



## Los Cabos Children's Foundation Cardiac Program Update—March 2013

### Twin programs developing side by side Bringing them home to the Baja

Alongside the Spirit of Joy Children's Cancer Program, LCCF has been facilitating and developing our Cardiac Program at an equally rapid pace. The stars are aligning and the time is right to move both of these programs to new levels. The emphasis is on providing the majority of the services here in Baja California Sur! This will allow donated dollars to be stretched to the MAX, more children to be served and lay the groundwork for future sustainability.

There are many contributors to these exciting times...most of whom have been involved since the beginning such as;

LCCF and supporters, our Miracle Bid Donors, Amigos de los Niños, Omaha Children's Hospital, Avera McKennan Medical Systems and of course the Doctors in the Baja, Sioux Falls and Omaha! All angels who have taken care of the children both in the Baja, in Omaha and in Sioux Falls

...you all know who you are! Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

### Perla Denisse

*Translation of a letter  
Perla wrote on Facebook:*

Well, tomorrow I return to Los Cabos with a lot of joyful energy and much more because I am now happy again and thankful to God for having given me the opportunity to have another perfect and beautiful birthday.

I give thanks to Doctor Sami, Jeanie, Mark, Bob, Donna, Brenda and especially the Doctors who healed me. One of them is the first who is Dr. Hammel who I owe thanks for operating on me when no other Doctor wanted to operate but he stepped up and operated on me! Now I am a very happy girl and content

to be able to have a new and beautiful heart. This was what I dreamed of and I thank God.

Well, my dear friends and family, I return home with such happiness and a smile from ear to ear. Thank you.



I am going to miss everyone from the Children's Foundation. Many thanks for helping me.

I love you all!

## Photo Gallery of Perla's Journey



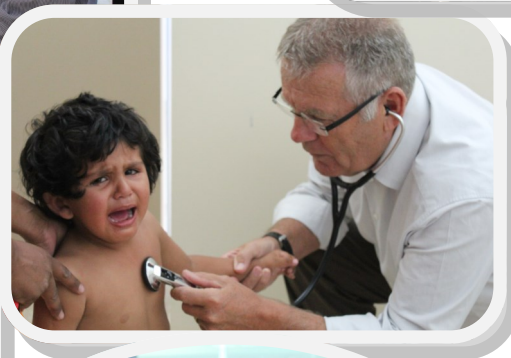
## Cardiac Team Trip November 10-12, 2012

In November, the Children's Hospital of Omaha sent a Cardiac Team to do catherizations and evaluations to determine the needs of children to be transported to Omaha and/or treated here in the Baja in the June 2013 surgery program.

The participating Doctors from Children's Hospital Omaha were: Dr. Jim Hammel- Chief Pediatric Cardiac Surgeon, Dr. Jeff Delaney- Pediatric Interventional Cardiologist, Dr. Kerri George-Pediatric Cardiac Anesthesiologist, Dr. Stacey Froemming-Nurse/ Director of the Cardiac Hybrid Cath Lab Participating Doctors from Cabo/La Paz: Dr. Valderrain- Adult Cardiologist, Dr. Dick McFaul-Pediatric Cardiologist, Dra. Isabel Sanchez-Adult Cardiologist, Dr. Jose Luis Ortega-Pediatrician

Six children were evaluated including Perla in preparation for her trip to the US and a follow-up with Axel, who had his open heart surgery last year in Omaha.

## Pediatric Surgeon/Cardiologist Visit La Paz



## Cardiac Surgery Program Planned for June 2013

Evaluations were done on the 20th of March as seen above and plans made for the third week of June 2013 to have the first open heart surgeries performed here in the Baja. A team of 22 members including doctors and support team will come down from Omaha Children's Hospital (pro-bono) to perform the surgeries and begin training of the staff here in BCS. This is the next step in bringing the less complicated surgeries and treatments home to the Baja. For the same cost as sending one child to the US for surgery, five to ten can be performed here.

There is no Pediatric Cardiac Surgeon here so Dr. Hammel will continue to come and gradually train the support staff so that the team he brings will be smaller each trip.

The second trip is slated for November, 2013



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Ximena finds a new friend at Salvatierra hospital in Gail Freels, Chair of the Board of Directors of LCCF.

Ximena is a successful heart surgery collaboration between LCCF and the Children's Hospital, Omaha. She was in for a checkup and passed with flying colors!

## Message from the CEO—Significant progress is being made!

In all my travels and meetings, I am consistently asked two questions by the supporters of LCCF.

1. What is LCCF's relationship with the local and state Mexican government? Are we doing this alone? The answer is we have a wonderful working relationship with the Governor, First Lady, Minister of Public Health, Hospital Directors and specialty doctors. Without these working relationships it would be impossible to build a cancer center or perform open heart surgeries for the children of the state. The Director of the hospitals have opened the doors of their facilities to us, the doctors within the hospitals have been collaborative and supportive. The Minister of Public Health has given permissions and financial support for additional nurses and the First Lady is currently finishing construction on a hospitality shelter for mothers with children under cancer treatment. In addition, we have strong partnerships with the Children's Hospital, Omaha, the University of California San Diego, Rady's Children's Hospital, San Diego and St. Jude from abroad and locally our long time partner in cancer and heart issues, Amigos de Los Ninos. Are we alone? Definitely and emphatically - NO!
2. Will the children of Baja eventually be able to receive the healthcare they need here locally? YES! This has always been our goal this is the year! As you can see, the two questions are related. As we develop the resources, facilities, team and capacity to work here, we will. We have 15 children with cancer already being treated in La Paz and we are no longer sending them to Culiacan or the US. On April 30th, the hospitality house will open and shortly thereafter so will the newly remodeled area inside of Salvatierra for the cancer program. This year will also see two weeks of pediatric heart surgeries at Salvatierra. This is an enormous project requiring specialized equipment and blood, and a team of more than 20 doctors and support staff from the USA in the beginning. However, for the same cost as sending 2 children to the US we can do 10 locally AND develop training and the capacity within one to two years to have a stand alone program here in Baja. Last year we did one heart surgery, in the US, and in the next 12 months we will do 20!!!!