

VOSH/California Mission to El Salvador, Nov. 22-29

Three optometrists, Dr. Greg Pearl, Dr. Diane Williams and Dr. Jane Le (from Australia), five SVOSH/SCCO optometry students, Dorothy Lea, Elise Swanson, Mariah Smith, Stephanie Johnson and Paul Kwon and two optometrist's spouses, Marion Pearl and Don Williams worked with a team of two FUEDEM optometrists and seven technicians and opticians in the southern state of La Union, El Salvador.

Based out of a hotel in San Miguel, the team travelled each day to a different village and set up our FUEDEM/VOSH clinic in a school or other public building. We screened 2058 patients in five villages and then examined and refracted 1879 of them using trial frames and portable phoropters on tripods. Reading glasses were immediately dispensed to 390 of the patients and orders were taken for 756 new custom single vision and bifocal lenses which are made at the FUEDEM optical lab for dispensing later. FUEDEM has a clinic in San Miguel which is staffed by an ophthalmologist and an optometrist so 417 patients were referred to that clinic for further consultation. Those patients needing surgery will then be transported to the FUEDEM surgical clinic in San Salvador.

While in La Union, the El Salvadorean Navy took our team on an afternoon cruise in the Bahia La Union aboard a patrol boat. We also enjoyed visiting the National Art Museum in San Salvador, shopping for souvenirs and an afternoon at a beach club before returning home to California.

I would highly recommend any VOSH team interested in working with FUEDEM (see fudem.org) to contact them and ask to join their ongoing rural vision campaigns. FUEDEM is very well organized and will take care of all food, lodging and van rental arrangements for your VOSH team.