

## Bringing Hope and Improving Patient Care

Submitted by Connie Ambrecht, RDMS

As I clocked in at my 7 to 3:30 job, my mind drifted to thoughts of vacation. This vacation was going to be different than any before. I was going to Haiti on a health care mission trip. The usual vacation preparation was taking place; planning, packing, booking flights, destination research and daydreaming of what was to come. This trip brought about different daydreams... What would it be like when we got there? Who will be learning how to use the equipment? How many doctors will be there? What shape will the equipment be in? What will the patients be like? How will the food be? What about the living conditions...will I have a hot shower? This vacation would be spent on a health care mission trip. A trip to Haiti to use my sonography skills in a way I'd never done before.

As the trip was coming together, I connected with the team who was going, doctors, nurses and another RDMS. It almost felt like we were on a reality television show with a project to get together. Our main task: collect supplies to take with us...in an extra suitcase. As it turned out it was amazing to see and experience how easy it was to collect gel, gel bottles, thermal paper, drapes for exams and whatever supplies we could get together through donations. Offices and hospitals are very willing to be part of the team that is going by donating what they can. They can't go, they can support.

My trip to Haiti is the most recent health care mission, medical outreach, or humanitarian sonography trip I've participated in. In April 2005, I participated in my first international sonography trip; destination: Armenia. Since then I have been to Romania, Ukraine, the Philippines, and Equator.

You may feel that international travel may not fit your lifestyle but domestic volunteer opportunities would be just right. There are many free medical clinics who offer a variety of services. One may need abdominal scanning and another obstetrical. One thing is certain; medical professionals are willing to reach out and use their skills to serve others. At a time when many are finding themselves uninsured, more volunteers are needed. I hope you are challenged to consider what medical clinic might need you.

Connie Ambrecht, RDMS is co-founder of Hope Imaging. Hope Imaging is a 501C-3 organization that coordinates RDMS's with health care mission teams who need sonography trainers and practitioners. Feel free to contact Connie at [cambrecht@msn.com](mailto:cambrecht@msn.com) or visit [www.hopeimaging.org](http://www.hopeimaging.org)