



TASH TIMES

Vol 10 – July / August 2020. Oaxaca, Mexico.

www.tashinc.org

GREETINGS

Dear Friends,

There seems no doubt that we are moving through an unprecedented slice of human history that is being lived and reflected on by each one of us across the world. As I hold all those emotions closely to my heart, I also feel the need and opportunity to share with you our gratitude for your generosity that you have shown towards the people of Oaxaca for more than two decades. I hope you are inspired by the impact in numbers and stories, that you have made possible.

There are many ways to define impact. One could say that Fr. Scott’s approach started by touching hearts and minds through La Clínica del Pueblo; established to provide affordable, quality, and compassionate care for low-income families with healthcare needs in Oaxaca. During his more than two-decade-long journey and made possible by the incredible benevolence of you all, he was able to expand his giving to other organizations working with vulnerable populations in Oaxaca.

Measuring Our Impact



160,000 patients have received medical care



15 nonprofit partners doing good work



20 years of economic support in Oaxaca

The story of TASH is also a story about Oaxaca. Why Oaxaca? It is a convergence of many contrasts. 58% of the people speak an indigenous language compared to the national average of 15%. Oaxaca possesses stunning mountains and coastline, plus exquisite food, culture and the most biodiversity of any state in Mexico.

It is shocking to me to imagine a place that has so much potential, but also a daily minimum wage of just \$4/ USD. Oaxaca suffers from the consequences attributed to the lack of access to education, basic health services, and decent jobs. There are some notable challenges due to the rugged mountainous landscape and endemic political corruption that have affected 1000s of tiny villages spread across Oaxaca. For these reasons and more, the work of TASH found its home, working cautiously and in collaboration with local organizations to ensure we respect local traditions and way of life. We will also strive to build trust with local leaders to ensure that our donations best reach those in need.

Sincerely,

Pete Noll
Executive Director, TASH, Inc.

Learn more about OUR IMPACT at:

www.tashinc.org/our-impact



On June 23, 2020, a 7.3 magnitude earthquake hit off the southern coast of Oaxaca and was felt strongly in the mountainous villages throughout the state and in the capital. The earthquake, aftershocks and landslides caused structural damage in many towns and six people died. Earthquakes are a frequent occurrence in Oaxaca and most modern buildings, including La Clínica del Pueblo, were constructed with this in mind. All of La Clínica's staff is safe and accounted for. We are grateful for the messages of concern and your prayers for our safety.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP by Pete Noll

With the recent protests and conversations in the United States, I have been seeking out how to better understand the role a Servant Leader might pursue as a catalyst for change. Of course, Fr. Scott is a strong proponent of justice. I found a video from another Catholic keynote speaker, who argued that advocating for justice could be translated into speaking out on behalf of justice from an upright place. As Servant Leaders, I believe that we must put the interests of others above our own.



Ausencio & Cecilia are visited by a social worker - 2020

My family moved to Sewickley in Western PA in 1979, so that my Dad could work in Ambridge. I appreciate the experience of having grown up in a mixed community and have been fortunate to maintain those lifetime friendships and perspective. Since I now live in Oaxaca, I am thinking about how to apply my leadership to advocate for justice and peace in our work down here, a place that is also filled with deeply rooted inequalities. I must say, I have more questions than answers, but realize that part of being a Servant Leader is taking the time to listen and learn from those most affected by the injustices.



RADIO PROGRAMS: We recently added 50 more archived programs from Fr. Scott's radio show "Joyful Reflections" to bring the total to 150. Visit our website (www.tashinc.org) and click "Radio Archives" under "Our History." You can listen to all the available programs at no-cost, and let them be a part of your daily lives.

WITNESS to OAXACA

In the last newsletter, I reported 163 positive COVID-19 cases and 22 deaths. As of June 30th, in Oaxaca, there are 5,081 reported cases and 559 attributed deaths. We are thankful for La Clínica staff and all our partner organizations who have remained committed to their work during these uncertain times. I like the Hawaiian saying, “No rain, no rainbows.” It is in that spirit of perspective that I am pleased to share with you two testimonials from the past two months.

Many of you may recall a testimonial that I shared with you in 2019 about Liz, a single mother and community promoter, who received a successful emergency brain surgery. Her neurosurgeon recently called me with a new urgent case. He was willing to donate his services but needed a place to operate with public hospitals closed to non-COVID cases. TASH was honored to cover the surgical costs to allow this critical surgery to move forward.

Hilda Inés Reyes Castro is 40 years old, and has Von Hippel Lindau (VHL) disease. It is a rare disease that causes tumors and cysts in the body. They can grow in the brain and spinal cord, kidneys, pancreas, and reproductive tract. Tumors are generally benign (non-cancerous). But some tumors, such as those in the kidney and pancreas, can become cancerous. It is a genetic and degenerative disease.

Hilda shared with me, “Over the course of these 8 years my health has deteriorated significantly. Today, I thank God for you all, as I have been able to undergo this recent surgery and I had one more tumor removed, which no longer allowed me to have a normal life.”

“I have two children: one is 12 and one is 3 years old and, at this point, I could no longer attend to them, but thanks to you and your great humanity and your altruistic labor today I am recovering from this surgery, which was performed by Dr. Javier Arjona who, has become an angel for me and my family, much like you all.”

“I thank all of you for giving me the opportunity to undergo the surgical intervention. From the bottom of my heart, I want you to know that I will always be grateful for this enormous act of generosity, for giving me the opportunity to regain my health. God bless you and fill you with blessings, I will pray for you forever. Thank you for performing these kinds of altruistic actions, for blessing people like me with this beautiful gesture.”

Dania, 29 years old, is married and a nurse at La Clínica del Pueblo since April of 2018. She was diagnosed with COVID-19 in May, but fortunately is in full recovery. We contacted Dania, while in quarantine, and she was kind enough to share with us her story. When Dania decided to study nursing, it was a big step for her, as the school was five hours away. Living on her own for the first time, the adaptation was difficult for the first few months, but then she realized it was worth the effort so she could reach her goal.

(Dania's story is continued on the next page...)



Dr. Javier Arjona and Hilda after and during her successful surgery



Dania outside of La Clínica del Pueblo

When I asked Dania why she decided to become a nurse, she said, “It is rewarding to be able to help those who are sick and see them on their final recovery day.” She said that it fills her with wonderful pride to help patients and be able to say to others, “I am a nurse!”

When asked about working as a nurse during the COVID-19 pandemic, she shared, “While it is known that as frontline health workers, we have a responsibility to society; I know that it is with the help of everyone that we can improve the overall conditions and get past this pandemic.”

When asked about how she felt when she got COVID-19, she shared her mixed emotions: “I knew I could be at risk for my vocation, but when I started to physically feel sick and realized it could be the virus, my mind started to race. I not only had angst about my own health, but my other family members, including worst case scenarios. At the same time, I had faith that we could follow the health recommendations and have a full recovery.”

As we finished the interview, she said “I look forward to returning soon so I can continue to carry on my profession, with empathy, patience, faith, enthusiasm, and love; and to be able to help people who come to La Clínica and have hope that we can help them.”

UPCOMING EVENTS & UPDATES

2020 Ole 5k Benefit Race: We are excited to share with you the new race date, Saturday, October 24, same venue, same family fun, same opportunity to support TASH’s mission in Oaxaca, Mexico.

Please visit: www.ole5k.com or www.tashinc.org/ole5k for more information.

As we do each year, TASH filed its 990 tax documents and completed our annual audit, which demonstrate our good standing with the IRS. We continue to maintain the highest tier of nonprofit profiles: GuideStar Platinum Level.

   @tashincorg – Follow us on social media for more updates.

If you would like to make a donation to support the mission in Oaxaca, we would truly appreciate it.

Please make a check out to TASH, Inc. and use the donation envelope included or you can make a secure donation online at www.tashinc.org.