



Tanzania Miracle Corners Provides Dental Equipment and Training



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Miracle Corners of the World (MCW) announced the arrival of a team of technical experts from the United States to Tanzania's business capital of Dar es Salaam. The team will install state-of-the-art dental equipment and train local technicians and staff to maintain and operate the equipment at Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS) Dental School. "Progress in providing dental services begins with building capacity," said Dr. Marion Bergman, MCW health projects director. "Our goal is to help strengthen the dental school. Creative partnerships like these benefit from the knowledge of local institutions and the technical and market expertise of private-sector firms. These collaborations have the potential to help improve the lives of thousands of people." The team will begin installation and training as soon as the equipment arrives from the United States. The donations were packaged in three 40-foot containers and several air freight consignments filled with dental equipment, including dental operatories and chairs, X-ray machines, sterilizers, compressors, dental instruments, new cabinetry and sterilization centers. "The assistance of MCW-USA to MUHAS School of Dentistry to replace old dental equipment has been like a dream to every one in the dental school," said Dr. Emil Kikwili, MUHAS Dean of Dentistry. "On Monday, this dream becomes a reality that will have a tremendously positive impact on patient care and training." MCW received support for the initiative from medical and dental manufacturers and distributors around the world, including companies from the United States, Europe, Asia and the Middle East. This project, along with the planned installation of a new dental lab, is valued at nearly USD \$2 million, representing one of the largest private donations to MUHAS to date. "This project is going to have a profound, long-term effect on dental care for the entire country. Upgrading the dental school is the first step in upgrading the entire country's dental care system," said John Spencer, CEO of Dental Components International (DCI) and team leader. "Once the decision was made to do the project, we found that every time we mentioned it, people were willing to contribute—they appreciated the expected effect the project would have the country and the people." The visiting team comprises technical representatives from the major donors, including Henry Schein, Inc., DCI, Midmark, and Attieh Medico, who will work with MUHAS technicians on the installation, along with local and New York-based MCW facilitators. "The dental chairs and equipment were in a poor state, so this timely MCW project will help to transform training and oral health services in line with our strategic plan, as well as the National Policy for Oral Health care in Tanzania," said Dr. Kikwili. "With modern facilities, it will be possible to revolutionize training, services and continuing education to match the demands of the market. In that way the School of Dentistry will advance its status as model of oral health services, particularly in managing oral diseases and infection control." The project builds on a memorandum of understanding in September 2008 devoted to bringing MUHAS and MCW together to collaborate on an oral healthcare initiative with private sector companies. Tanzanian President H.E. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete and the Ministry of Health, under the leadership of Health and Social Welfare Minister Honorable David Mwakyusa, have supported the project from the beginning.