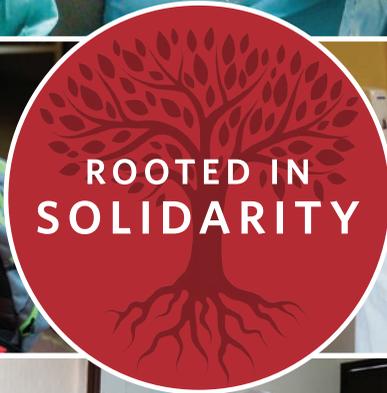




SOLIDARITY BRIDGE

ANNUAL REPORT 2016



VISION

We transform lives by promoting solidarity and justice through experiences of **service and healing**. We believe that saving a life and alleviating suffering can **sustain families** and **strengthen communities**.

MISSION

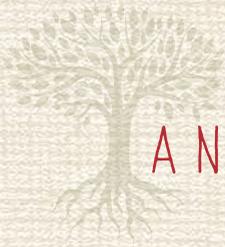
In a spirit of mutuality, we build a healthier future for the people of Bolivia and Paraguay through domestic and international partnerships. We **train and equip** their medical communities, **empowering them** to provide high-complexity surgery and other health care for those living in poverty.

“To be a missionary is to be called: called away from the world as we think we know it, called to use our gifts and talents in the service of the world’s needs. To be on mission also means to be sent: sent to bring blessing, healing, and hope, sent to learn and be transformed by the relationships we build.”

In the name of the wider Church,
Bishop John Manz commissions
Dr. Francisco Nuñez for mission.

Fr. Bob Oldershaw
10-time missionary and team chaplain





A NOTE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Every tree is known by its fruit. It's time, once again, to express our gratitude for the abundant fruits borne of our collective acts of solidarity in 2016. Our four year-round surgical programs were sustained by seven mission trips with continued focus on training and equipping our Bolivian colleagues. Together with Puente de Solidaridad, our partner in Bolivia, local medical leaders were better resourced to serve the health needs of their communities. Our mission is strong and we are proud to announce that we have finalized plans for a total of eight mission trips in 2017, a historic high!

Every tree is strengthened by its roots. In 2016, our founder, Juan Lorenzo Hinojosa, retired from his staff and board roles at Solidarity Bridge. While he remains fervently active with our mission, we are now formally in our "second generation," ever grateful for our firm foundation in Catholic social justice traditions. **Rooted in solidarity, we are intentional about serving those most in need, recognizing our profound oneness with God and all others.** We believe this sustainable vision will continue rendering transformative experiences for all who participate in our work.

Ann Rhomberg,
Executive Director

Dale Granchalek,
Board Chair

"We need
to grow in a solidarity
which would allow all
peoples to become the
artisans of their destiny."
- Pope Francis



2016 Accomplishments

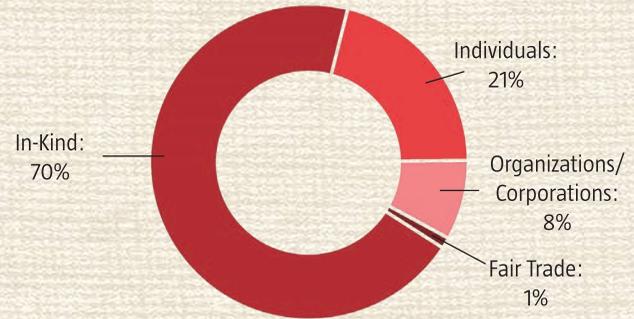


* This includes: \$307,662 in time donated by US missioners and \$646,650 in time donated by Bolivian partners through our year-round surgical programs.

** This includes 416 unique missioners, many of whom return year after year.

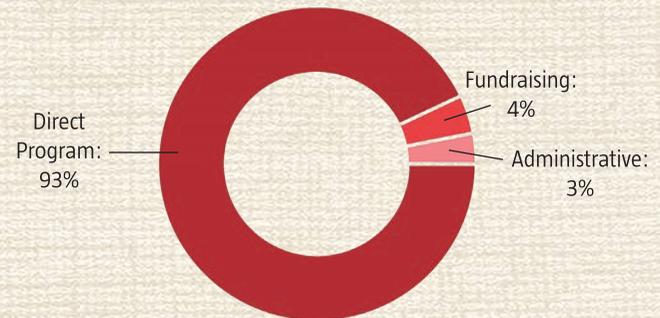
REVENUE: \$3,381,762

\$2,378,308 In-Kind | \$1,003,453 Cash



EXPENSES: \$ 3,909,734

\$2,881,863 In-Kind | \$1,027,870 Cash



NET ASSETS: \$522,248

\$246,745 In-Kind | \$275,503 Cash

Where We Serve

Solidarity Bridge, based in Evanston, Illinois, works primarily in Bolivia. The poorest country in South America, Bolivia has an annual per capita income of less than US \$6,500. While recent national efforts have increased access to primary health care, surgical services remain inaccessible for the vast majority of the population. In 2016, Solidarity Bridge continued efforts to bring services to new areas of the country with a focus on reinforcing local capacity, especially to serve patients in poor and indigenous communities, many of whom live in remote, rural areas.



All of our work is directed and managed in close partnership with our Bolivian counterparts at Puente de Solidaridad, with offices located in Cochabamba and Santa Cruz, Bolivia. Patients travel from throughout Bolivia to receive surgical care through our mission trips and year-round surgical programs based at a growing number of partner hospitals. The map indicates our primary work sites in 2016. We also returned to Paraguay in November to conclude our pacemaker efforts and to discuss new opportunities in neurosurgery.

**new location in 2016*

General Surgery Program

Locations:

Cochabamba, Mizque, Punata,
Santa Cruz, Tiquipaya

Surgeries: 179

Mission Trips:

2 (Cochabamba, Santa Cruz)

Mobile Laparoscopic Campaigns:

4 (Punata (2x), Mizque, Santa Cruz)

Expanding Surgical Capacity

Mission trips continued to expand surgical capacities at the most important third-level public hospitals in the cities of Cochabamba and Santa Cruz. In addition to progressively upgrading local equipment and skills for such high-demand surgeries as gall bladder extractions and hernia repairs, in 2016 mission surgeons operated alongside Bolivian partners to treat several especially complex cases, including gastric and colon cancers, a bronchialpulmonary fistula, and congenital dolicolon.

Hours are spent on the first day of each general surgery mission trip reviewing patient files and planning each surgery. Here, missionaries Dr. John Gregory and P.A. Stephanie Morup plan the week's schedule with Dr. Walter Antezana, surgical resident Dr. Gonzalo del Carpio, and Dr. Juvenal Butrón.

The spring 2016 mission trip was hosted by the Viedma Hospital in Cochabamba.



Expanding Surgical Access Through Mobile Campaigns

Mobile laparoscopic surgery campaigns are 4-8 day visits by Bolivian surgical teams to rural or peri-urban hospitals to provide laparoscopic surgeries for patients unable to travel to the urban centers. Largely equipped by Solidarity Bridge donations, the campaigns are planned and managed by our Bolivian partner, Puente de Solidaridad. Two new sites, the central-Bolivian town of Mizque and a small hospital on the outskirts of Santa Cruz, were served by mobile campaigns in 2016. During these campaigns, Bolivian partner surgeons equipped and trained through our programs take surgical care to more marginalized communities.



Ariel, a mobile campaign patient seen here at home with his family, has now returned to his job in construction.

After surgery, Sara, 18, was eager to return to high school and help care for her disabled sister so that her mother can work.



Young Sara had suffered her entire life with persistent and increasingly debilitating digestive ailments, before being diagnosed with dolico colon, an exceptionally long large intestine. Team chaplain Jim Manzardo spent many hours with Sara as she recovered from the arduous procedure to alleviate her symptoms and give her a chance at a normal life.

“As I left the hospital with fellow missionaries, I realized that we have been chosen—chosen to be that healing and strengthening touch that changes our lives as well as those of our patients.”

Jim Manzardo
Trip Chaplain



Heart Surgery Programs

OPEN HEART

Locations:

Cochabamba, Santa Cruz

Surgeries:

22 children, 2 adults

Providing Life-Saving Support

Heart surgery is a matter of life or death for children born with congenital heart conditions. **Our Open Heart Program prioritizes pediatric heart surgery**, serving newborns through teenagers who could not otherwise afford such specialized care. Three Bolivian hospitals and their staffs partnered with Solidarity Bridge and Puente de Solidaridad in 2016. Dharma Social Projects and the Medtronic Corporation generously ensured needed resources and valuable equipment.

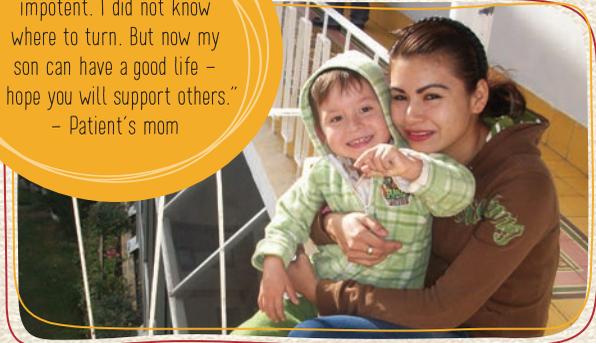
"My parents made huge sacrifices for me but they have financial problems. Without your support, I do not know what would have happened to me. God bless you!"
– 15-year-old patient



In August, we signed an agreement with the Bolivian nonprofit Fundacor. By combining our resources, we hope to improve access to surgical care for the children who need it most.



"I had felt so impotent. I did not know where to turn. But now my son can have a good life – I hope you will support others."
– Patient's mom



Dr. Carlos Brockmann
Bolivian Heart Surgeon

*"We perform advanced heart surgery here in Bolivia for a fraction of the cost of what it would take to send a child outside the country. **Solidarity Bridge is bringing the patient, family, skills and resources together right here.**"*

PACEMAKER

Locations:

Cochabamba, Santa Cruz

Pacemaker Implants: 127

Mission Trip: 1 (Santa Cruz)

In 2016, seven Bolivian partner cardiologists and one US missionary implanted 127 pacemakers, defibrillators and resynchronization therapy devices at ten partner hospitals.

Pacemaker patients came from *eight out of Bolivia's nine departments (states)*. The majority originate from Cochabamba, Santa Cruz and Chuquisaca, the regions most affected by Chagas disease, which accounts for about *three out of four* of all our implants.



Our Donors Make It Possible

In-kind support is the backbone of this program. In 2016, we welcomed two new corporate partners: **St. Jude Medical** and **Boston Scientific**, who joined **Medtronic Corporation** to provide pacemakers and other implantable cardiac devices used by our program.



Missioner Joseph Wu, MD (left) accompanied Bolivian social worker Carmen Salses (right) on several patient home visits. Here they pose with the grateful sons of a mission patient.

Lifetime Care!

Once a patient receives a Solidarity Bridge pacemaker implant, we commit to their lifetime follow-up. With a current **average age of only 57**, many of our patients return to long and productive lives. This also means many will eventually need a new battery or device - **in 2016 we replaced 20 pacemakers for past patients**, accounting for 17% of our implants.

Mission Trip

In November, Dr. Joseph Wu of UCLA Medical Center spent three days in Santa Cruz operating alongside Dr. Ronald Cuellar, one of Bolivia's few electrophysiologists. They performed seven cardiac implants at the San Juan de Dios Hospital in Santa Cruz, Bolivia's best-equipped public hospital implant center.



Gynecologic Surgery Program

Locations: Tiquipaya, Punata, Santa Cruz

Surgeries: 22

Mission Trip: Tiquipaya

We are focused on training and equipping partner hospitals and physicians to provide gynecologic and pelvic reconstruction **surgery for low-income Bolivian women**, in particular those in their post-reproductive years **whose needs are rarely prioritized**.

The majority of women treated in 2016 sought help for urinary incontinence due to bladder prolapse. Others suffered from pelvic injuries attributable to multiple or unassisted difficult births. As part of our general efforts to promote less invasive options to treat common problems, Solidarity Bridge is the sole provider in Bolivia of endometrial ablation treatment to resolve abnormal bleeding for appropriate patients.



The **2016 Gynecologic Surgery Mission Trip** was hosted by the Municipal Maternity and Children's Hospital of Tiquipaya located on the outskirts of Cochabamba. Two mission surgeons, Dr. Janet Tomezsko, specialist in female pelvic medicine and reconstructive surgery, and Dr. Ronald Miller, gynecologist, operated alongside Tiquipaya hospital director and Solidarity Bridge's lead Bolivian partner gynecologist, Dr. José Luis Choque.



Victoria rents a two-room home with her daughter in the small town of Quittacollo. She heard about the Gynecologic Surgery Mission through a public service announcement on the state television station. Victoria was one of 13 women who recovered their health, dignity, and independence thanks to surgeries provided during the mission trip.

Semana de Solidaridad

Spanning two continents, the staff and leadership of Solidarity Bridge and Puente de Solidaridad gathered together for a week of prayerful visioning, planning and celebrating the work of our mission, nourishing our deeply planted roots of solidarity.

During Semana de Solidaridad, Solidarity Bridge's board of directors and staff gathered for a biannual retreat. This gathering provided time for deep reflection on the meaning of our rootedness in solidarity—in profound oneness with all others. It is from this deepest root that our work flows.



Patricia Vargas

Executive Director of Puente de Solidaridad

"Semana de Solidaridad helped us to rediscover our reality, respond and act in solidarity, and recognize that our organizations share the responsibility for fulfilling our mission."



TV Documentary Coming Soon

Solidarity Bridge will be featured in a 30-minute documentary on the award-winning Public Television series, *Visionaries*, this fall. The series, hosted by Sam Waterston, has captured inspiring stories of nonprofit organizations in virtually every corner of the world. We have been selected as a feature organization precisely because we are **rooted in solidarity**.

"I am excited to tell the story of this organization that is creating a more effective model for global justice by building relationships based on mutual respect and fostering solidarity among all who participate."

Jody Santos

Documentary Filmmaker

Local broadcast times to be announced in the coming months. Subscribe to our email list for more updates.



Neurosurgery Program

Locations:

La Paz, Santa Cruz, Cochabamba

Surgeries: 45

Mission Trips:

2 (La Paz, Santa Cruz)

Course Titles:

Third International Course on Endoscopic Skull Base Surgery

International Course on Pediatric Neurosurgery and Neuro Oncology

Course Attendees: 34

Course Faculty: 3 US faculty and 8 Latin American faculty

Senior Director of Programs Mary McCann Sanchez celebrates with a patient the restoration of her vision following neurosurgery in La Paz.

New Traditions Develop in Neurosurgery Program

With more than a decade of leading mentored surgeries and strengthening relationships with Bolivian colleagues, our Neurosurgery Program has established a new tradition on mission: **structured courses in highly demanded subject areas**. We offered two courses in 2016 under the leadership of medical director Dr. Richard Moser and in close collaboration with the Bolivian Neurosurgery Society.

Solidarity Bridge coursework trains surgeons who serve the poor and links patients without financial resources to high quality neurosurgical care. Courses are planned collegially with Bolivian neurosurgeons as part of a three-year rotation across the country. **Lectures, demonstration stations, and simulcast surgeries provide hands-on work and a deeper understanding of surgical techniques.** The faculty is intentionally international, a product of the strong professional relationship among US, Bolivian, and other Latin American neurosurgeons. Course evaluations underscore the need for continuing professional education, validate the high quality of our courses, and attest to their practical application.



Sotak Scholarship Strengthens Our Roots

Five years ago a visionary donor to Solidarity Bridge established a scholarship program that allows a recently trained neurosurgeon to accompany a mission team to Bolivia. On mission, the Sotak Scholar contributes a wealth of specialized knowledge acquired in recent, intensive coursework and becomes part of an experienced team of international neurosurgeons. Dr. Krista Greenan from the University of California Davis Medical Center served the mission as the Sotak Scholar in 2016. Dr. Greenan operated with the neurosurgical team, individually guided course participants in a demonstration work station, and delivered a lecture on the use of shunt devices.



Sotak Scholar Dr. Krista Greenan and SB Medical Director Dr. Richard Moser analyze studies of a tumor prior to surgery. (Santa Cruz, September)



Dr. Art DiPatri demonstrates use of a ventriculostomy simulator at the pediatric neurosurgery course.



“During the opening ritual on the first night, I began to feel that there was a purpose for my being here, that God had chosen this time in my life to speak to me. I want to be a doctor like those who have inspired me here this week, and I want to be a missionary for life.”

Carla Andrea Cossio Ledo

Bolivian medical school graduate and volunteer interpreter



“I feel that part of my responsibility as a neurosurgeon is to continue the tradition of teaching the subject. I am impressed with the philosophy of Solidarity Bridge in teaching local medical professionals and building relationships as opposed to doing surgeries and leaving.”

Dr. Krista Greenan
Sotak Scholar

Multi-Specialty Mission Trip

Mission Trip Location: Punata

Patients Served: 418

The 2016 Multi-Specialty Mission Trip was hosted by Manuel Ascencio Villaroel Hospital, which serves patients from a wide rural area southwest of Cochabamba. **A growing partnership** is developing between Solidarity Bridge, Puente de Solidaridad, and the hospital staff to further resource and **expand the care available to those living in remote areas**, many of whom live in deep poverty. The hospital hosted a mobile laparoscopic surgery campaign in June, and welcomed our multi-specialty team in September.



"I had an operation and now I am doing so much better. May God bless you, and please come back."
– Isabel

In the OR, our team focused on sharing laparoscopic instrumentation and methodologies with their Bolivian counterparts. Together they completed 17 general surgeries and 4 gynecologic surgeries. Our missionaries were also grateful for the opportunity to meet people like gynecology patient Isabel, pictured above with Dr. Peter Tinsman.



In addition to the clinical and surgical care offered at the hospital in Punata, Physical Therapist Kim Stover and Family Practitioner Alvaro Encinas made 14 home visits to patients in the countryside.

Short-Term Trip, Long-Term Impact

Cardiologist Mark Ottolin carried with him a portable echocardiogram machine. This important diagnostic tool would typically be inaccessible to patients visiting a second level hospital in a rural area like Punata. Throughout the week, Dr. Ottolin saw **143 patients in the cardiology clinic**. He also partnered with mission pediatricians Dr. Monica Joseph-Griffin and Dr. Mary Hall to diagnose cardio pathologies in our youngest patients, referring some to the Solidary Bridge Heart Surgery Program for further treatment.



Mission team physicians delivered morning lectures on the following topics:

- ★ Cardiac pathologies
- ★ Megacolon pathologies
- ★ Surgical management of urinary incontinence
- ★ Neonatal resuscitation
- ★ Post-op medication and pain management

Clinicians worked across five specialties: Cardiology, Gynecology, Pediatrics, Family Practice, and Physical Therapy. Each partnered with a Bolivian doctor or resident to share knowledge and best practices.



Missioner Dr. Tony Cirrincione, pictured here with his Bolivian partner Dr. Bruno, saw 44 patients in the gynecology clinic.



“When we tell the stories of our mission trip we are no longer just storytellers but sources of information for our family and friends about an entire country, culture, people, and [health] system.”

Gustavo Arreguin Mendoza
Benezet Intern and Interpreter



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In December 2016, we received a \$42,000 anonymous bequest gift from a donor who expressed a desire to help underserved populations gain access to needed surgeries. This is a wonderful example of how one's personal legacy can live on through the life-giving work of Solidarity Bridge!

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“I’m thankful for the ongoing spiritual formation, blog posts, and activities, which help me continue to incorporate the blessings of the mission into my everyday life.”

Mary Hall, MD
 Missioner, Donor, & Office Volunteer



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Brian Clarke

Board Treasurer and Donor

"I prioritize Solidarity Bridge in my charitable giving because of its commitment to doing lifesaving work not just in the moment but in a sustainable way. They work in true concert and solidarity with Bolivians to meet the needs of their people."

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Equipping is a Key Part of Our Mission

Each year our medical missionaries carry millions of dollars of medical supplies to Bolivia. On occasion, as in 2016, we also sent a 40 foot shipping container with heavy equipment and high-value surgical supplies for distribution to our partner hospitals and patients in need. Special thanks to Hospital Sisters Mission Outreach and our in-kind donors for making this possible!



GREENOLA
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Dharma Trading Co.
FIBER ART SUPPLIES & CLOTHING BLANKS SINCE 1969

Dharma Trading Company sells clothing made by artisans in Bolivia and takes no profit from sales. The Goff family, Dharma Trading owners, generously supports our pediatric heart surgery efforts. Greenola Style is a fair trade fashion retailer/wholesaler working with Bolivian women artisans. Puente de Solidaridad manages exports from Bolivian cooperatives to both companies.



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Learn more!

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