



**Children's Surgery  
International**

FALL 2023

Changing lives,

one child at a time.

## MEXICO 2023

Jose



At age 13 Jose's speech was unintelligible, even to his family. Jose had a complicated cleft palate — a hole in the roof of his mouth the size of a quarter. This hole, or fistula, allowed air to flow freely between his mouth and nose, which interfered with his ability to speak. Local surgeons had attempted to close the fistula, but it presented itself again and again. The sadness and frustration Jose and his family were experiencing was gut wrenching.

Children who are fortunate enough to have access to highly specialized pediatric surgical care have this problem repaired early in life — before they start to form words. Jose grew up in a country where the poor often do not have access to this type of surgical care.

Children's Surgery International (CSI) has some of the most highly skilled surgeons in their fields as volunteers. Drs. Micheal Fritz and Daniel Sampson are two of them. They first met Jose in Hermosillo, Mexico, in 2018 and were determined to

*CSI is proud to conduct two important surgical trips to Mexico in 2023 to meet the enormous need that mounted during the pandemic.*



give him the gift of speech. They made a treatment plan that would take place over the next few years during CSI's annual trips to the region.

Because of the time constraints

related to surgical missions, Drs. Fritz and Sampson needed to innovate. They didn't have the luxury of seeing Jose multiple times over the course of the year, so they planned to collaborate and perform a dual procedure on the 2019 trip.

Dr. Fritz is a pioneer of the "free flap" procedure, which uses a very thin, small flap of skin from the thigh to close the hole in the roof of the mouth. Dr. Sampson specializes in bone grafts to repair complicated cleft palates. Together they performed the surgery, creating a flap of skin to attach to the bone taken from the pelvis, providing a strong foundation to close the hole. Drs. Fritz and Sampson believe that this is the first time such a procedure has been completed on a surgical mission trip anywhere in the world.

Immediately after waking up from the surgery Jose spoke and everyone

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)



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### **Medical Director**

Dave Tetzlaff, MD

### **Academic Director**

Siva Chinnadurai, MD, MPH

### **Operations Manager**

Darryl Scarborough

### **Office and**

### **Communications Manager**

Veronika Skorich

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## MEXICO 2023: JOSE (CONTINUED FROM FRONT)

could understand his speech! The joy and relief in the room was palpable. Jose's bravery, his family's perseverance, and the amazing talent of the CSI surgical team changed his life in a way that is indescribable.

During the pandemic while CSI teams were unable to travel, Drs. Fritz and Sampson kept in touch with Jose and his local orthodontist, who X-rayed the repair and reported that it was holding up well.

Jose is now 17, a "delightful young man," according to Dr. Sampson. This fall Dr. Sampson reinforced the graft with more bone from the pelvis. Jose's speech is entirely normal. Next year he will be eligible for cosmetic procedures to make his smile and nose more natural.

Through CSI's unique volunteer model and strong partnerships with St. Andrews Children's Clinic, Hospital CIMA and CIMA Voluntariados, Jose gained access to receive these life-changing surgeries. With normal speech and oral motor function, the sky's the limit for Jose!



Each fall we launch our year-end giving campaign - a critical component of our annual fundraising goals.

Your donation is the fuel that creates a multiplier effect - igniting our mission to deliver expert pediatric care, training and supplies. During the year-end giving campaign, you have many opportunities to fuel our work:

- Plan a gift to CSI on **Give to the Max Day** on Thursday, November 16.
- Attend the **CSI Holiday Brew and Dine** at Wooden Hill Brewing on Tuesday, December 12.
- Watch the mail for our **Annual Appeal Letter** which includes a special message from CSI Board Chair Amy Fischer and send your donation in the enclosed envelope.
- **Donate online** at [childrenssurgeryintl.org/giving/](https://childrenssurgeryintl.org/giving/)
- **Plan a gift** from your Donor Advised Fund (DAF) on the CSI website using the new feature that connects you from the CSI giving page to your DAF to authorize grants.

## Meet our office staff



### Darryl Scarborough Operations Manager

CSI welcomed Darryl Scarborough to the team in May. Darryl is a seasoned operations and development professional

with years of experience in humanitarian aid and assistance programs. During his military career, he traveled abroad extensively. Most recently, Darryl worked as an International Affairs and Policy Analyst within the Department of Defense. He is committed to advancing health equity and looks forward to his first trip to Liberia with CSI in January 2024.



### Veronika Skorich Communications Manager

Veronika joined the team in 2022. She has worked within communications, development, operations and strategic

management at various health systems. She has an undergraduate degree in public relations and a master's in healthcare administration. She is passionate about nonprofit work and has traveled to underserved areas of the country to provide aid in homebuilding and educational assistance.

## Holiday Brew & Dine at Wooden Hill Brewing

**Dec. 12, 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.**

7421 Bush Lake Rd, Edina, MN 55439

A portion of all taproom sales will support CSI. This includes both drink and food sales so bring the whole family for dinner! Everyone who visits the CSI information table will be entered to win a 4 pack of water park passes to Great Wolf Lodge in Bloomington. We hope to see you there!



## Board of directors updates



**Linda Sedgwick, RN,  
and Norie Wilson, RN**

Linda and Norie rotated off the CSI board in June, after more than a decade of service. We are profoundly grateful to Linda and Norie for their organizational leadership, oversight and vision and for their commitment to supporting the children, families and communities we serve.



### Ellen Reynolds, APRN

Ellen was elected to the CSI board in June. Ellen first volunteered with CSI in 2012 and has traveled with teams to Liberia, Vietnam and Ethiopia. She has over 35 years experience as a pediatric nurse practitioner and clinical nurse specialist in both acute and primary care settings. Ellen enjoys teaching and has served extensively as adjunct university faculty at undergraduate and graduate levels.



### Dave Tetzlaff, MD

Dave has been involved with CSI for nearly two decades and has been a part of CSI's leadership team since 2015 serving as Medical Director. He joined the board this year as a voting member. Dave is a board certified hospitalist in internal medicine and pediatrics. He has served as lead physician on numerous site visits and surgical trips. The energy, expertise and passion that Dave brings to CSI is appreciated by all who work with him.

### Siva Chinnadurai, MD, MPH

Siva completed his term as CSI board chair in June of 2023. Also at this time he was appointed as Academic Director, a new volunteer leadership position to provide oversight and vision to CSI educational and academic activities.



## UPCOMING TRIPS/DATES

### Mexico:

November 11 – 14, 2023

### Liberia:

January 13 – 27, 2024

### Ethiopia:

February 22 – March 3, 2024



## CSI Gala

*Mark your calendar for our  
biggest night of the year!*

**Saturday, May 4, 2024**

Planning is underway!  
Volunteers are needed. Email  
[info@childrenssurgeryintl.org](mailto:info@childrenssurgeryintl.org)  
if interested.

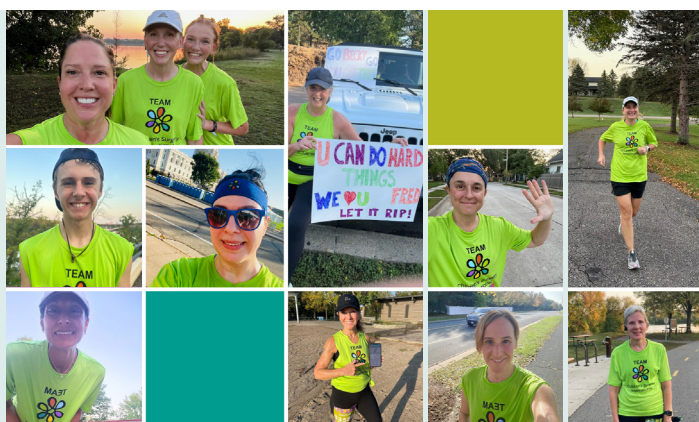
## GIVE NOW



Scan the QR code  
with your phone,  
or go to [childrenssurgeryintl.org/donate](https://childrenssurgeryintl.org/donate)  
to make a gift today.



CSI exceeds industry standards  
and outperforms most  
charities in financial health,  
accountability and transparency.



## SPOTLIGHT ON FUNDRAISING Team CSI runs to change lives

This year marked CSI's first year as a charity partner of the Medtronic TC 10 Mile. CSI's team of **18 runners** raised over **\$20,000** — incredible work!

Want to run the 2024 TC 10 Mile as part of Team CSI? Email [veronika@childrenssurgeryintl.org](mailto:veronika@childrenssurgeryintl.org) to join the team contact list.