations began immediately in Spokane and Guatemala to obtain temporary medical visas, passports and medical records. Finally all documentation was obtained and Maria and Joselinne arrived in Spokane on April 18, which was right before Easter. After a brief waiting period, accommodations were arranged at Ronald McDonald House. Initial medical evaluations were completed and the orthopedic team at Shriners' decided to fit Joselinne with a prosthetic leg brace and an orthopedic shoe in order to align her legs correctly. After several weeks went by and no measurable improvement was made, the doctors determined that orthopedic surgery would be the best option to permanently align Joselinne's leg and foot correctly. On June 10, Joselinne underwent surgery and all went well. She was confined to a wheelchair while wearing a cast, but she was still able to celebrate her 9th birthday at Ronald McDonald House, surrounded by other children in treatment, their parents, friends and supporters of *Family to Family* and RMDH staff.



Trip to the Louff Carrousel



FTF Family Sponsor, Mary Ressa, visits Joselinne after surgery



Birthday party at Ronald McDonald House



Joselinne's cast is removed

Because of the incredible generosity of local medical professionals, Maria and Joselinne also received dental treatments and eye exams. Joselinne's cast was removed on July 8th and she was able to put her full weight on her left leg almost immediately. The surgery was a success! A new leg brace would be fitted to Joselinne's leg and new orthopedic shoes for school and play would be ordered in larger sizes to be used for several years in the future. No prosthesis was recommended for Joselinne's left arm as she continues to grow, but she would be eligible for one as an adult.

There have been many "firsts" for Maria and Joselinne Quiche since arriving in Spokane: first plane ride, first time seeing snow, first Easter Egg Hunt, first Carousel and Gondola ride (in downtown Spokane), first time swimming in a pool, first meal in a restaurant, first boat ride (on Priest Lake) and many other experiences they will never soon forget.

Maria expressed her deepest appreciation for the love, care and support that she and her daughter received from FTF and the Spokane community with this message:

"I want to thank all those people I do not know personally, but who are doing so much for us. God has opened my eyes to so many beautiful people who selflessly put the needs of others ahead of their own needs. I know in the Bible, it says, "ask and you will receive." God answered my daughter's prayers when we received the opportunity to come to Spokane for treatment. God has placed all of you in our lives to do His work. I don't have a way to repay everything and everyone that is involved with the Family to Family program, but may all of you, those I have met and those I haven't met, receive God's blessing."

Due to the generosity of several *Family to Family* supporters who direct their donations for medicine and medical supplies, families that we serve are able to benefit directly. In 2016, our skills training center in Nueva Ixtahuacan served as a staging area for *The Hope Alliance*, a non-profit organization that provides eye exams and new or recycled eyeglasses to families in need as well as educational talks on the prevention of eye disease due to exposure to the sun. Last year, a couple of *Family to Family* donors provided funds for the purchase of a wheelchair and walker for two disabled teens.

INTRODUCING "FRIENDS OF FAMILY TO FAMILY"

Do you have extra time or a special talent that you would like to share? This international ministry that serves "the poorest of the poor" in Guatemala could use your help. Please indicate below how you would like to be involved and any comments you may have. Muchas Gracias y Que Dios te bendiga!

- I can help with weavings and coffee sales
- I can help with mailings
- I am proficient in Spanish and can translate Family Histories or Progress Reports
- I have experience in grant writing and can help
- I have web design experience and can help
- I have marketing experience and can help
- I have a special skill or knowledge that I am willing to share such as carpentry, masonry, wood carving, quilting, sewing, iron working, electrical wiring, agriculture, animal raising (such as chickens, sheep, livestock), bee keeping, forestry, engineering skills i.e. road improvement/maintenance, building structure integrity, hydro-electrical water systems, international shipping, other. Please elaborate:

Comments: _____

Contact Information:

Name	Phone Number	Email Address

Please return to: **Family To Family, 505 W. St. Thomas More Way, Spokane, WA 99208**