



GLOBAL HEALTH

International Partners in Health

Tanzania

Visit Provides Service, Education, and Research Opportunities



Traditional dancers at the ceremony for the dedication of the new clinic and community center during the NYUCD team's visit.

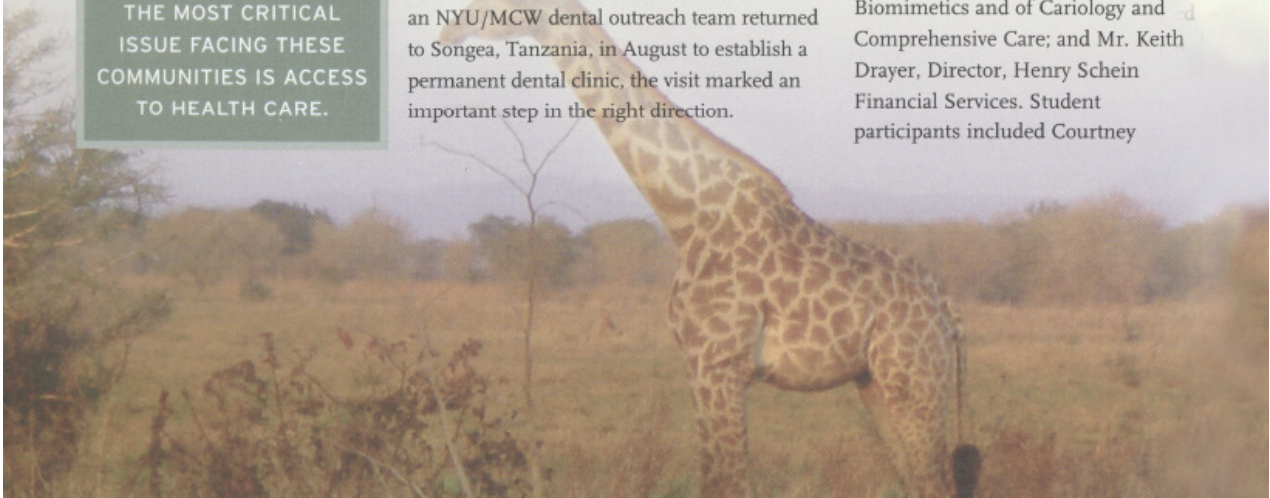
Since 2001, Miracle Corners of the World (MCW), a not-for-profit community development and revitalization organization, and NYUCD have partnered to bring desperately needed oral health education and dental care to residents of remote

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regions in Tanzania, East Africa. Beyond poverty, the most critical issue facing these communities is access to health care. So when an NYU/MCW dental outreach team returned to Songea, Tanzania, in August to establish a permanent dental clinic, the visit marked an important step in the right direction.

The dental team screened 600 school children and provided services for over 300 adults and children over a one-and-a-half week visit. Adult services included simple to complex surgical extractions, emergency treatment, restorations, and limited periodontal preventive services. Children received oral hygiene instruction, routine extractions, restorations, and emergency services. Henry Schein Cares, the global corporate citizenship program of Henry Schein, Inc., donated supplies to support the outreach mission and to help increase oral healthcare access in this extremely underserved region.

The group's traditional healthcare services agenda also included a school-based community education and research program led by the organizers of the trip, Dr. Girish Shah, Clinical Associate Professor of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, Radiology & Medicine; Dr. Mitchell S. Pines, Clinical Professor of Biomaterials and Biomimetics and of Cariology and Comprehensive Care; and Mr. Keith Drayer, Director, Henry Schein Financial Services. Student participants included Courtney



Russell, Class of 2006; Maria Cristina Kim, Class of 2007; Pompilia Belean, Class of 2007; and Tameko Tompkins, Class of 2007.

Local school children benefited from oral hygiene instruction and demonstrations in their classrooms. In addition, the team taught teachers techniques for continuing the oral hygiene and health education program once the outreach team had gone. At the same time, the NYU team collected data on the prevalence of dental caries among school children, ages 6 to 16. Dr. Shah, the principal investigator on a grant application to create school-based oral health education and disease prevention programs in Tanzania, is analyzing the findings.

If funded, the grant would allow Dr. Shah to develop an outreach program in collaboration with Dr. Lameck Mabelya, Dean of the School of Dentistry at Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences in Dar es Salaam. Muhimbili dental students from Dar es Salaam would rotate at the new dental clinic in Songea, where they would treat patients under the supervision of a local dentist.

The dental team plans to return to Tanzania in August 2006 and hopes to add four to six additional schools to the two they visited last year.



Members of NYUCD's outreach team treating patients from Songea, Tanzania, at a local school.

