

Do care about DOCARE

Photo by John Reilly Photography



PETER B. AJLUNI, DO

While promoting lifelong physical fitness has been a major focus of my presidency, I am equally committed to another critical cause—serving the medically underserved.

These callings intersect. Medically underserved populations typically lack access to the fitness centers, exercise classes and sports gear that many of us take for granted. Straining to survive from day to day, impoverished people often do not have the time or the motivation to stay fit. Much more troubling, the medically underserved frequently lack sufficient food, let alone access to nutritious meals. And basic medical care may remain elusive.

Throughout its history, the osteopathic medical profession has taken an active role in caring for those less fortunate. But we all can do more, especially those of us in leadership positions. We need to reach out to people living in unspeakable destitution throughout the world.

Since 1961, DOCARE International has been providing desperately needed medical care to remote, impover-

ished regions of the Western Hemisphere, particularly Latin American countries. I am proud to announce that the AOA has assumed the day-to-day management of this all-volunteer organization consisting of DOs, osteopathic medical students and friends of the osteopathic medical profession, as well as MDs and other healthcare professionals. Under the administration of its new executive director, Mike Mallie, who is the AOA's director of state, specialty and socioeconomic affairs, I know that DOCARE will grow even stronger.

On Feb 24, 2008, my wife, Judy, and I will travel with Mike and AOA President-elect Carlo J. DiMarco, DO, to Guatemala to join a DOCARE mission led by Gary L. Willyerd, DO, that will provide primary care medicine to residents of San Martin and Zaragoza. While Dr Willyerd is no longer looking for volunteers for this mission, other upcoming DOCARE missions may still be seeking volunteers. For more information, visit DOCARE's Web site at www.docareintl.org and click on the links titled "Missions" and "Upcoming Missions" and then on the links to particular missions.

To find out whether medical supplies and equipment are needed for any of the upcoming missions, you can e-mail the mission directors directly from DOCARE's Web site.

To join

To serve on a DOCARE mission, you must be a DOCARE member. Dues for regular members are \$50 per year, while medical students pay \$30 for the duration of medical school. To learn more about joining, click on



the "Membership" link on DOCARE's home page.

DOCARE members include people who support the organization financially but are unable to serve on its missions. If you haven't already joined DOCARE, please do. Your support will make a tremendous difference to those in greatest need of healthcare.

DOCARE also welcomes donations—monetary gifts and medical supplies. If you have questions, e-mail the organization at docare@osteopathic.org or call (312) 202-8163. (See also the article on Page 10 for more information.)

I am thrilled to be going on a DOCARE medical mission. The knowledge I'll glean from the Guatemalan people and the personal satisfaction I'll derive will surpass the care I will provide. Although I'll be in Guatemala for just five days, I hope the experience will make me a better physician, a better AOA president—indeed, a better human being.

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