

SERTOMAN

A PUBLICATION FOR SERTOMA MEMBERS



Hearing Aid Project
**Brings Service to
Mankind to Belize**

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HEARING AID PROJECT BRINGS SERVICE TO MANKIND TO BELIZE



The Hearing Aid Project is proud to help provide refurbished hearing aids, batteries and other supplies to support Belize Mission Project's clinical work.

Over the past few years, Sertoma has begun expanding the Hearing Aid Project work beyond the United States by partnering with other nonprofit organizations leading medical mission trips throughout Latin America, Africa and Eastern Europe. Earlier this year, we took steps to further that expansion by exploring how we might participate in these trips to help serve individuals in need around the world.

Hearing for Belize, a division of the Belize Mission Project, invited Sertoma Executive Director Jason Camis and Carol Pandis, a hearing aid specialist and member of the Sertoma Club of Greater Sarasota, to join one of its annual trips to the Central American country in January. While Camis and Pandis only joined the Hearing for Belize team for a short stint of the ten-day medical mission, they were able to see firsthand how the nonprofit and its volunteers serve individuals in Belize City, San Ignacio and San Pedro.

Families from across the country traveled for hours by bus to reach the clinics set up and staffed by Hearing for Belize. Pandis and Camis met individuals of all ages who had been living with untreated hearing loss for years, maybe even decades. While Camis assisted with greeting and registering patients, Pandis was able to use her professional expertise to directly serve visitors to the clinic.

"Being able to provide hearing evaluations, fit hearing aids and offer counseling was incredibly rewarding and deeply humbling," Pandis said.

Programs like those provided by Hearing for Belize are critically important to emerging nations such as Belize, which largely lacks formal audiology services. Without support from initiatives like the Belize Mission Project and the Hearing Aid Project, many Belizean children and adults would be forced to live without access to any hearing health care. This can significantly

impair their ability to communicate with people who have “typical” hearing, relying instead entirely on sign language without any spoken language. In Belize, these individuals often lack the access they need to independently navigate communication, education and daily life. Pandis noted that witnessing the emotional impact hearing care had on the patients really drove home why work like this is so important beyond just what HAP can accomplish in the United States.

“Being able to provide hearing evaluations, fit hearing aids and offer counseling was incredibly rewarding and deeply humbling.”

-Carol Pandis

“Simple moments like a smile, tears or the quiet realization that someone could once again hear a loved one’s voice served as powerful reminders that hearing health care is about far more than devices,” Pandis said. “It’s about restoring connection, dignity and quality of life. This experience reinforced why Sertoma’s mission is so important and why hearing health advocacy matters on a global level.”

Sertoma hopes to continue its relationship with the Belize Mission Project and similar organizations by inviting volunteers to serve in the name of Service to Mankind. If you are willing to donate your time—especially if you have a professional audiology or hearing instrument background—please contact Jason at jcamis@sertoma.org to express your interest.



Carol Pandis (left), a hearing aid specialist and member of the Sertoma Club of Greater Sarasota, helped provide hearing evaluations and fit hearing aids during the medical mission trip to Belize City early this year.



Without the support of organizations like Hearing for Belize and the Hearing Aid Project, many Belizean children, like this young patient, and adults would go without access to hearing health care.