

# Hands of Esperanza

# Annual Report 2025



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## About Us

Founded in 2014, **Hands of Esperanza** began when physician assistant students and licensed clinicians from Central Florida traveled to Alta Verapaz, Guatemala to provide medical care to the Poqomchi indigenous community. What started as a student-led mission quickly grew into a long-term commitment, with teams returning each year to serve and build lasting relationships. Today, Hands of Esperanza is focused on providing sustainable, year-round healthcare through initiatives such as the construction of a multi-specialty medical and surgical clinic that will offer low-cost and free care to the community. True to our name—*Hands of Hope*—our mission goes beyond medicine to bring hope for a healthier future.

### Board Members

Ashley Sweat - President  
Kunj Shroff - Vice President  
Jaime Rodriguez - Treasurer  
Brian Cardona - Creative Director  
Melissa Lashombe - Fundraising  
Andrew Lashombe - Secretary

### Volunteers

Abigail Love  
Ariane Berkland  
Alex Nguyen  
Becca Suiters  
Ben Anderson  
Jen Michalak  
Kaylee Whalen  
Kurtis Dixon  
Lovell White  
Mitchell Michalak  
Whitney Jones



## Rural Clinic Program

In rural Alta Verapaz, many patients still travel **hours by foot** to reach care. In 2025, our volunteer clinicians hiked up mountainous terrain to treat patients impacted by disease and injury that would otherwise become life-threatening, managed chronic illness without interruption, and provided prenatal and pediatric care to families with no alternatives.



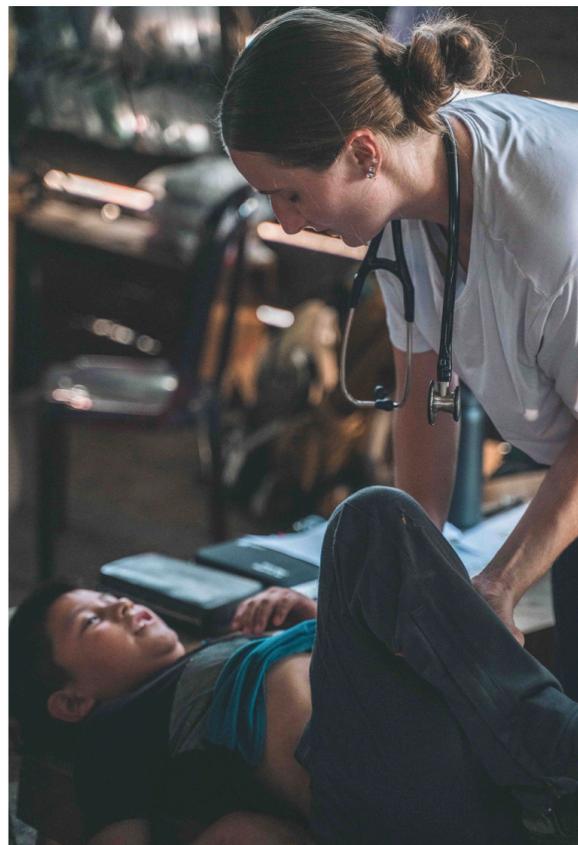
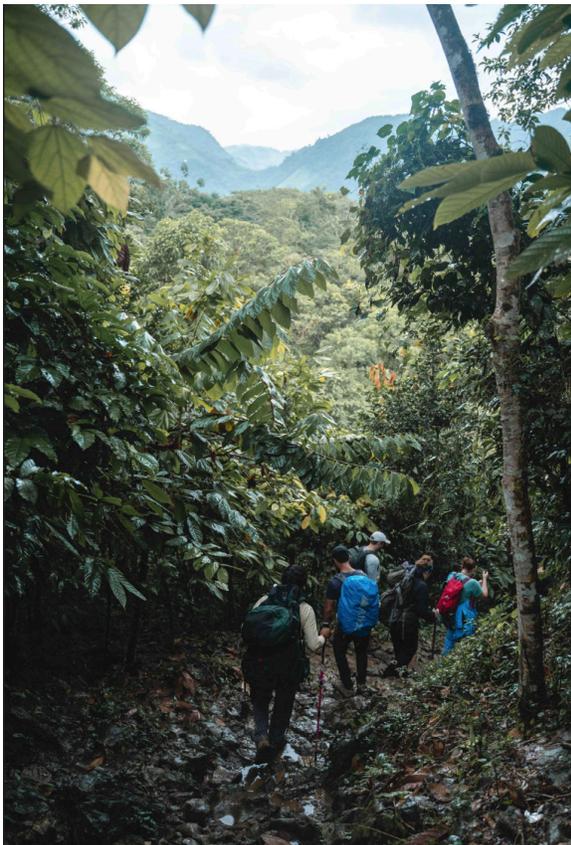
**Medical  
Mission Trips**



**Volunteers  
Deployed**



**Patients  
Served**

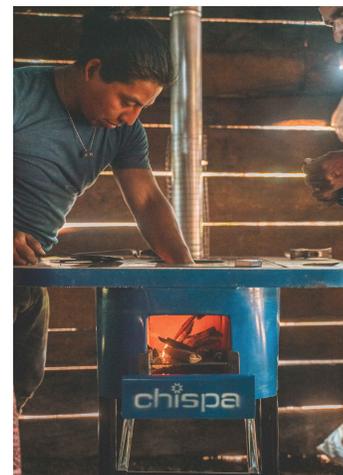


## Smokeless Stove & Water Filtration Program

In many rural Guatemalan villages, families cook over open flames inside their homes, exposing children and older adults to harmful smoke. This smoke can cause serious eye problems, respiratory illness, burns, and long-term lung damage. Through your generous support, we provide smokeless stoves that include a chimney to safely vent smoke outside the home, offering a much safer alternative to open-flame cooking. Each stove costs approximately \$250 and is purchased and installed during our bi-annual trips to Guatemala. These stoves significantly reduce smoke exposure, burns, and respiratory illness for local families.

Access to clean water is another critical need in this community. We also provide simple household water filtration systems, which are assembled and installed in each home we serve to help prevent waterborne illness.

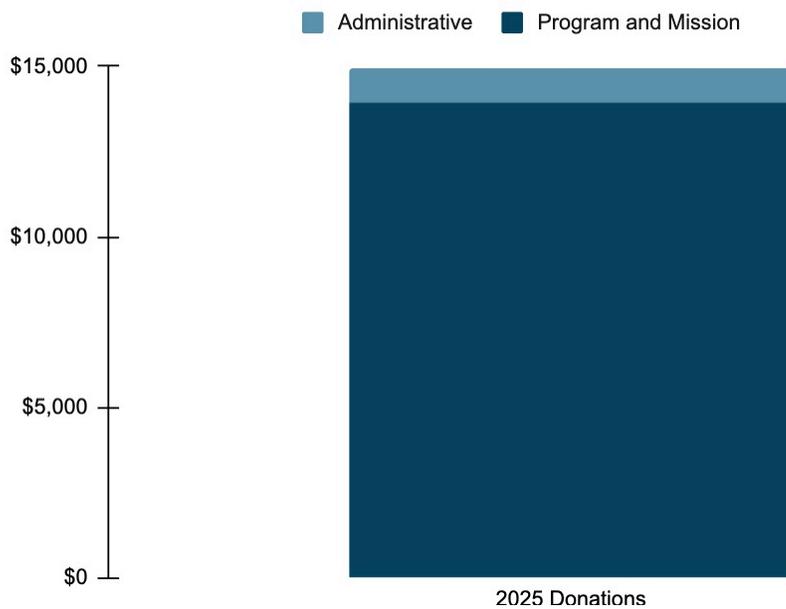
**2025 Impact:** 24 clean-burning stoves installed | 24 water filtration systems delivered to rural homes



## Financial Transparency

Thanks to your generous support, we raised \$14,930.74 in 2025. More than **93%** of every dollar donated went directly toward mission-driven work, including medical care, clinic construction, smokeless stoves, and on-the-ground operations in Guatemala.

Administrative expenses were limited to essential costs such as nonprofit compliance, payment processing, and basic technology needs.



## Medical Center

On **February 21, 2026**, Hands of Esperanza will open the doors of our **permanent medical and surgical clinic** in Alta Verapaz, Guatemala. This facility will allow us to provide **year-round, continuous care**—not just episodic mission-based treatment.

**This milestone is the result of 11 years of volunteer service, grassroots fundraising, and your belief that access to healthcare should not depend on geography or income.**

This clinic will allow teams of medical professionals—including PAs, physicians, surgeons, dentists, nurses, and support staff—to serve the community on rotating schedules. With this model, our teams will be able to address serious and life-changing conditions, such as cleft palate and other complications that greatly affect a person’s quality of life.



## Plans for 2026

- Two PA-led Mission trips
- Installation of more smokeless stoves and water filtration systems
- Completion of the second floor of the clinic *to meet rising demand*
- Expanded surgical capacity

