



International Christian Institute

Preparing Those Who Will Go!

Panama Medical Mission

Feb 2013



Panama City



Man to Man, Brother to Brother



Patient Patients

There is an old saying that says, "Geography determines history." For the country of Panama, that saying is very true, for her geographical position in the world has alerted all nations to its strategic importance, both commercially and militarily. The century old influence of the United States cannot be underestimated. The fourteen military bases adjacent to the canal have now officially been given to the Panamanian people, and they now occupy them as private homes, but the once dominant American influence still remains in their hearts, as they strive to be like the United States. The building of the canal a century ago, brought the two countries together and there was a marriage of sorts – a political union for mutual benefit. It was a "rocky marriage" which ended in a costly divorce, but they still see each other "as friends." Panama enjoys her amazing trade income and the United States retains the rights to militarily maintain the neutrality of the canal. Without the canal and this union with the U.S., Panama would be like any other Central American country, but all these things added together, have produced a prosperity unrivaled in that part of the world. Panama City is like the New York of the region, with millions of dollars pouring into it every day through world-wide investments and canal tariffs. Obviously, all of this social elevation has produced a proud, high-minded people who want to see themselves on the same footing as their "former spouse" – the United States.

What that meant for me was that I encountered a big wall of pride, where officials of all kinds were not that helpful: to quote a manager at Miami airport – "Panama! A country on a power trip!"



The Panama Canal Locks



San Miguelito



"Thank you, these will work."

Pressing in - to Victory!



Registration



Blood Work



Sisters together



Prayer for all

We were met with many obstacles and unnecessary difficulties, but the word from God to us was simply, "Press in." So that is exactly what we did and we chose to ignore the negative aspects that presented themselves to us and we pressed in and won a great victory. Initially we were told that the week we had planned for was not a good time as it was Carnival time in the nation and that people would not be available to attend our clinic, but we found that it was a great week to do it! For example, the nightmarish volume of traffic that I had previously encountered on my preliminary trip was all gone, and it didn't reappear until late in the week when the Carnival was over. Attendance on the Monday was initially slow, but then we met a woman who knew of a small community of Indians that needed medical attention. We gave her some tickets and they came by bus after lunch and filled up our quota for the day! They were the sweetest folks you could ever wish to meet, and I believe that God arranged that situation just for them.

In the end, we ministered to nearly six hundred patients, giving them all our love as well as medications, with each station of the clinic doing their spiritual part as well as their physical part. Our relationships with the church workers grew steadily as the week progressed and it was extremely difficult to leave them on the Friday afternoon. It was the most emotional partings that I can remember! All that "pressing in" had paid off in a wonderful way and we all hoped that it wouldn't be too long before we met each other again.



Blood Pressure



Physician's Room



Pharmacy



Team Panama