

## **Report on Cardiac Mission to Choray Hospital in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam**

**Departure Date: October 16, 2009**

**Return Date: October 24, 2009**

### **Team Members:**

Menoo Afkari-Jarrett --- Executive Director and Administrator

Robert M. Jarrett, MD --- Cardiologist and Team Leader

Carl Reimers, MD --- Interventional Cardiologist

Cary Passik, MD --- Cardiothoracic Surgeon

Ilya Zhuravlev, MD --- Anesthesiologist

Catherine Cassidy, RN --- OR Nurse

Angela Watts, RN --- ICU Nurse

Timothy Hansen, PA --- Surgical Physician's Assistant

Richard Rigling, RDCS --- Cardiovascular Sonographer

The Hearts Around the World, Inc. team arrived in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam on October 17, 2009. The team was met at the airport by a large group of the cardiologists and cardiac surgeons from Choray Hospital. The following morning, the Hearts Around the World, Inc. team went to Choray Hospital and our week of patient care and teaching began. As per the mission statement of Hearts Around the World, Inc., our task was to teach the physicians and nurses of Choray Hospital the latest methods of cardiovascular therapy, interventional cardiology and cardiac surgery. Each member of the team set specific goals as to how best to improve the medical and surgical outcomes for the Vietnamese patients with cardiovascular disease.

Dr. Cary Passik performed 10 open heart operations specifically targeting patients with aortic disease, mitral valve disease and complex coronary artery disease. Our anesthesiologist, Dr. Ilya Zhuravlev introduced the technology of transesophageal echocardiography. Timothy Hansen, our surgical physician's assistant, taught the Vietnamese surgeons the technique of endoscopic vein harvesting a procedure routinely utilized in the U.S. to obtain the saphenous veins for coronary artery bypass grafting without making large incisions in the patient's leg. Our OR nurse (Catherine Cassidy) and ICU nurse (Angela Watts) specifically worked with the Vietnamese nurses providing them with an extraordinary boost in self-confidence. Previous teams from other countries had never brought nurses to teach the Vietnamese nurses – only to assist the visiting cardiothoracic surgeons.

Our interventional cardiologist, Dr. Carl Reimers spent the week in Choray Hospital's cardiac catheterization laboratory. Their cardiac catheterization laboratory is extremely busy performing greater than 15-20 diagnostic and interventional procedures per day. Advanced techniques in coronary angioplasty on both acutely ill patients with myocardial infarction and

stable patients with chronic angina were demonstrated. In addition, collaboration between Dr. Reimers and the Vietnamese interventionalists resulted in the successful performance of a balloon valvuloplasty in a patient with rheumatic mitral stenosis.

Dr. Robert Jarrett and Richard Rigling demonstrated stress echocardiography to the Vietnamese cardiologists. The use of this imaging technology along with the standard ECG stress test will allow the Vietnamese cardiologists to better diagnose the patients with coronary artery disease. Approximately 20 stress echocardiograms were completed and in most cases, the Vietnamese cardiologists performed the studies under the watchful eyes of Dr. Robert Jarrett and Richard Rigling. In addition, Dr. Robert Jarrett rounded on hospitalized patients each day assisting the Vietnamese cardiologists with diagnostic and therapeutic issues. Approximately 15-20 patients were seen each day.

Lectures, both formal and informal, were given each day by various members of our team. Subjects included postoperative nursing, transesophageal echocardiography, stress echocardiography, valvular heart disease and mitral valve repair.

In addition to providing our services, the Hearts Around the World, Inc. team brought needed supplies and equipment with them. These included:

- Surgical instruments
- Suture material
- Ultrasound machine with transesophageal and transthoracic probes
- Coronary artery stents
- Books

The total value of supplies was \$350,000.00

During the week, Dr. Robert Jarrett and Menoo Afkari-Jarrett met with the cardiologists, cardiothoracic surgeons and administrators of Choray Hospital planning the next mission to Vietnam. The next Hearts Around the World, Inc. team will leave on January 29, 2010. Their mission will be to commence a 5 year educational program teaching pediatric cardiac surgery to the Vietnamese physicians. In addition to Choray Hospital; pediatric cardiologists, anesthesiologists and cardiothoracic surgeons from Pediatric Hospital Number 1 and Pediatric Hospital Number 2 in Ho Chi Minh City will be involved.

In addition, Menoo Afkari-Jarrett began to explore other future projects for Hearts Around the World, Inc. She toured and assessed the needs of other departments at Choray Hospital and at the end of our work week, she arranged for the Hearts Around the World, Inc. team to visit Cu Chi Hospital. Cu Chi is located approximately 2 hours outside of Ho Chi Minh City. This hospital is representative of many small rural facilities in Vietnam. It is in desperate need of medical supplies and basic cardiovascular education for their physicians. It is our expectation that we will be able to develop a relationship with Cu Chi Hospital and assist their patients and physicians in the next year.

*Respectfully Submitted by Robert M. Jarrett, MD – President Hearts Around the World, Inc. 11/14/09*