

# Children's Surgery International

Changing faces, changing lives

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Jennifer Malaret recounts her experience on a recent mission as a CSI Partner. Learn more about CSI's Partners Program on our website.

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## CSI's Fourth Mission to Haiti a Success

Children's Surgery International returned from a weeklong mission to Haiti at the end of September. CSI has been to Haiti four times, and three of those have been to this specific location. St. Damien's Hospital is located in Tabarre, which is a district of Port au Prince. This mission was different, however, as it was the first time we performed cleft surgeries at the site. Past visits have focused on other types of semi-elective surgeries such as hernias and other analogous cases. We performed over 35 cleft and hernia surgeries, and hope to be back next spring to do more.

This trip was memorable on many levels for everyone; here are some of the favorite memories as recounted by team members:

"I will always remember the little guy who wanted my pack of gum. He spied it in my pocket as he was waiting for surgery. He asked me 'chike?' I had to ask how to say 'after surgery' in Creole. He was still asking as we rolled down to surgery and the anesthetic was making him sleepy; I thought for sure he would forget. We finished the case and the patient was wheeled out to recover. While prepping for the next case, I was summoned to the PACU. I went out and there was my little friend sitting up waiting for his chike! I gave him three sticks of strawberry Extra and he went up to the floor a few minutes later. I was told that he arrived with all three pieces in his mouth!"

"Working on the floor, I was filled with awe and respect as I watched parents and children wait patiently, sometimes through long hours, for their turn to have surgery. They waited, parents sitting on hard chairs and children, especially older ones, in beds that were too small, with no complaining. They were grateful to be there, for their children to receive surgery that they may not have otherwise been able to have. Their quiet patience and deep gratitude filled me with a respect for the Haitian people that I will carry with me in practice and daily life in the states."

"The memory of Rose Caroline will stay with many of us forever. This little girl was severely undernourished but she was the happiest, most optimistic baby we met on the mission. With the successful repair of her cleft lip, the second goal became to get her some formula to take home, and teach mom the proper mixing ratios. After much effort (as

*(continued on page 2)*



## Save the Date!

**The 8th Annual Passport to Smiles Gala  
will be held at the Sofitel Hotel on  
Saturday, April 21, 2012.**

As always, the event will feature live and silent auctions, great food, inspired speakers, and fascinating conversations.

Check out our website for more information, and watch for your invitation in early March 2012.



(continued from page 1)

formula is a scarce commodity) the precious powdered formula arrived on the floor. A cup was mixed up for Rose Caroline and offered to her by her mother. As the cup reached her newly healed lip, Rose Caroline's beautiful brown eyes popped open and her small hand held the cup in a vise-like grip as she hungrily swallowed the formula. When her mother pulled the cup away to give her a break, Rose Caroline's little hand shot out to pull the cup back to her. We all laughed and smiled at her eagerness, happy in the knowledge that, not only had we repaired her lip, but we had provided her with nutrition that she clearly enjoyed and needed to grow and heal from her surgery."

"I will not soon forget the torrential downpour we survived and having to run in the rain and knee-deep 'puddles' back to the hospital only to find our tent submerged in the water! The memories of being soaked to the bone, along with my suitcase, backpack and books (which I am still drying out) are comical now..."

"So many good times in the OR. Singing, the 'Aha!' moment upon figuring out the 'Haiti Hernia' and of course watching the transformation as we fixed the children, knowing that we were giving them a chance to be a kid again."

For a full recount of the mission, visit our website and click on the CSI Blog link in the header.

## Firestone Liberia Honored with 2011 Bridgestone Corporation Award

By Dan Adomitis

I am pleased to announce that Firestone Liberia has been honored with the 2011 Bridgestone Corporation Award for Contributions to Society. The Award is being given in recognition of the work Firestone Liberia has done alongside our partners at CSI to provide free, life-changing surgeries to underprivileged Liberian children. Three members of our Liberian team traveled to Tokyo in March to receive the award, which is one of the highest honors within our global corporation. On behalf of Charles Stuart and the rest of the Firestone Liberia team, thank you and congratulations to our partners at CSI, without whom this could not have been achieved.



## 2011 Liberia Trip

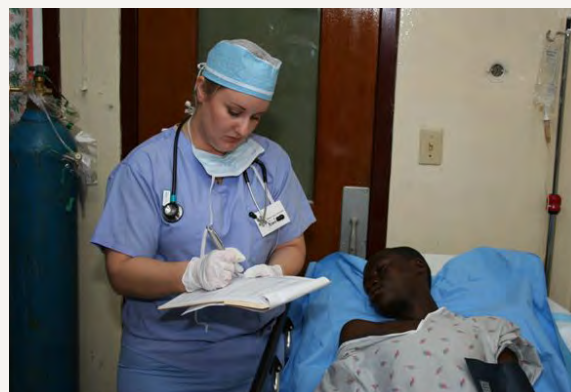
By Katie Houle

Once again I had the privilege to participate in a medical mission with CSI, as we traveled to Liberia, Africa. I was overwhelmed by the skill and dedication of our team and the way everyone, from parents to Firestone and CSI staff, rally together to serve the children. The gracious welcome and hospitality we received from Firestone was amazing, and they also made sure the families were comfortable in the new "Firestone Friendship House," a new facility on the hospital campus much like a Ronald McDonald house. Having patients housed on the Firestone campus made the families lives easier and helped keep the surgery schedule moving.

As we began screening for surgery on our first day, it became very evident that the need for our work in Liberia is still present. Many patients showed up and waited all day to be screened by our team. The surgery schedule filled up very quickly and as a team we decided to add a day to the schedule to accommodate as many children as possible. Several Firestone employees stayed with us late into the night on the first day of screening to complete lab work and feed the families still waiting to be seen.

There are so many wonderful stories to share! A young child named Fatu who received surgery and stayed at the hospital for the week. Her mother smiled and thanked our team members every time they passed her bed. A grandfather who brought his young grandson in for surgery and stayed by his side as he recovered; the hardship of the journey outweighed by his love for his grandson.

The stories and the experiences from these missions continue to guide my work daily and will stay with me for my lifetime. I feel truly amazed and blessed to be part of this work and look forward to travelling with CSI again soon. I am always moved by the significant impact CSI has and the amount of work yet to be done.



## Changing faces, changing lives

**Want to be a CSI Mission Partner?***By Jennifer Malaret*

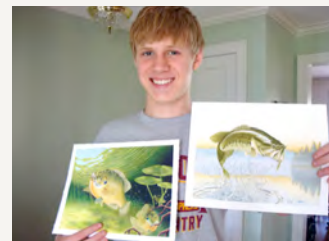
When asked to travel with the CSI medical team to Liberia, I felt a tremendous sense of challenge and adventure. It was a wonderful opportunity to make a charitable donation and a personal opportunity to travel to a part of the world where I could make a difference in the lives of sick children.

I felt a little apprehensive during the planning process. What would it be like to spend ten days in a country afflicted by war, political instability, and poverty? CSI provided flight arrangements, visas, vaccines, and scheduling; Firestone Liberia hosted our team in a comfortable guesthouse and provided hearty meals and daily transportation; and Dan and Johnine Adomitis, our Firestone sponsors, made sure that everyone had anything they needed.

During the mission trip, I saw and did things that I never could have imagined. I was able to go into the operating room and watch CSI work side-by-side with their Liberian counter-parts. I saw another surgeon dedicate himself to urological repairs which enabled young boys to urinate properly. A third doctor provided surgeries to correct disfiguring conditions.

Although the government is years away from re-building the country, Monrovia has developed an active market place. Another day was spent visiting a home for children in Paynesville. We assisted CSI distribute medication and then cooked lunch for 150 orphans and public school children. During our visit, we got to know the kids and presented them with toys and boxes of educational materials.

I am most grateful to CSI and Firestone for the opportunity of a lifetime. The money that I donated in support of CSI's mission was secondary to the personal growth and experience that I gained through my travels as a Mission Partner. I would encourage anyone to support CSI and its Mission Partners program. Travel. Make a difference. Change lives...

**Young Man Supports CSI with His Art**

Riley Nelson is a young artist who is not quite ready to "go pro," but when people offer him money for his drawings, he accepts it on behalf of Children's Surgery International. He is a student at Minnetonka High School and is interested in being a painter or illustrator one day. His history of donating to CSI goes back to elementary school.

Kids began offering him money in 3rd grade for folders that he had doodled on. In 5th grade, one of Riley's friends became his "business manager" for "Riley's art business." Kids would tell him what they wanted Riley to draw and he would charge 50 cents to a dollar for caricature drawings. He would save up the money and donate it to CSI.

"I love to take a blank page or canvas and turn it into something that is fun to look at and draws the viewer's eye. If I can surprise or even shock someone by how funny or unique my art is, then in my mind I have done well," commented Riley.

In recent years Riley has found that the fish drawings he entered in the State Fish Art Contest are getting more attention than his cartoons or caricatures ever have. His dad has them displayed at work, and co-workers have bought copies, again with the money going to Children's Surgery International. Some of his teachers at school have also requested copies. Now, Riley makes Giclee' prints of his best artwork so he can offer professional grade prints to interested folks.

**Yearly Holiday Boutique Benefits CSI**

Each year since 2006, Marian Hehre has contributed to Children's Surgery International from the earnings of her fabulous Holiday Boutique. A friend of CSI board member Lora Stege Koppel, Marian was touched by Lora's stories and moved by the need for CSI's work.

Marian says, "We are incredibly humbled to be able to help in a small way, and are pleased that our donation increases each year as the event grows."

Join us for this year's boutique November 11, 10-7pm and 12, 9-3pm at 5345 Clinton Ave S. Minneapolis, MN. Find directions and more information on our website under News & Events.



## Meet Our Newest Board Members

### Tim Lander, MD

Dr. Tim Lander is new to the Children's Surgery International Board, but he has a long history with CSI. He is the first surgeon to join the Board since his medical practice partner, Dr. Jim Sidman, served five distinguished terms several years ago.

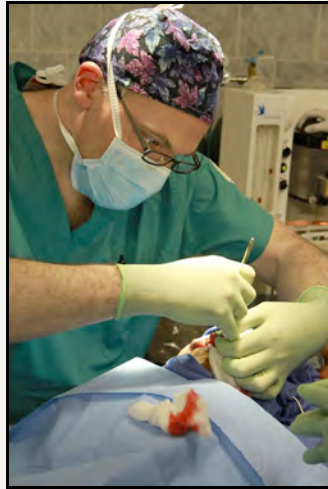
Tim, a graduate of the University of Minnesota Medical School, and completed residency training at the University of California in San Diego.

He specializes in pediatric otolaryngology and facial plastic surgery, and has been in practice for nine years.

A veteran of seven CSI missions, Tim has traveled to Peru, Mexico, and Liberia and has often been the surgical lead. Among his favorite memories of those missions are experiencing a building-rocking earthquake during surgery in Arequipa, Peru, and having the opportunity to work with a multitude of skilled medical professionals from all over the United States.

Retired CSI Board member Mary Batinich remembers how creative and innovative Tim and the other medical staff were in our last mission to Peru, when our medical supplies were held up in customs and never did arrive in time for the mission. Tim and other doctors and nurses performed more than 60 surgeries on that mission, in spite of not having the latest state of the art machines and supplies. All of the patients were operated on successfully and were filled with grateful thanks after their surgeries. Always fun to work with, and incredibly skillful in the Operating Room, Tim is a favorite with the team members with whom he serves.

Some of the directions which he'd like to see CSI take are increasing the opportunities to train local surgeons and anesthesiologists in the operating room, and to continue to expand the variety of surgical procedures that CSI can offer on its missions.



### Tom Fansler

CSI Board member Tom Fansler built a start-up company called Inter-Tax Company in 1995 and sold it in 2007. The company automated the GPS system to recreate vehicle activity that included routes and fuel consumption, and reported it to client companies. What used to be a manual process became an automated process, and Tom feels that there may be opportunities to help CSI using this technology. After

he sold Inter-Tax, he started a new division for Peoplenet, a leading mobile communications provider to the transportation industry.

Tom learned about Children's Surgery International through his good friend George Steiner, who is our organization's treasurer. They are karate practitioners and meet twice a week at the Midwest Washin-Ryu Club, where they perfect the discipline of the art and cement their friendship. Through George and Rose Marie Steiner, Tom and his wife Jeanne began attending our Passport to Smiles events several years ago and have been hooked on the mission of CSI ever since that time.

As a new CSI Board member, Tom volunteered to head the live auction for this year's April 16 event at the Millennium Hotel in Minneapolis. He "hoped that the day after tax day wouldn't dampen people's enthusiasm!" He asked people to save frequent flier miles for CSI's benefit, as well as thinking about major auction items which could be paired with those tickets. Tom coordinated the donations for the fundraiser.

The Fanslers have three children, the oldest of whom is Alison Scott, a song writer, pianist and singer. She and her band perform locally, and her songs are heard on many local radio stations. Molly is a second year medical student at the University of Minnesota. Son Sam, 21, a junior at Northwestern University in Chicago, studies computer science and music. Both Tom and Jeanne have a great interest in music, Tom, being a music composition major and Jeanne, a singer and music mentor of children.

Tom was a team member of the 2009 Hermosillo mission, and after that moving experience, truly understands why we need to keep funding our missions and helping children smile. He looks forward to being on our CSI Board, and we welcome him with open arms.



Changing faces, changing lives

The 7th Annual Passport to Smiles Gala



Bill Brink and Norie Wilson



Dr. Zipporah Gathuya and Dr. Joseph Kait



Live Auction



Sarah and Erik Hromatka, KeySurgical



Jennifer Maleret, Ruthanne Randall, Lora Stege Koppel



Tim, Joyce and Leon Lander



Vicki Olson and Katie Pownell



Robert Rivers, Johnine Adomitis, Jennifer Rivers, Dan Adomitis



Pat Brenna, Auctioneer



George and Rose Marie Steiner, John and Inez Bergquist



Danielle Patti, Mary Bye, Steve Bye, Celeste Gaiser, Mitchell Cookas, Dodie Barr



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**Hailey Lynn Laspi's 5th Birthday**  
Melissa Laspi  
Darlene & Mike Moen

**Honor of his birthday**  
Friends of Ronald Ott

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Steven Peet

**Dorothy & Rob Ramsdell's  
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Judi Renier

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Jeffrey Schmidt

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**George and Rose Marie Steiner**  
Mary and Ernie Stelzer  
**George and RoseMarie Steiner's 50th  
Wedding Anniversary**  
Mary and Ernie Stelzer

**Ruth Sterling's 90th Birthday**  
Marlayne Domyahn

**Virginia Sweitzer's Birthday**  
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**Drs. David & Naomi Tetzlaff's Birthdays**  
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**Remya Weier 5th Birthday**  
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