Helping Hearts: Hundreds of Students from 35 Countries to Learn Hands-Only CPR

Training to Occur at Operation Smile’s International Student Leadership Conference

Virginia Beach, Virginia (PRWEB) July 17, 2017 -- For the first time, more than 525 college and high school students, from Africa, Asia, North and South America, and Europe, will gather to learn the life-saving skill of Hands-Only CPR during Operation Smile’s 26th annual International Student Leadership Conference (ISLC), which will take place July 17 to 24 at Fraterna Domus in Rome, Italy.

Students who participate in ISLC are given the opportunity to apply for a position on an Operation Smile medical mission. On the mission they will teach Hands-Only CPR to patients and their families – along with basic first aid, dental hygiene, oral re-hydration therapy, and nutrition.

According to the American Heart Association, about 90 percent of people who suffer out-of-hospital cardiac arrests die, but CPR can double or triple a cardiac arrest victim’s chance of survival.

Dr. Vinay Nadkarni is Professor of Anesthesia, Critical Care and Pediatrics at the University Of Pennsylvania Perelman School Of Medicine. He says, "Bystander Hands-Only CPR has become the single most effective intervention that can more than double survival from adult out-of-hospital cardiac arrest." Dr. Nadkarni is also Chair of the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation. He added, "It takes only a few minutes to learn and practice and can return smiles to a family for a lifetime!"

Also during the week-long conference, students will participate in peer-to-peer leadership training, service projects to benefit Operation Smile patients, and serve as advocates for global access to safe surgery by taking part in Operation Smile's UNTIL WE HEAL campaign.

In March 2017, Operation Smile kicked off a year-long celebration of its 35th anniversary with the global launch of the UNTIL WE HEAL campaign. First inspired by students, the campaign unites like-minded advocates and world leaders to advance access to safe surgery for all people with cleft conditions. On July 18, all ISLC participants will simultaneously sign the UNTIL WE HEAL pledge, showing their support for the concept that access to safe surgery is a fundamental right.

Co-Founder and President of Operation Smile Kathy Magee said, “The lack of access to safe surgery is an important issue and we are so proud of our student volunteers who are taking the lead to be advocates for those in need. Every child that has a facial deformity is our responsibility. If we don’t take care of them, there’s no guarantee that anyone else will.”

Since 1991, Operation Smile Student Programs has empowered youth globally through advocacy, education, leadership and service. Thousands of elementary, middle and high school students have formed more than 900 Operation Smile student clubs worldwide promoting these values on their campuses and in their communities. ISLC further empowers these student leaders and teaches them to become responsible global citizens.

About Operation Smile
Operation Smile is an international medical charity that has provided hundreds of thousands of free surgeries for children and young adults in developing countries who are born with cleft lip, cleft palate or other facial

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deformities. It is one of the oldest and largest volunteer-based organizations dedicated to improving the health and lives of children worldwide through access to surgical care. Since 1982, Operation Smile has developed expertise in mobilizing volunteer medical teams to conduct surgical missions in resource-poor environments while adhering to the highest standards of care and safety. Operation Smile helps to fill the gap in providing access to safe, well-timed surgeries by partnering with hospitals, governments and ministries of health, training local medical personnel, and donating much-needed supplies and equipment to surgical sites around the world. Founded and based in Virginia, U.S., Operation Smile has extended its global reach to more than 60 countries through its network of credentialed surgeons, pediatricians, doctors, nurses, and student volunteers. For more information, visit www.operationsmile.org.
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