

## Meet Daniel DeSanto | New Executive Director



Daniel DeSanto, MScPH

We are proud to announce the return of Daniel DeSanto as Executive Director. Daniel started at Rotaplast in 2012, organizing over 45 surgical clinics as operations manager. His experience at Rotaplast inspired him to pursue a Master of Science degree at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in public health for developing countries. Afterwards, he moved to South Africa to work as a researcher and epidemiologist, focusing on national program evaluation coupled with stigma research to strengthen health systems and patient outcomes. Upon his return to the United States, Daniel lectured at San Jose State University and had a short stint at Partners in Health USA before reconnecting with Rotaplast.

Daniel’s experience living and working overseas, expertise in global public health evaluation, and historical understanding of Rotaplast provides him with a unique perspective and skillset to lead Rotaplast into the future.

## Rotaplast Board and Headquarters Updates

Rotaplast’s Board of Directors met live in November to review events and plan for the coming year. Twenty members attended live and four via Zoom from the East coast to Hawaii. The occasion included a visit to Rotaplast’s new headquarters in South San Francisco. The Building Committee pointed out that its acquisition provided several significant benefits.

The previous headquarters building was in a busy San Francisco residential neighborhood that had no parking, poor roadway access and limited warehouse space. The new site is in a spacious commercial park close to San Francisco Airport, making it convenient for delivery of supplies for missions. It has ample office and warehouse space for the staff and medical supplies. Because of exceptionally high real estate values in San Francisco, Rotaplast was able to sell the original building with enough profit to purchase the new facility outright. The reduction in fixed overhead makes Rotaplast a more efficient operation.



Eric Schmutz, PDG speaks at Rotaplast Board

## Making an Impact | Clinic Updates

### Return to Full Scale Missions

We’ve been busy with new missions, many volunteers, and heart-warming stories from our patients.

#### Completed Clinics

Location	Dates	Travel with our teams. Click the link below!
Medellin, Colombia	July – Aug 2022	<a href="#">Medellin 2022 Blog</a>
Guatemala City, Guatemala	Nov – Dec 2022	<a href="#">Guatemala City 2022 Blog</a>
Cebu City, Philippines	Feb – Mar 2023	<a href="#">Cebu City 2023 Blog</a>
Agra, India	Mar 2023	<a href="#">Agra 2023 Blog</a>

#### Upcoming Clinics

Location	Dates
Medellin, Colombia	Apr 2023
Luxor, Egypt	Oct – Nov 2023
Nagamangala, India	Nov – Dec 2023

## Recognizing the People Behind our Success



Gordon McInally (left) Paul Quintavalla (right)

### Rotary Zone Institutes In USA and Canada

Rotaplast volunteers attended the Rotary Zone Institute meetings across North America in the fall of 2022. Attendees included District Governors, Governors Elect, and Governors-Elect Nominees. Also attending were Rotary International President and Rotaplast volunteer **Jennifer Jones**, and Rotary International President Elect for 2023-2024 **Gordon R. McInally, DDS**. “As a dentist, I am keenly aware of cleft lip and palate’s devastating effects on children and adults. And I know of the good work you people do. This is a great cause and I wish you all the very best.” said PE McInally.

Rotaplast participated in the Houses of Friendship at each meeting to talk with future governors about forming Rotaplast Committees during their terms as governors. Many governors conduct a districtwide service project of their choosing which will leave a legacy that lasts a lifetime. Rotaplast is the ideal international service project that is in keeping with the Rotary Area of focus, Mother and Child Care.

### In Memorium – Roger Joseph Schulte III

**Roger Schulte** was a good friend and passionate promoter of Rotaplast. He was active in Rotaplast since 2010 when he joined a mission to Tacna, Peru. Three other missions soon followed, one to Guatemala and two to India. On some missions, his wife Paulette joined him in support roles. He headed the Rotaplast Committee for District 5300 and served there as District Governor 2010-2011. Roger often spoke at Rotary clubs and civic organizations to raise funds and encourage others to join. He was an astute organizer and was often known as the man with a plan. To honor Roger the mission to Medellin, Colombia in July 2022 was named, “Roger Schulte 100 Sonrisas.”



Roger Schulte doing what he loved

### Rotary Club Honors its President

On the last days of **Margaret Stoffel’s** term as president of the Chestnut Hill Rotary Club, fellow club members gave her a gift to acknowledge her exceptional leadership and service. Instead of the customary wall plaque, they gave her something more meaningful and representative of her life of charity to others. The club made a donation to Rotaplast International in her name.



Margaret Stoffel, (left), former president of Chestnut Hill Rotary Club

“Margaret Stoeffel,” said club president Andy Sears, “is well known for her caring and compassionate work for the less fortunate. It is therefore fitting that a contribution to Rotaplast in her honor be made to help children suffering from disfigurement.”



Happy to have Jan as Donor Liaison

### **Jan Biros is Appointed Donor Liaison**

In her role, Jan will establish good communications and maintain strong relations with all the valued Rotaplast donors. Jan is a member of the Phoenixville, PA Rotary Club. She is an experienced Rotaplast volunteer and will give donors up-to-date information and respond to questions about Rotaplast activities, needs, and missions. Donors are invited to contact her at [jan@Rotaplast.org](mailto:jan@Rotaplast.org). Jan has been a Pennsylvanian for most of her life and is retired from a career in higher education administration. She is currently her club's president, has been on a Rotaplast mission to Myanmar, and is an active fundraiser. She is also the Interim President of District 7450's The Gundaker Foundation.

### **Rotaplast Receives Four-Star Charity Navigator Rating**

Rotaplast has again received a Four-Star rating from Charity Navigator, its highest award level. Charity Navigator is an assessment organization based in the United States. It provides insights into a nonprofit's financial stability, adherence to best practices for leadership, accountability, transparency, and results reporting. It is the largest and most utilized evaluator of charities in the United States.



District 7430 volunteers & beautiful baskets

### **District Rotaplast Fundraiser – Show Biz**

District 7430 Rotaplast Committee stimulated the community's awareness of Rotaplast and received its support. For over 25 years, the Committee has raised funds for many free surgical clinics to serve children with cleft lip and cleft palate anomalies. For this year's fundraiser we partnered with the historic Pennsylvania Playhouse in Bethlehem, that provided their venue and entertainment," said Rotaplast Chair Susan Burnett. Guests enjoyed a terrific performance of *Deathtrap*, then took part in a raffle for a wide variety of baskets and bid on beautiful Rotaplast quilts. Attendees were served a catered post-play meal and had a dynamic conversation with the show's cast and director for audience participation at its best. We are grateful to several District clubs who were sponsors, and to area merchants who provided gifts for the baskets. Our fundraising will continue until we reach our goal of planning a mission for 2023

### **Monroe Energy Corp. Supports Employee**

When Rotarian **Craig Galante** informed his employer he would be away for two weeks on a Rotaplast mission to Medellin, Colombia, he was thrilled by their response. The company was proud to learn of their employee's humanitarian work. "When I asked for a donation," said Craig. "They were happy to support our work and provided a generous contribution." To show appreciation, Craig presented his employer with a certification of Appreciation from Rotaplast International.



Craig Galante (right) present Rotaplast Certificate of Appreciation



## Rotaplast Surgery Clinics & Conferences

### Medellin, Colombia Mission (2022)

The two-week mission to Medellin, Colombia in 2022 marked Rotaplast's return to full scale medical missions nations. The mission included medical and Rotary volunteers from coast to coast and was hosted by the Rotary Club Medellin El Poblado. This mission was sponsored by generous contributions from Districts 5150, 5300, and 6650. Their tireless work in raising funds changed many children's lives.



Arzoo Salami, MD prepares CUE COVID tests

Colombian Rotarians pitched in to look after volunteers throughout their stay. Rotaplast has been to Colombia several times in the past, but this was the first mission to Medellin. Concerns about COVID 19 were still at their peak in July/August at the hospital and throughout Medellin. All precautions were taken including using face masks and daily testing.



Anne Delaney, MD closes a palate



Catherine McCullough, RN and Paulette McHugh, RN with beautiful quilts donated by Wrap-a-Smile

### Rotary Club of San Jose Helps Mission to Antigua, Guatemala (2022)

The Rotary Club of San Jose, District 5170 provided the funding and non-medical volunteers for this mission. Most of the medical and Rotary volunteers were from the west coast and had served together previously. "As is our custom on Rotaplast missions, we gave each child a quilt according to the child's age and size." reported Quartermaster **Jamie Chavez.** These quilts were made and donated by Wrap-a-Smile of International Quilters, and sponsored by the Rotary Club of Wells, Maine."

"We especially appreciated the support and hospitality extended by our host club, Club Rotario de La Antigua Guatemala. Club member **Jerry Leach**, an American expatriate from New York State, invited us to his home for an evening of fellowship and cultural entertainment. A unique and delightful meal was prepared by indigenous natives using traditional recipes."

### Asociación Colombiana de Diferencias Congénitas Craneofaciales

Rotaplast has been asked to assist a group of concerned medical professionals in Colombia form a nationwide association dedicated to providing free reconstructive cleft lip and palate surgery for children. The group is headed by **Dr. Héctor Vilegas**, a longtime associate of Rotaplast, who received surgery from Rotaplast as a youth. The Association held its first congress in March 2023 in Medellin. Rotaplast is participating along with Smile Train and Operation Smile to provide direction and support. Presentations on behalf of Rotaplast will include Rotaplast Board Member **Dr. Marie Tolarova** regarding genetics and prevention, and **Dr. Granger Wong**, surgeon at UC Davis.





### Help Us Tell Our Story

Rotaplast's missions resumed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2022, with teams in Guatemala and Columbia. As the world emerges from the throes of Covid, we have engaged in changing one life at a time. Now, as we plan ahead, we need your help to spread word about our vision, mission and projects with an objective to target donations and volunteers. In 2023, we plan to enhance our marketing campaign on social media starting with medical and non-medical volunteers that have participated in Rotaplast missions. We would like you to share the Rotaplast Facebook posts and re-post on your Facebook page within your network. Additionally, send along your Rotaplast life-changing stories to [Paul@Rotaplast.org](mailto:Paul@Rotaplast.org) for the Newsletter and [sangitaseshadri@gmail.com](mailto:sangitaseshadri@gmail.com) for social media. In the eyes of the parents of the children whose lives we transform, "we do seem to make magic."

### Joe and the Volcano

Rotaplast's many missions have generated no shortage of anecdotes that become folklore among volunteers. Like the one about a surgeon on a mission in Retalhuleu, Guatemala who wouldn't let anything distract him. The hospital was near Volcán Santiaguillo, a twin chimney volcano the staff nicknamed *Huff and Puff*. In addition to the awful smell of sulfur when the wind blew their way, *H&P* sent mild tremors from time to time.

One morning in the operating room everyone felt a particularly hefty tremor. Unruffled he asked, "Is it twelve o'clock already?" "No", replied a nurse casually, "But I think your laundry is ready."

