



## Healing and Growing

Dominic is an active boy living in Island Garden City of Samal, Philippines. He loves to climb coconut trees and is very agile, but one day his foot slipped and he fell from the tree and fractured his femur.

Dominic's father rushed him to the hospital, but he knew that he could not afford medical care. Dominic's mother had recently passed away, and the family was drained financially.

But when Dr. Jun Valera told them that a SIGN Implant—the best implant available to stabilize Dominic's fracture—was donated and available at no cost to the family, they were overjoyed.

The surgeon used a SIGN Pediatric Fin Nail to stabilize the femur, and Dominic returned home. One month later, he came back to the hospital and was excited when Dr. Jun told him that he no longer needed crutches, and that he could go back to school.

Now, two years after Dominic's injury and surgery, he has been scheduled to have the implant removed. The SIGN Pediatric Nail has worked exactly as intended; it helped stabilize the bone to enable proper healing while allowing the bone to grow. Like most 15-year-old boys, Dominic has grown significantly in the past two years, and he has no long-term effects from the fracture.

**You can help ensure that a momentary accident does not define the future for children like Dominic. Please help people in developing countries recover from trauma injuries by donating with the included form or online at [signfracturecare.org/donate](http://signfracturecare.org/donate).**



**SIGN Surgery helped Dominic heal after falling from a tree.**



Pre-op x-ray



1-year x-ray

# SIGN Responding in Conflict Areas

People living in areas where conflicts are happening around them are especially vulnerable to injuries and often lack access to medical care.

Because the SIGN System is designed to be used in low-resource settings and does not require electricity in the operating room, it is ideal for use in challenging situations like conflicts and natural disasters. We are honored to support surgeons working in Afghanistan, South Sudan, Pakistan, Iraq, and other areas of conflict as they arise.

Recently, conflict has broken out in Armenia and Ethiopia, and SIGN is responding. In all of these situations, SIGN is not supporting a particular side or cause, but we seek to provide medical care for vulnerable people in the midst of challenging circumstances.

## Armenia

The Nagorno-Karabakh region is internationally recognized as a part

of Azerbaijan but has been controlled by ethnic Armenians since 1994. Conflicts over this region have been ongoing for many years, and fighting flared up in 2020.

After the conflicts began, Dr. David Akin, the president of Operation Rainbow, reached out to SIGN to support a surgeon he knew in Armenia who had more than 40 people at his hospital injured by the conflict and lacked the implants needed to care for them. SIGN quickly sent a SIGN Starter Set to begin a new program at Wigmore Clinic CJSC in Yerevan, the capital city.

Additionally, SIGN is starting a new traveling program to bring orthopaedic care to people living closer to the fighting. A group of US and Armenian surgeons will be traveling to some of the most affected communities, and SIGN is enabling them to care for patients with fractures. Even before the SIGN Set arrived, the surgeons have been

sending x-rays to Dr. Zirkle for consultation on specific cases.

## Ethiopia

In recent weeks, conflict has arisen in northern Ethiopia, resulting in hundreds of people killed and injured. It is unclear how many people are wounded because the region of Tigray has been in a communications blackout since the conflict began, with no internet or phone service.

SIGN is responding by providing additional shipments of SIGN Instruments and Implants to SIGN Surgeons from Bahir Dar University and the University of Gondar, who are organizing support for hospitals and patients in the region. Our local partners are expert surgeons and know the needs of the community better than we can from the United States, so we are empowering them to respond to needs as they arise.



People injured in the Ethiopian conflict are already filling up hospital wards.

# Engineers Highlight SIGN Model

On November 17, SIGN Engineers Terry Smith and Joel Gillard presented a paper that describes the SIGN Model at the International Mechanical Engineering Congress & Exposition.

The presentation highlighted that, from the very beginning of SIGN, our wholistic model to address fracture care in developing countries and listening to frontline surgeons drives our innovation and helps us address problems in the most effective manner.

“For engineers, our natural instinct is to be a problem solver,” Terry says. “But with that, it’s easy to focus on one area and assume that you know the best solution.” The SIGN Model of providing education, creating appropriate devices, and examining outcomes helps SIGN’s team of engineers ensure that each project they work on serves the mission of creating the best outcome for patients.

The consistent feedback from SIGN Surgeons, through database entries, hands-on teaching at the SIGN Conference, and conversations through The Hub, gives the engineering team a wide range of ideas and innovations to continuously improve SIGN’s products and processes. Through this bi-directional learning—SIGN teaching surgeons and surgeons teaching SIGN Staff—the engineering team is exposed to new ideas that lead to new solutions.

This process is the manifestation of one of Dr. Zirkle’s favorite sayings, that “diversity trumps ability.” By getting a wide range of ideas from people in different situations, the engineers

discover solutions that they would not have found on their own.

Putting the SIGN model into an article and presentation for the American Society of Mechanical Engineers was a bit of a challenge, Joel says. “I think they were expecting something more technical.

If we were just after a publication, we could have focused on the technical side, but we wanted to tell the whole story to inspire others in the engineering community.”

By telling the whole story, Terry and Joel highlighted that the SIGN Model is our primary innovation, and how that creates the environment where constant innovation occurs and how that leads to life-transforming outcomes for SIGN Patients.



**Joel Gillard, left, observes how SIGN Surgeons use products during the SIGN Conference.**

SIGN is focused on fracture care, but the SIGN Model is applicable in other areas, which prompted Terry and Joel to share it with a new audience—mechanical engineers. “If they can take part of our model and adapt it to what they’re doing,” Terry says, “that’s a win for everyone.”

**The annual SIGN Conference enables engineers like Terry (second-left) and surgeons to exchange ideas and develop better products.**



# Shabir Ally, Tanzania

At 3 years old, Shabir Ally is one of the youngest patients to be treated with a SIGN Implant. Your support provides training for his surgeons in Tanzania and donates the SIGN Pediatric Nail that stabilized his fracture and enabled him to quickly get back on his feet.

Thank you for providing the right care to help this young boy heal and avoid life-long complications from his injury.



# What SIGN Means to Surgeons

## Dr. Pierre Woolley, Haiti

“With SIGN’s education, and in particular the Bioskills Lab, people who did not initially have that knowledge and education can learn every time they come, and grow into being the teachers of others. It is very rewarding and very satisfying. There’s such a big difference between when I got into residency and what residents get now, and SIGN has been there in every single way.”



## Dr. Biruk Wamisho, Ethiopia

“I did the first ever SIGN Surgery here on September 2, 2009. Still I run this program at Black Lion Hospital, where we now have over 100 residents. The 1,600 SIGN Surgeries we did are only possible through good hearts of our mentors Dr. Lew and Jeanne. My eyes fill with tears when I see our progress.”



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Happy Holidays

To: \_\_\_\_\_  
From: \_\_\_\_\_



# Holiday Gift

This holiday season, you can donate to SIGN in honor of a friend or family member, and we'll send them a card showing the impact of your gift.

Check "Holiday Gift" when you give at [signfracturecare.org/donate](http://signfracturecare.org/donate)

# Thank you!

Thank you for supporting SIGN through our recent virtual events, Moonlight Masquerade, SIGN Silent Auction, and Giving Tuesday. Your generous support has exceeded our goals, and we are grateful that you chose to provide healing surgery for people in developing countries. Each of those donations has been matched, which will help twice as many people in need.

**GIVING**  
**TWOSday**



# Giving Ideas

## IRA:

Check with your CPA to see if you are eligible to give a qualified charitable distribution from your IRA account directly to SIGN.



## Stocks and Bonds:

When doing your year-end tax planning, consult with your CPA about donating stocks and bonds to SIGN. Not only will your gift help heal, but you may receive some valuable tax advantages as well.



## Employer Matching:

Many employers match donations to charities. Check with your Human Resources department to find out how your donation to SIGN can go further.



**For all questions: please call Lori Maier at 509.371.1107.**

**For more information, visit [signfracturecare.org/ways-to-give](http://signfracturecare.org/ways-to-give)**



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December 2020

Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Address\*\*: \_\_\_\_\_

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Email: \_\_\_\_\_

YES! I would like to give a healing gift. Enclosed is my gift of:

\$50  \$150  \$250  \$500  \$1,000  Other amount \_\_\_\_\_

This gift is (check one):  in honor  in memory  Holiday Gift

Honoree Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send a personalized card to: \_\_\_\_\_

Address\*\*: \_\_\_\_\_

## Payment Method:

Check enclosed (payable to "SIGN")

## Charge my:

VISA  MasterCard

American Express  Discover Card

\_\_\_\_\_  
Credit Card Number

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ CVC # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\*\*Must have full address if credit card is used\*\*

# Fireside with SIGN

Watch a new video from  
Dr. Lewis Zirkle and Jeanne  
Dillner at [signfracturecare.org/  
givingtuesday](http://signfracturecare.org/givingtuesday)

## How You've Helped This Year...

As of Nov. 2020

**25,787**  
Patients Healed

**23**  
New SIGN  
Programs Started

### Contact SIGN

P 509.371.1107

F 509.371.1316

[info@signfracturecare.org](mailto:info@signfracturecare.org)

[signfracturecare.org](http://signfracturecare.org)



See SIGN's privacy policy and state  
disclosures at [signfracturecare.org/privacy](http://signfracturecare.org/privacy)



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