30,000th Free Surgery Provided by Mercy Ships Onboard the Africa Mercy

Volunteer surgeons on world’s largest private hospital ship reach milestone this week - celebrated on International Volunteer Day

CAMEROON, Africa (PRWEB) December 05, 2017 -- This International Volunteer Day marks two incredible milestones onboard the floating hospital ship the Africa Mercy, currently docked in Cameroon. Volunteer ophthalmic surgeon from Tyler, Texas Dr. Glenn Strauss performed the 30,000th surgery on the ship -- ten years after performing the very first surgery onboard the Africa Mercy in 2007. Mercy Ships, founded in 1978, has worked tirelessly to combat the global surgery crisis of 5 billion people without access to safe surgery.

“I could never have imagined when I did that first operation on the AFM in 2007, that now, 10 years later, I’d be doing the 30,000th case. Not only that, but I’ve been privileged to train 47 ophthalmic surgeons who will provide tens of thousands more safe cataract surgeries in Africa and around the world,” said Strauss.

Dr. Strauss’ main goal has been to train ophthalmic surgeons as well as to provide the surgeries himself. He teaches the revolutionary MSICS cataract technique (manual small-incision cataract surgery) which is a low-cost, small-incision form of extracapsular cataract extraction and is more easily multiplied in developing world settings.

“These milestones are the epitome of what Mercy Ships strives to do, and Dr. Strauss is truly the image of our volunteers, all of whom are dedicated and caring individuals who change lives every day, thousands of times over,” commented Don Stephens, President and Founder of Mercy Ships.

Since deployment 10 years ago, the Africa Mercy has docked in nine African countries for a total of 12 field services. The surgical specialties offered in the ship’s state-of-the-art operating theaters include maxillofacial, plastic reconstructive, women's health – including obstetric fistula, pediatric orthopaedics, general, and ophthalmic (adult and pediatric).

In addition to providing surgeries, the volunteers on the Mercy Ship also provided medical capacity building training courses attended by more than 7,800 African healthcare professionals. By providing training for the healthcare professionals, Mercy Ships surgeons help to ensure that partner healthcare providers will be better equipped to care for their country and provide safer surgeries in Africa after the ship leaves.

ABOUT MERCY SHIPS:

Mercy Ships uses hospital ships to deliver free, world-class healthcare services, capacity building and sustainable development to those with little access in the developing world. Founded in 1978 by Don and Deyon Stephens, Mercy Ships has worked in more than 70 countries providing services valued at more than $1.3 billion, treating more than 2.56 million direct beneficiaries. The Africa Mercy is crewed by 400 volunteers from up to 40 nations, an average of 1000 each year. Professionals including surgeons, dentists, nurses, healthcare trainers, teachers, cooks, seamen, engineers, and agriculturalists donate their time and skills to the effort. With offices in 16 nations, Mercy Ships seeks to transform individuals and serve nations one at a time.

For more information click on http://www.mercyships.org

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Hi-res photos and general Mercy Ships B-Roll video footage are available upon request.

ABOUT INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER DAY:  
International Volunteer Day (IVD) mandated by the UN General Assembly, is held each year on 5 December. It is viewed as a unique chance for volunteers and organizations to celebrate their efforts, to share their values, and to promote their work among their communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), United Nations agencies, government authorities and the private sector.  
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