

### **Karen Valdes testimonial**

I have been involved in a surgical trip to Honduras for the past five years. For a week in May, we provide preoperative assessments, perioperative care, and education to an underserved public hospital in Honduras. Initially, my role was as a Registered Nurse (RN), but this year I had the privilege to attend as a Student Registered Nurse Anesthetist (SRNA).

The first years I participated in this trip I provided nursing education; while providing the nursing education, I realized that in Honduras nurses are trained in BLS one time and do not have to recertify. I talked with them about BLS, and they were all doing 5 to 2 CPR. I did a quick review of the new guidelines, and the nurses were shocked at the BLS changes. Moving forward I stay in touch with the head nurse in the surgical wards, and I communicate with them before the trip to ask them what education would be helpful to their practice, the training is primarily based on a topic of their choice. I am also available to them throughout the year if any questions should arise. In addition, every year I review the new BLS guidelines. We have provided them with equipment needed like BP cuffs, pulse ox's, and stethoscopes. I leave them the power points I prepare in Spanish, so they can forward information to nurses that were unable to attend the session. As a nurse and now student nurse anesthetist I genuinely feel that I have made a difference in the nursing care at this public hospital and hope to continue this relationship for years to come.

I have also gained knowledge from providing care in Honduras. As an anesthesia provider, I was able to experience limited monitors, limited supplies, and scarce drugs. Monitors did not work to their full potential every day, there was no TOF, no scavenging system, we had to run the Anesthesia machines on large tank O<sub>2</sub> (which gave you no warning when it was low, so twice we just lost O<sub>2</sub> in the middle of a case), no air, so all cases received 100% O<sub>2</sub>. No N<sub>2</sub>O, we had sevo and iso the vaporizers did not have the key system. Most of my management relied on my assessment skills, a genuinely fantastic learning experience. Not only do I feel I help the nursing staff with education and training but I gain so much from these trips that help me grow as a practitioner.