



**Himalayan
Dental
Relief
Project**

NEWS

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Contact: Kim Troggio
303 858-8857
kim@humanitariantours.com



Julie Dinh, RDH

Local Hygienist Participates in Humanitarian Project in Central Vietnam

Julie Dinh, RDH, Provides Dental Care for Children

(Portland, OR, July 16, 2008) Portland Dental Hygienist Julie Dinh recently participated in a humanitarian dental clinic in Hoi An, a village located in central Vietnam. The clinic was organized by the Himalayan Dental Relief Project in conjunction with its local partner, the East Meets West Foundation which operates a charity dental clinic in Danang, Vietnam. Over the course of five days, the clinic served 908 children, many of whom had never before received dental care.

Dinh was among a group of 13 volunteers that included four dentists, two hygienists, and seven lay volunteers who worked alongside their East Meets West counterparts, including four Vietnamese dentists. The clinic was held in a local school that converted classroom space into a ten chair dental office for the week. Assisted by a lay volunteer who received on-site training in basic skills, Dinh personally treated hundreds of children. Each child received an exam, cleanings as needed, and restorative and extractive care. In total, the clinic provided 63 cleanings, 256 sealants, 598 restorations and 914 extractions.

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Dinh was born in Vietnam and has always had a strong desire to go back and visit her country. “What better way to see how the Vietnamese live than through humanitarian work,” says Dinh. “You get the opportunity to meet local people and listen to them share their stories. The trip was a wonderful and touching experience.”

Oral health education and access to care is severely lacking in Vietnam. Dinh cites her understanding of the language and culture as a huge asset in providing care to these children. “Being able to communicate made it so much easier to appreciate the limits of their knowledge of dental hygiene. Lack of knowledge goes hand in hand with fear – how do you change the mentality of the people so that they understand the importance of taking care of their teeth? It takes very little time to volunteer in one of these clinics, and it makes a huge impact on so many lives. I am looking forward to continuing to volunteer both internationally and at home.”

About Julie Dinh, RDH

Julie Dinh, was born in Vietnam and immigrated to the United States as a child. She has been practicing as a hygienist in Portland, Oregon for five years. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in dental hygiene from the Oregon Institute of Technology in 2002. In addition to volunteering with HDRP in Vietnam, Ms. Dinh has also volunteered in Cambodia with Medical Teams International.

For more information, contact Julie Dinh at (503)-720-7132 or jujuubeanzz21@hotmail.com.

About Himalayan Dental Relief Project

The Himalayan Dental Relief Project (HDRP) is a 501(c)3 charitable organization established in 2000 to provide free dental care and oral health education to impoverished children and families of Nepal, northern India and selected locations in Vietnam and Guatemala. HDRP’s commitment is to return to these same children every two years to provide continuous care.

Treatment and preventative care is provided by volunteer health professionals who donate their time to treat children during intensive dental camps. Camps generally include up to five dentists,

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five hygienists and five to ten non-medical volunteers. Each camp treats 300 – 900 children. Since 2001, HDRP has hosted more than 240 volunteers and treated 28,187 children.

For more information about the Himalayan Dental Relief Project, visit www.himalayandental.com.

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