



Children's Surgery  
International

WINTER 2024

Changing lives,

one child at a time.

## Paying it forward in Liberia

CSI nurse volunteer Doris Osurah has a saying, "When you pull one, one must pull one." In other words, when you help someone, that person should pay it forward. That is just what she is doing, alongside the amazing team of CSI volunteers and their Liberian colleagues at Firestone Daside Hospital in Liberia.

Doris was born in Liberia. She left in 1990 at the start of what would become a brutal 14 years of civil war that had horrific consequences, including severe hunger, unsanitary conditions and death. She boarded a Nigerian military ship along with her 3-year-old daughter, two sisters and thousands of other refugees in search of safety. When the ship docked in Ghana, she and her family disembarked due to a cholera outbreak.

Doris shares that the journey to becoming a refugee was dire. While in the refugee camp in Buduram, Ghana, Doris prayed. She recalls bargaining with God to take her and her family out of the conditions,

**"Volunteering as a nurse enables me to see how authentic health disparities are globally. [CSI] strives to empower the communities it interacts with."**

—DORIS OSURAH,  
CSI NURSE VOLUNTEER

where she began a new chapter, safe from the atrocities of war. She completed her bachelor's degree in nursing as well as advanced training as a nurse practitioner. Along the way, she learned about Children's Surgery International (CSI) and the work we do to support children and families in need, including those within her home country. Doris first returned to Liberia as a volunteer with CSI in 2008 and has also traveled with CSI to Vietnam and Peru.

This month, Doris returned to Liberia with CSI. She reflects, "Imagine fleeing a war zone, living

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# TRAVEL UPDATES

## ETHIOPIA

The escalation of conflict in Ethiopia led to the need to postpone our surgical training trips to Bahir Dar. We remain in contact with our longtime partners who report they are safe and eagerly awaiting our return. Our thoughts are with our colleagues at Tibebe Ghion Specialized Hospital and Bahir Dar University, as well as the people of Ethiopia during this time of continued violence and uncertainty.



### 2023 highlights

190 

life-changing  
surgeries

\$300,000



worth of medical supplies and  
equipment delivered to partners



surgical trips



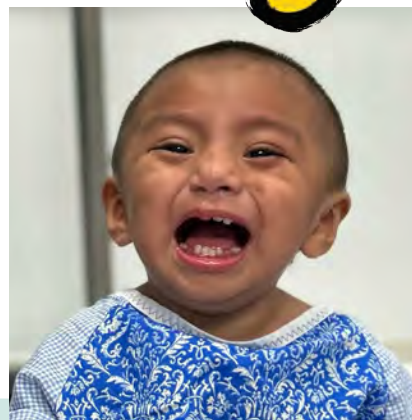
\$1 million

of total contributed  
services donated

## UGANDA

CSI is thrilled to be embarking on a new partnership in Mbarara, Uganda this month. We've been invited to collaborate with the team at Holy Innocents Children's Hospital to provide desperately needed surgical care to children and advanced training to their strong team of surgeons, physicians, nurses, residents and medical students. Mbarara is in the southwest region of the country. Of the roughly 49 million people in Uganda, 50% are children. There are 10 pediatric surgeons in the country, nine in the capital of Kampala and one in Mbarara, where Holy

Innocents Children's Hospital is located. Our volunteers will focus on craniofacial and general pediatric surgical care and training.



## THE GAMBIA

In March, a small volunteer team will conduct a site visit to The Gambia to meet with future partners at Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital (EFSTH). The Gambia is a small West African country, bordered by Senegal. EFSTH is a tertiary referral hospital in Banjul, the capital city of The Gambia. It is the largest hospital in the country and home to the country's only medical and nursing schools. Our goals for partnership include surgical training, supply support and sharing best practices for medical outreach programs.





## Paying it forward in Liberia

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT)

as a refugee for three years, and being allowed to return home as a medical volunteer in your community. Returning with CSI was an answered prayer. Volunteering as a nurse enables me to see how authentic health disparities are globally. The organization strives to empower the communities it interacts with."

This month, Doris and 24 other CSI volunteers worked side by side with their Liberian colleagues to strengthen skills and increase access to basic, life-changing healthcare. The team completed 87 surgeries, donated thousands of dollars in medical supplies and equipment, delivered hands-on education and training to 40 Liberian nurses and doctors, and provided deworming medication and basic need supplies to 7,000 children at area orphanages and schools.

Doris, thank you for paying that "pull" forward, returning to Liberia and being a part of our work to change lives and strengthen communities. BRAVO team!



### CSI meets highest giving standards

Children's Surgery International has once again earned top ratings and outperforms most charities in financial health, accountability and transparency. We take our professional duty to our donors seriously. Through prudent investment and spending in accordance with our donors' expectations and with our mission, vision and values always at the forefront, we maximize each and every dollar.



**GIVE NOW**



### Medtronic Twin Cities 10 Mile



You can change lives by running the TC 10 Mile on October 6. Be part of our second annual Team CSI. As part of the team, you'll receive a running shirt, fundraising platform, swag and more! Sign up at [info@childrenssurgeryintl.org](mailto:info@childrenssurgeryintl.org).

# Thank you,

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Edward Piechowski  
Dr. Michael Philbin  
Theresa Philbin, RN  
Lynn Randall, CRNA  
Dr. Karen Resch  
Ellen Reynolds, APRN  
Dr. Jon Robitschek  
Kara Rollins, CRNA  
Dr. Brianne Roby  
Taylor Rumsey, CST  
Mallory Ryan, RN  
Madison Sackett, RN  
Alicia Said, RN

Dr. Daniel Sampson  
Zinda Schaefer  
Dr. Andrew Scott  
Linda Sedgwick, RN  
Amy Smith, RN  
Dr. Craig Smith  
Mary Jo Smith, CRNA  
Dr. Heidi Stephany  
Alicia Stephens, RN  
Amy Stinson  
Todd Stinson  
Jen Sturm, CRNA  
Travis Tanberg, CRNA  
Dr. Dave Tetzlaff  
Dr. Naomi Tetzlaff  
Susan Turnquist, RN  
Dr. Trish Valusek  
Dr. David Vandersteen  
Ana Vazquez Rojas, RN  
Garrett Vincent  
Laura Vincent  
Mary Jo Wagner  
Sharalee Walton, RN  
Marissa Wat, CRNA  
Terri Weaver  
Anna Weiden  
Kirsten Willenbring, RN  
Norie Wilson, RN  
Dr. Tim Wood  
Steve Yackel  
Sarah Yeakel  
Bob Zehrre  
James Zimmerman

## Heritage Society Members

Zinda Schaefer  
Jack and Megan Sparks  
Dr. Craig Smith  
Virginia Smith

## Leave a lasting legacy

We are humbled by the support of our donors. Many give generously, year after year, to reduce disparities in healthcare and increase access to life-changing care for children around the globe.

Another important way to leave a lasting impact is to include CSI in your estate plans, ensuring our mission lives on well into the future. The Heritage Society recognizes those who have made philanthropic arrangements for CSI in their estate plans. Heritage Society members receive a special gift from CSI, are honored at our annual gala and recognized in our annual report and winter newsletter.

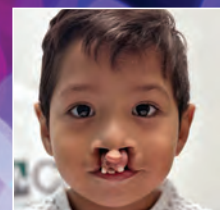
**To learn more, contact Megan Sparks at [megan@childrenssurgeryintl.org](mailto:megan@childrenssurgeryintl.org) or 612-746-4082.**



# be the light

SATURDAY, MAY 4, 2024

## CSI GALA



*Omni Viking Lakes Hotel*

2611 Nordic Way, Eagan, MN



**It's CSI's biggest night of the year! Join us and be the light that changes a child's life and make a lasting impact for children and communities in need.**

- Support CSI's mission through silent and live auctions.
- Connect with others who care deeply about making a difference in the world.
- Participate in fun games and activities.
- Hear about our work this year and what's in store for the year ahead.
- The Golden Ticket raffle – win YOUR CHOICE of a Live Auction item! Only 100 tickets available for purchase, \$200 each. The drawing takes place before the Live Auction begins.

**NEW  
THIS  
YEAR**

*Event Sponsor*



**Firestone**  
NATURAL RUBBER COMPANY

Support the CSI Gala by becoming a vital event sponsor.  
**Contact Megan Sparks at**  
[megan@childrensurgeryintl.org](mailto:megan@childrensurgeryintl.org)  
**to learn more.**

Registration will be available in March.  
For more more information, go to  
[childrensurgeryintl.org/events](http://childrensurgeryintl.org/events).



## Children's Surgery International

99 5th Avenue NW, Suite 100  
New Brighton, MN 55112

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



We are in need of in-kind donations for the CSI Gala auctions and games. Funds raised from these fun gala activities support the critical work we do.

In-kind donations ideas: Unused gift cards, tickets or suites to sporting events, special experiences, rounds of golf, vacation home rentals, special gift baskets and more.

Contact us as soon as possible if you can assist at [info@childrenssurgeryintl.org](mailto:info@childrenssurgeryintl.org). Thank you for helping us change lives!

**MORE GALA  
DETAILS  
INSIDE**



## 2024 TRIPS

### **Liberia:**

January 13 – 27

### **Uganda:**

February 23 – March 3

### **The Gambia:**

March 3 – 9 (site visit)

### **Mexico:**

October 4 – 9

### **Ethiopia:**

October 17 – 27

