



Granting the Wish to Walk

I recently returned from Antigua after going on the mission "pre-trip" with my fellow team leader Tom Maidens to tour the host hospital, Hermano Pedro, and meet with local physician Dr. Claudio Gonzalez. The charming town of Antigua will be the setting for Operation Walk Pittsburgh's first mission in August of this year.

While on the pre-trip, Tom and I met up with team leaders from Operation Walk Los Angeles Jeri Ward and Mary Ellen Sieben. Since this is Operation Walk Pittsburgh's first mission, we will be working together with the staff from Los Angeles.



While on our pre-trip, we toured Hermano Pedro Hospital, met some of the hospital staff and discussed some of the patients who will be operated on in August. There are 68 potential surgical candidates for our mission in August and a list was provided to us by Dr. Claudio, along with x-rays of all of the patients. We also spent some time walking the streets of Antigua, visiting local restaurants and hotels that might be a part of our trip in August.

The team, led by Dr. Anthony DiGioia, will consist of 25 volunteers, including Dr. Michael Weiss and Dr. Anton Playksehuk, anesthesiologists, nurses, therapists, and other health care providers, and also a few other volunteers. The team will arrive in Guatemala City on Friday, August 21st and will take a 1 ½ hour bus ride from the airport to the town of Antigua. Work begins on Saturday with a screening clinic in the morning of all of the potential surgical candidates and a few patients will even have surgery on Saturday afternoon! Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday will be full operating days with the target of doing a total of 70 total joint replacements. While in Antigua, Operation Walk staff will also provide education to nurses and therapists in Guatemala and also to family members of patients. On Saturday, while patients are being screened, their family members will go through an education session held by nurses and physical therapists so that they know what to expect when their loved ones get home from the hospital. Also during the trip the surgeons and anesthesiologists will take a day and travel to Guatemala City to give a seminar to local physicians. We will return home to Pittsburgh on Saturday August 29th after what I'm sure will be a very grueling but very rewarding week!

I look forward to keeping you up to date on the planning of our first mission and all that goes into it and of reporting all about our trip when we come home! This is an exciting time for our team and we are all looking forward to the work we will do!

Thank you for helping us grant "the wish to walk",



Operation Walk Pittsburgh Team Leader

March 30th is National Doctor's Day - Honor Dr. Tony DiGioia or another doctor by making a contribution to support efforts leading Operation Walk Pittsburgh!

Make a gift through the AMD3 Foundation in your physician's honor to support health care services. You can make your tax deductible gift by check, money order, or credit card via mail to: The AMD3 Foundation, 5001 Baum Boulevard, Suite 644, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, or [online](#).

For more information, please visit www.operationwalkpgh.org or contact our team leaders [Janice Harmon](#) or [Tom Maidens](#)