



# ONBOARD

2019 In Review



A photograph of three children playing in shallow, rippling water. In the foreground on the left, a young boy is waist-deep in the water, holding a blue plastic container and splashing water. To his right, another boy is partially submerged, looking towards the camera. In the background on the right, a girl stands in the water near a large, rough stone wall. The water is clear and reflects the sunlight, creating a shimmering effect. The stone wall in the background is made of large, irregular blocks of light-colored stone.

# A YEAR OF FIRSTS

In the mission field, every opportunity brings new challenges. This year was no exception, but with the help of our incredible Super Teams, the support from people like you, and God's guidance we were able to do work that we've never done before. With your help, we changed lives! In the following pages, you will see the amazing accomplishments of 2019.



# A BRAND NEW SMILE

A smile opens doors. It shows the kind of comfort and confidence that helps us create friendships and relationships. So, imagine how difficult it could be for a young person in Pohnpei struggling with tooth decay. You don't smile; you don't show your teeth. You feel self-conscious in public; social interaction is difficult and the constant pain in your mouth makes you feel sick all the time.

That's why it was so incredible that our Dental Super Team brought an innovative new procedure to change lives and restore smiles. Dr. Dave Kanas (who you can see on the cover) returned to Pohnpei for his second trip with a technique to fabricate resin fixed bridges that could replace decayed teeth. The best part was that the procedure only took two days and was much more cost and time effective than traditional porcelain bridges. We called it the "Pohnpei Snap Bridge."

Imagine coming in to the Canvasback clinic with decaying front teeth, unsure of what could be done other than removing them. Our smiling team would greet you and two days later, you'd leave with a beautiful smile of your own!



Even better, our team taught the local dentists how to make the "Pohnpei Snap Bridge" and left the materials for them to create 100s more!

But why stop there? Our teams wondered why tooth decay was so prevalent in young people, so they went to the heart of the problem and created a plan to work with Pohnpei Dental Services to provide preventive sealants for elementary students and address dental problem at a young age. In addition, we're beginning dental clinics in remote villages so that no matter where people live, they have access to dental health.

We're so proud of our volunteers and the smiles they left behind!



# A COORDINATED VISION



The heart of the health problem in Micronesia stems around figuring out how to balance necessary medical resources between remote and distant islands. For years, Canvasback has tackled that problem in a variety of ways like sailing medical teams out to tiny islands, flying in specialists, and developing portable programs that provide world-class care. In all of that, one of our biggest successes has been through our ophthalmology teams which have been able to restore sight to thousands of people whose cataracts or retinal disease had left them blind. It's a complicated challenge to transport all the necessary equipment, lenses, and personnel to an island hospital and perform the delicate surgery. But our success has set Canvasback apart and earned us a valuable reputation throughout the Pacific.

This year we did better than ever with a coordinated strategy of two teams to the Marshall Islands. The first to the small island of Ebeye where we performed cataract surgery and identified patients with retinal disease. Those patients then flew to Majuro to receive treatment from our retinal specialist. A total of 317 sight giving surgeries were performed.







One of the most exciting things about Canvasback's long history in Micronesia is being part of the growth of the local health infrastructure. We know that we are only a small part of God's plan to bring health and wholeness to people living in the Pacific islands. So this year, we were overjoyed to help the Ebeye Hospital create a new unit to address one of their pressing health issues.

On the island, it is not uncommon to diagnose patients in their 40s with colon cancer. The rates they faced

are much higher than the average population, partially because they didn't have the ability to screen for cancer at an early stage.

So, Canvasback put together a Super Team to train and establish a colonoscopy unit at the Ebeye Hospital. Dr. Nathan Kam took the lead to ensure that the hospital purchased the necessary equipment and supplies. And together with Dr. Rody Yoshinaka and our nurses Nimfa Wroblewski and Catherine Velasquez, they

performed 56 colonoscopies, which served as a training exercise and gave the local staff many valuable opportunities to practice using the colonoscope.

Additionally, Nimfa and Catherine provided hands-on training for the local nurses on how to assist their doctors during the procedures and most importantly how to maintain and clean the equipment.

They helped a start a program that will save lives!



## A NEW OPPORTUNITY



# AN OPEN DOOR

This year Canvasback's Gynecology Team served in Palau and crowds of women packed the clinic—many had suffered years of bleeding and discomfort. This team completed 262 examinations and performed 36 surgeries because of the efforts of our Super Pathology Team.

On Palau, pap smears are sent overseas and results are returned in 4-6 weeks. If there are positive findings, biopsies are taken and again are sent overseas. This scenario would totally limit the efforts of the Canvasback team who are on island for only two weeks.

To make the team more effective, Pathologist Lauren Hammock, MD, Cytotechnologist Mark Endicott, and histotechnician Stacey Ganieany decided to up our game! They brought donated histology equipment which gave them the ability to read tissue and provide a 24-hour biopsy diagnoses. Combined with our 3-hour pap turnaround times, we were able to be more effective in treating the women.

In Palau, this was life-changing for so many women in need of immediate care. If the test results were positive, the appropriate treatment could be decided on the spot. This new testing method is opening up doors for Canvasback's work in all of Micronesia. We see a huge need in women's health and we feel God calling us to the work. This is the beginning of work that will change lives and we are excited to see the healing to come!







## A HELPING HAND

Orthopedic teams can be our most equipment and supply intensive outreach, but the results we see are well worth the extra care and planning that goes into each of our teams. This year, Canvasback planned two ortho teams to Majuro in the Marshall Islands and Koror in the Republic of Palau providing over \$1.6 million in care! That dollar amount translates into people being able to walk again, to dance with their families, and enjoy the fullness of life.

Over the last few years, Canvasback has been working to improve our ability to provide these kinds of procedures and we could not do it without amazing volunteers who provide incredible expertise and the partnership with generous companies like Zimmer Biomet who donated the implants, De Puy Synthes and Bioventus who donated the visco-elastic supplementation, Providence St. Mary's Hospital, WA, Wilcox Memorial Hospital, Hawaii, and John Muir Hospital, California loaned and donated supplies, and Matson Navigation and Garden Isle Couriers donated the loading and shipping of all the equipment. We couldn't do it without you!





## AN OPPORTUNITY TO HELP



### ENT Super Teams

His name is Kiki Always. He is a medical officer who met us when we landed the Canvasback dinghy on the remote atoll of Namunuito in the Chuuk Islands. The very first thing he said was, “Doc, there are so many children on my island with ear infections. I need your help.” Virtually the same words are spoken year after year in the islands of Micronesia. Some ear infections are so bad that the children experience almost complete hearing loss and we have had adults whose ears have been weeping since childhood. The need for ENT surgery teams is great.

In 2020, Canvasback Missions will send ENT teams to both Majuro and Pohnpei. Your help is needed to meet this call for help. Specialized instruments are required for ear, nasal, and tonsillectomy surgery. The cost to purchasing these instruments which will be used year after year is \$16,229... very little when compared to restoring a child's life.

### Dental Needs

‘A picture is worth a thousand words’—so goes the old saying, but when it comes to dentistry, it is doubly true. Every Canvasback Dentist has wanted the ability to x-ray pictures of their patient's teeth but that just hasn't happened—it's the mission field, however, so they do their best.

That can all change, with your help. For a mere \$5,000, the team will be able to bring a KaVo Nomad Pro 2, a portable digital x-ray unit to the mission field with them. This unit will provide the dentists a wonderful new tool, allowing them to evaluate the patient's oral health which cannot be done by a simple oral examination. With the Nomad Pro 2, problems such as cavities, tooth decay, and impacted teeth will be identified—leaving the guesswork behind.



### Orthopedic Supplies

We have an ambitious goal of doing 30 Total Knee Replacements on the island of Palau. More surgeries means more surgical supplies. \$5000 is needed to purchase these supplies. Your donation will be a gift of life for those who cannot walk.



# CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS

## We need your help!

We need dentists, dental assistants, dental hygienists, ENT doctors, audiologists, gynecologists, nurse practitioners, ultrasound techs, mammogram techs, operating room nurses, scrub techs, PACU nurses, anesthesiologists, cooks and data entry personnel to help document data and statistics, and bio medical personnel. People with a heart to serve and go the extra mile!

## Upcoming 2020 Teams

|                     |                             |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| January 16-31       | ENT, Majuro                 |
| February 19-March 6 | Orthopedic, Palau           |
| March 26-April 10   | Gynecology, Majuro          |
| July                | ENT, Pohnpei                |
| August              | Colonoscopy Training, Palau |
| September           | Dental, Ebeye               |
| September 10-25     | Dental, Pohnpei             |



Our work is made possible by our faithful supporters and amazing sponsors. Thank you so much!

**CANVASBACK**   
MISSIONS

940 Adams Street, Ste. R,  
Benicia, CA 94510

T: (707) 746-7828  
Editor: Sterling Spence