



Children's Surgery International

Changing lives, one child at a time

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Save the Date!

Support CSI at Macy's Shop for a Cause

**Saturday
August 23, 2014**

CSI will participate in Macy's annual Shop for a Cause. Purchase a \$5 pass from CSI and get discounts at any Macy's on that day!

**Contact CSI for tickets:
612-746-4082 or
info@childrenssurgeryintl.org**



A huge 'Thank You' to our 2014 Gala Sponsors Firestone Natural Rubber and 3M. Read more about the event inside this issue.

Mission Trip Nerves - A CSI Volunteer's Experience

By Melanie McCall

As I prepared for my role as one of two logistics specialists going on the annual CSI trip to Hermosillo in October 2013, I became increasingly excited, and nervous. I knew this surgical mission to be a wonderful experience for those who had gone previously, including my husband; but also that it would be chaotic, tiring and emotional. As someone who prefers an orderly process and who also gets choked up at sad or sappy commercials, Hermosillo seemed a bit daunting. Could I take pictures in the operating room without fainting? How would I communicate? I shoved my concerns firmly aside, focused on my excitement at being part of this marvelous group of professionals, and boarded the plane that took us to Mexico.



Inari with her father

It turns out that the incredibly warm welcome given to CSI by our hosts, the fantastic support of the hospital staff and volunteers, and most of all, the smiles on the faces of these beautiful children were all that was needed to allay my fears. Whatever nerves I had were nothing compared to the initial fear and concern felt by these parents, many of whom traveled hundreds of miles to help their child, and who may never have been in a "real" hospital before.

One family touched us deeply. Tiny Inari, only three months old, was carried in by her very frightened parents. Throughout the screening day I would see Inari's mother, clutching her baby daughter to her and trying, unsuccessfully, not to cry. Dad, ever stoic by their side, would smile grimly and nod at me but say nothing. After Inari's cleft lip surgery was successfully completed, Ashley, my wonderful partner in logistics and medical records, and I escorted Inari's anxious parents back to recovery. As they gazed down at their sleeping baby with a newly repaired lip, we watched their faces turn from anxious fear to joyful smiles. Their relief and joy was palpable.



Inari, post-surgery

My strongest memory, however, is of Inari's stoic strong father dissolving into tears as he stroked his baby girl's head and held his wife. He gave me a huge grin and said thank you, over and over. I turned to Dr. Grischkan, who smiled and said "That's why we do this."

Nervous? Not me. I can't wait to go back.



Children's Surgery
International

The 10th Annual Passport to Smiles Gala...



...An event to benefit children around the world

Check us out online at www.childrensurgeryintl.org.

A fabulous success for CSI and the children we serve!

Thank you to the record number of guests who were able to celebrate with us, our Event Sponsors Firestone Natural Rubber and 3M, along with the many Table Sponsors and Auction donors. You are all an important part of the CSI mission. Together we raised **over \$110,000!** This represents renewed hope and possibilities for many children and their families.

Thank you to our Gala Co-chairs, Janis Heaney and John Hehre, the Gala Committee and the many volunteers who worked tirelessly to make the evening so memorable. Thanks also to our emcee Chris Egert, Auctioneer Dan Masloski, videographer Nolan Morice, Keynote speaker Con Nguyen, Molly and the Danger Band, and Esera Tuaolo.



Closing the Circle

An inspiring CSI Gala Keynote Speech by Conrad Nguyen

One of the most poignant moments of the night was undoubtedly the keynote speech given by Conrad Nguyen. Conrad, a Manager for 3M Health Care and CSI Board Member, shared the story of his life as a young child growing up in South Vietnam where he and his family experienced persecution, displacement, discrimination, and resulting poverty.

Despite significant strife, Con never lost hope, and ultimately the dreams he could only imagine have come true!

Below is a short excerpt from Con's speech:

CSI's mission really strikes a chord in me. While I never had to deal with the physical health problems these children are facing, I do know what it feels like to be poor, to be ostracized because of what I look like or how I speak, to yearn for an education and to fear those dreams will always be out of reach. I know how these kids feel because I've been there.

This past November, I went on the CSI mission trip to Liberia. In a way, it felt like going home. There were hundreds of families lined up, hoping for a chance of a better future for their children. I looked in their faces and saw my father, standing in line at the refugee camp, waiting for an interview. I saw my mother, standing in line for hours to receive a handful of donated toys so she could give her children gifts as we started our new life. I saw a fierce, burning hope – the kind that keeps you going when the whole world seems set against you.

I know that, alone, I'm not going to save the world. But together, we can make a tremendous difference. CSI supporters, staff and volunteers are already changing the world for one child, one family, one village at a time. A kid who was shunned yesterday could smile tomorrow – and that kid could become something. And just think what that kid can accomplish! He will grow up to help others, bringing their lives full circle.

A Heartfelt THANK YOU to Our 2014 Table Sponsors

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Did you know...

CSI takes our own anesthesia equipment on most surgical mission trips? Patient safety is our #1 priority, thus having the best equipment is imperative. **Spacelabs Healthcare** has generously donated specialized equipment that provides our anesthesia teams monitoring capability that ensures the highest quality of patient safety possible! Now CSI will have the ability to provide the highest standard of anesthesia care anywhere in the world!



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For more information or to make a donation, call or write to:

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You can also make a donation online at
www.childrenssurgeryintl.org

CSI Board Welcomes New Chair

After 5 years as CSI Board of Directors Chair, Lora Stege Koppel, RN is transferring her responsibilities from Board Chair to Board Member.

Lora has been on numerous missions, volunteered in nearly every capacity, and taken a leadership role on mission trips and the annual Gala. Her contributions to CSI have been great, and we are pleased that she will continue to volunteer and share her energy with the children and families we serve.



CSI is very pleased to announce that Tom Fansler, MBA will be taking the role of Board of Directors Chair. Tom has been on the CSI Board since 2010, and is an invaluable member. He brings a

wealth of knowledge related to leadership, business and finance, along with a passion for helping children in need. Tom has traveled with CSI on mission trips to Mexico and Bangladesh, and has taken various leadership roles within the organization.

