



"They Worked Their Hearts Out!"

2018 Mission of Mercy
in Words and Photos

Photos by Jim Keating

The fourth Michigan Mission of Mercy, which took place June 1-2 on the campus of Calvin College in Grand Rapids, served 861 patients and provided almost a million dollars — \$913,882, to be exact — worth of dental treatment.

Here are some additional statistics:

- more than 6,000 procedures performed.
- \$4,988 in pharmacy services.
- 861 comprehensive exams.
- 62 endodontic procedures.
- 2,544 X-rays.
- 73 lab cases.
- 1,204 restorative procedures.
- 981 hygiene procedures.
- 849 oral surgeries.

Those numbers and the photos on these pages tell the dental story, the treatment story. And it's an impressive one. But as impressive as those numbers are, they're just part of the whole story.

What's missing from the above is the hours and hours of exacting, detailed organizational work that must occur before, during, and after a MOM. After all, a MOM doesn't just "happen." Volunteers must be identified to staff MOM committees. The location must be scouted out, a process that usually involves multiple site visits. Detailed arrangements need to be made, not only with the



MDA President Dr. Deb Peters, Dr. Chris Smiley, and West Michigan Executive Secretary Elaine Fleming. A great effort by West Michigan helped make the MOM a success.

host facility, but with a score of suppliers and other vendors. Then, hundreds of dental and non-dental volunteers alike must be recruited, assigned, scheduled, and accounted for. Fundraising goes into high gear early, in order to pay for the thousands of dollars in expenses that result from such a massive undertaking. Important in-kind contributions, too, must be sought out.

And then there's the outreach to Michigan's dental laboratory community, the dental suppliers, waste dis-

posal services, even uniform vendors and food service for volunteers. Lodging arrangements for out-of-town volunteers. A constantly updated MOM website. Outreach to local media. Interviews. Contacts with key legislators. On-site visits by legislators and others. Videographers and photographers, too.

Equipment must be brought on-site, then carefully unloaded, then loaded back up again. A computer network is set-up, then taken down. Add to all of this many more countless details, both large and small.

After all the funds have been raised, the site secured, and supplies gathered, then it's time for a MOM's biggest asset — people power. Lots of people power! That people power includes dental volunteers — from MOM chair and co-chair Dr. Steve Harris and Dr. Connie Verhagen, to the MOM committee chairs, vice-chairs, and leads — to the hundreds of other dentists, dental hygienists, dental assistants, dental students, and lay volunteers. And don't forget MDA Foundation staff and Board members, and MDA staff, particularly in the continuing education/meeting planning area.

(Continued on Page 32)



Lab volunteer Jim Brodowski with patient, MDA President-elect Dr. Margaret Gingrich, and MDA CEO/ED Karen Burgess.



Sterilization section volunteers like these kept the clinic running at full capacity.



Volunteers distributed bottled water and healthy snacks to patients waiting outside.

Everyone plays a part. All are important. It's a *massive* undertaking. And after a year or so of exhaustive planning and preparation, of literally sweat and tears, a MOM happens.

In all, 1,289 dentists, dental team members, and others volunteered for this year's MOM. Many are veterans of previous MOMs.

As MDA President Deb Peters, herself a volunteer, said, "Our member dentists, dental team members, staff and other volunteers worked their hearts out to help hundreds of people get access to dental services."

She added, "It was touching to see the joy and gratitude shown by many of the patients. They are the reason the MOM exists. But it's just as awesome to see our MOM volunteers in action, working hard and so passionate and dedicated in their service. They don't have to volunteer, but they do, and many of them have done so at every Michigan MOM so far. I think that's the untold story of the Mission of Mercy."

MDA Foundation President Dr. Norm Palm couldn't agree more.

"Our MDA dentists, dental team members, and other volunteers stepped up to help hundreds of people get access to dental services at

this year's MOM," Palm said. "We are so grateful to our MOM volunteers, who took time out of their schedules to help those in need, as well as our important MOM donors and of course, Calvin College."

Many of these volunteers can be seen in the photos on these pages.

What volunteers said about the MOM . . .

"The most memorable moment I have (that will be held forever in my heart) is when a patient took me aside, held my hand, began to cry and told me

that because of what we do she is now able to receive a kidney transplant. I sat down next to her and we cried together. This was the most incredible feeling. I had goose bumps from head to toe and tears fell uncontrollably down my face. She hugged me and thanked me as she shook with such emotion. I asked if she would tell her story to [MOM Co-chair] Connie Verhagen. I then went to find Connie so she could also hear this story. This patient didn't know at the time her story would be heard by so many people. She and I have been in contact many times since the MOM event. She is hopeful that she will someday soon receive her kidney. We have exchanged stories about our lives. She now knows that I teach at Grand Rapids Community College. She is excited to visit our clinic to maintain her oral health. And, she is now looking to pay back and volunteer in the future. Jesus taught us to love one another as he loved us. When we follow his teaching is when our hearts become filled with love. This day will never be forgotten."

—Teri Herdon, RDH

"On the first day of the MOM I met this same patient. She fulfilled for me one of the purposes of the MOM — to change lives. I sat next to her as she was waiting in the restorative area. She had a big smile on her face, which



Dr. Don VanderLinde, a member of the Foundation Board of Directors, treats a patient.



Dr. Nick Fontana and MDA Past-president Dr. Michele Tulak-Gorecki with grateful patient.

quickly changed to tears as she told me her story. She stood in line at 4 a.m. on Friday morning and left Saturday at 2 p.m. with all of her dental treatment completed. Two fillings, a CEREC crown and a treatment partial has put her on the transplant list! Her friends in Grand Rapids are excited and several are being tested to see if they are a

potential donor. Yes, a Mission of Mercy can change lives!"

—Connie Verhagen, DDS, MS

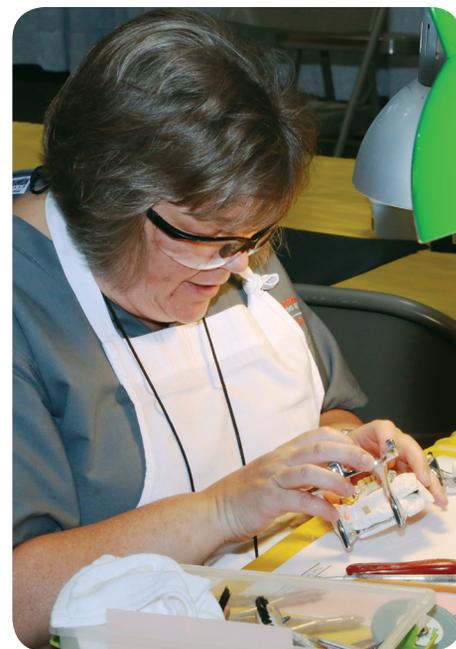
"The University of Michigan School of Dentistry student restorative delegation was happy to provide care at the Mission of Mercy again this year. We were glad to see the smiles returned to all the patients we treated. Thank you, MDA Foundation, for this opportunity to serve!"

—Howard Hamerink, DDS

"How wonderful it was to again participate in my Michigan Dental Association's Mission of Mercy. I am very proud of our honorable profession. Providing dental health care utilizing our skills and talent is sadly all too often something out of reach for many in our society. MOM helps satisfy part of that need, and the thanks we get from all who receive the benefits we provided was overwhelmingly positive. I congratulate the MDA, MDA Foundation, all of the dentist coordinators, treating dentists, assistants, hygienists, pharmacy professionals, plus the lay peo-



Patients received dental health education.



The on-site MOM dental lab was busy.

ple including those skilled workers who aided in the set-up and tear down, donors, and Calvin College and its personnel. It takes many dedicated people many months to organize this marvelous program. We are all part of a great team."

—Marvin Sonne, DDS

"Volunteering at MOM reminded me of why I went into dentistry in the first place — to help people! As the Exit Interview Lead I was able to interact with nearly everyone that came through the clinic. The laughs, the hugs, the tears of joy are things that I will never forget!"

—Katie Belland, RDA



Dr. Paul Korte, endodontics lead, with hygienist Sharon Lawrence.

“Once again, it was a pleasure to organize and see our fourth Mission of Mercy come together. It truly shows that dentistry is a diverse, energetic and caring community. It is great to see volunteers embracing our mission from all types of practices, specialties, auxiliaries, dental sales reps, and dental technicians. The smiles and expressions of thanks I got each day from volunteers happy to have a venue to participate in such a charitable community event, giving of themselves, are heartwarming. Mission of Mercy is not just about giving needy people free dental care. It is more about the whole dental community pulling together and being a part of something unique, out of the normalcy of our daily lives. At the end of the day, a lot of needy people have improved oral health, new smiles, boosted self-esteem and the end to pain and discomfort. What a fun way to spend a weekend!”

—**Steve Harris DDS, MOM chair**

“As Dr. Steve Harris says, ‘Once you drink the MOM Kool-aid, you are hooked.’ And I’d like to give special thanks to the MOM leads who have been part of every MOM program since 2013: Steve Harris, Scott Hodges, Margaret Gingrich, Andrea Sundermann, Michael Pack, Jeff Dulude, Vince



Supply truck from America’s Dentists Care Foundation, which supports MOMs nationwide.

Benivegna, Kevin Sloan, Brenda Marriott, Melanie Colbert, Paul Korte, Bonita Neighbors, Dan Briskie, Karen Briskie, Dave Hosking, John Carter, Joe Kolling, Chris Jones, Shelly Jones, Mike Maihofer, Scott Ward, Lori Barnhart, Tina Sprague, Barb Gurnee, Ron Nartker, Mike Cerminaro, Bill Sullivan, Barb Kolling, Christina Carlson, Kathy Mielke, Jim Keating, and Loyd Jenkins.”

—**Connie Verhagen, DDS, MS
MOM co-chair**



Patients lined up for care on Friday morning.



MDA CE Director Andrea Sundermann with Dr. Scott Hodges, dental clinic chair.



MOM Chair Dr. Steve Harris (front, center) with MOM committee members. Not all committee members are shown in this photo. Hundreds of others volunteered.



Dr. Amru Albeiruti, of the endodontics team.



Patients waiting for dental education.



U-M dental students Chris Minnis, Liane Racelis, and Austin Asaklis volunteered.

A 'Thank You' from the MDA Foundation

By Nancy Maier
MDA Foundation Executive Director

Michigan dentistry can look on the 2018 MOM and its many volunteers with great pride and gratitude.

Pride and gratitude in all of you who give of yourselves with each passing program.

Pride and gratitude in watching hundreds of volunteers work tirelessly to ensure that each and every patient was treated and walked away with dignity and respect, having received the compassion that only those who serve in a health care capacity can provide.

Being part of the months of planning for the program, which might seem daunting to some, is highly motivational and energizing to the MOM Committee. It is amazing to see hundreds of dentists who rush to register with their staff, friends, colleagues, or family members to volunteer to serve Michigan's most vulnerable; the underserved. Watching our volunteers work in unison with everyone else on the clinic floor serving patients is an awesome sight.

Knowing that many of you are serving and have been during each or multiple Mission of Mercy programs is heartwarming. Without you, patients in attendance wouldn't walk away healthier and happier. Without you, the communities we serve would know less about dentistry and what you do for the profession. And, without you, the Mission of Mercy would not take place — and those desperately in need of care might well go without.



Nancy Maier

The MDA Foundation is proud to have our volunteers as part of the MOM family. We are deeply thankful to each of you for the time and talent you share during the Mission of Mercy. We look forward to seeing and working with you in the future. Until that time, you will always hold a special place of pride and gratitude in our hearts.

Thank you for all you do!



foundation
IMPROVING DENTAL HEALTH

MISSION OF MERCY

MAY 31 - JUNE 3, 2018 • CALVIN COLLEGE • GRAND RAPIDS

well over

900

patient visits



over
\$900,000

in oral health care
services provided at
no charge.

1,289

volunteers

THANK YOU

Procedures: **\$906,264**
Anesthetic: **\$1,575.00**
Pharmacy: **\$4,987.61**
TOTAL: **\$912,826.61**



Total of **\$152,825**
raised from **78** donors.

Total of **95** in-kind donors.



Total procedures:
6,574

Endo: **62**
Xrays: **2,544**
Lab: **73**
Restorative: **1,204**
Hygiene: **981**
Oral Surgery: **849**





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MISSION OF MERCY

MAY 31 - JUNE 3, 2018 • CALVIN COLLEGE • GRAND RAPIDS

"All of the volunteers were amazing. All of the other patients were friendly, one of the most amazing experiences of my life."

- Mission of Mercy Patient

"Thank you guys for changing lives. You have been a blessing to me. I meet awesome people and hear a lot of great stories whenever I attend. But the young lady I met yesterday was the greatest story that I've ever heard thus far.

She needs a kidney transplant and could not get it because her teeth were not in good enough condition. But y'all fixed all her teeth that were in the way of her getting a transplant and now she will be able to get her kidney. Had me crying tears of Joy. Y'all rock.

Thanks to everyone. From the Dentist, Hygienist, volunteers, all the staff even the ones that were outside."

- Mission of Mercy Patient

"I have never attended an event that was so organized. The volunteers were helpful, happy, comforting, from the patient escorts to the doctors, an amazing group of people. I cannot express how thankful I am. Nobody made me feel judged, nobody spoke down to me, even the other patients were awesome."

- Mission of Mercy Patient

"Thank you to everyone who accommodated our young family of five today. We had three kids four and under with us, and all the volunteers were so gracious and provided amazing support and service. The day could not have went better!"

- Mission of Mercy Patient

"Thanks so much for this great event! So many people were helped ! I heard so many stories from people there. They expressed profound gratitude for the services."

- Mission of Mercy Patient

What a pleasure to be even a small part of this event! So thankful to have been able to volunteer!

- Mission of Mercy Volunteer

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