



**Himalayan
Dental
Relief
Project**

NEWS

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Himalayan Dental Relief Project Provides Opportunities for “Giving Back”

Dentists, Hygienists and Non-dental Volunteers Needed

(Denver, CO, Feb 7, 2005) – For the ever-increasing number of individuals who are disenchanted with luxury vacations to exotic locations, the Himalayan Dental Relief Project (HDRP) provides an opportunity for people to travel and volunteer much needed services at the same time.

Running a total of eight dental clinics per year in Nepal, northern India and Vietnam, HDRP needs the help of almost one hundred volunteers, including dentists, hygienists and non-dental volunteers to treat the approximately 4,000 children that receive care.

Volunteers work in basic conditions in often exotic and demanding locations. Dentists use portable dental units to provide exams, extractions and restorative care. Hygienists offer critical oral hygiene education and first-time teeth cleaning for children. Non-medical volunteers manage the lines of patients, assist in record keeping, keep track of children as they receive care and help with instruments and charting.

Reaching the clinic sites is often no simple matter – an appealing element for those volunteers seeking travel adventure. A clinic serving the remote Nepalese village of Khumjung, for example,

required air travel to Katmandu by way of Thailand. From there, the volunteers boarded a plane which took them high into the Himalayas to the village of Lukla, famous as a trailhead for expeditions to Mount Everest. The group then loaded their gear onto yaks for a four-day trek to Khumjung, at 12,500 feet. For those seeking an alternative to a sedate week at a luxury resort, this was a most satisfying trip.

In addition to providing much-needed care through these clinics, volunteers are rewarded by the joy and gratitude of the children. In the words of one participant, “Volunteering was an experience of love, sharing and giving that has given us rewards beyond measure.”

Volunteers are needed for the 2006 dental clinics in:

- Kathmandu, Nepal – Clinics serve children from orphanages, charity schools and remote mountain locations. Volunteers learn about the country and the people through cultural tours of local sites and marvel at the spectacular views of the Himalayas. A guided trek on the Everest Trail is available at the end of the clinic.
- Central Vietnam – In partnership with the East Meets West Foundation, volunteers work alongside Vietnamese counterparts in outreach clinics at village schools. Volunteers may join a cultural tour of this stunning country and culture after the clinic.
- Leh, Ladakh, India – Set at 11,000 feet in the Himalayas, Leh offers a unique adventure setting for dental clinics hosted by the local Lions Club. Clinics serve children from a fascinating mix of Buddhist, Hindu, Christian and Muslim cultures. The camp is followed by an optional trek and/or a trip to the magnificent Taj Mahal.

For more information about these programs or to volunteer, e-mail Kim Troggio at volunteers@himalayandental.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. 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 seven-day dental camps. Camps generally include up to five dentists, five hygienists and five to ten non-medical volunteers. Each camp treats between 400 – 700 children. Since 2001, HDRP has hosted more than 170 volunteers and treated 14,187 children.

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

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