

Living Hope



HORIZON INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL MISSION, INC.

January 2015

Rising above the obstacle- from patient to student pharmacist.

- story of Chigozie Ezeokoye

For 14 years Horizon International medical mission has been involved in obtaining free medical care to people of Africa and the Caribbean. 2004 opened a new aspect of our ministry involving then 10 year old Chigozie Ezeokoye who was flown from Nigeria to USA for cardiac surgery.

Chigozie hails from Awo Idemilli, Orsu Local government Area, Imo state, Nigeria. He was born with congenital heart defect of Atrial Septal Defect

(ASD) (hole in the heart) and mitral valve prolapse. His symptoms became noticeable at the age of 4. Unfortunately for 6 years he was misdiagnosed and treated wrongly. Until he was finally diagnosed at university of Lagos teaching Hospital. In Nigeria the surgical procedure could not be carried out leaving Chigozie in jeopardy and his family hopeless.



Chigozie Post-Op Atrial Septal Repair 2005

Through the efforts of Chigozie's Uncle Mr. Kevin Iwule, Chigozie's sad case was brought to the attention of Dr. Kennedy Okere (HIMM President and Founder) and his friend Dr. Jeffrey Dormu (surgeon) enabled the surgical repair of the defect at Deborah hospital Foundation, New Jersey.

For full story on this aspect link

<http://www.himm.org/newsletters/HIMM2005Newsletter.pdf>

Ten years post operation, Chigozie who had stunted growth is now 6ft tall. He has grown socially, physically and spiritually. Chigozie is presently a second year student in the school of pharmacy at University of Lagos, Nigeria. The hospital that made initial diagnosis but could not repair the ASD and valvular prolapse.

Special points of interest:

A Medical Update

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Chigozie Ezeokoye today

In an emotion filled (tears of joy for Chigozie and Dr. Okere) telephone conversation, Chigozie narrates “ I did not forget my childhood dream of being medical professional, did not allow my sickness to weigh me down rather I completed secondary school and proceeded to the university. It was not easy but I know that God has used my condition to prepare me for the future and I pray I remain focused to fulfill His will for me. I want to help in saving life as Dr. Okere came at the critical time in my life and the efforts of my Uncle Mr. Kevin Iwule and my mother Mrs. Francisca Ezeokoye will never be forgotten at such time as this.

‘I will encourage everyone not to allow obstacles like sickness put you down but rise above them and allow God to lift you’.”

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Horizon International Medical Mission (HIMM) was founded Dr. Kennedy Kelechi Okere who also serves as the president of the organization. The main purpose of the organization is to reach the medically and spiritually unreached people of Africa and the Caribbean. Dr. Okere grew up in Africa and lived in the Caribbean. While growing up he witnessed people in rural areas of these parts live in poor medical and living conditions without much hope for assistance. As Dr. Okere grew up, he continued to pray that one day God would raise a vessel after His heart that will lift the people out of their predicament. He had no idea that he was praying for himself.

Dr. Okere organized his first medical mission trip to Nigeria, West Africa in March 2000. At that time, he was a second year medical resident in Family Medicine at Memorial Health University Medical Center. He was able to recruit a local Physician, Dr. Emeka Anyamele, and local Nigerian Nurses. With the cooperation of the local Pastor of Ihiagwa Baptist Church, the community visited in Imo State, Nigeria, Dr. Okere converted the community church into a make shift clinic. Drs. Okere and Anyamele saw 600 patients during the 5-day clinic.

HIMM has gone on multiple mission trips since 2006. During each trip, HIMM has had the opportunity to recruit nurses, church ministers, a dentist, a medical student, a pharmacist and doctors.

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<http://www.himm.org>

