ConnectMed INTERNATIONAL

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## A FEW HOURS LEFT TO DONATE TO OUR DECEMBER GIVING CAMPAIGN!

**All donations made THROUGH DECEMBER 31 will be matched up to $3500, So far, we are about $450 shy!**

You can take advantage of **The CARES Act tax incentives** by choosing to give to ConnectMed! For those who itemize deductions, The CARES Acts allow deduction of up to 100% of adjusted gross income (increased from 60 percent). Deductions are also permitted for charitable gifts of $300 for those who do not itemize (or up to $600 for joint filers, recently added in the year-end spending package.)

**DONATE AT WWW.CONNECTMED.ORG**

Funds raised in this Campaign will be used to continue expanding our psycho-social outreach for children affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many craniofacial or similarly medically compromised patients need support following this past year of canceled or delayed surgeries, medical visits, therapy sessions, and social plans.

## PARTNERSHIPS WITH SAN DIEGO RESTAURANTS!

Support three La Jolla eateries in these tumultuous times AND benefit our Camp Cosmos programs! **Shore Rider, Dough Momma Pizzeria**, and **Cove House** now offer "Smile 4 Kits" containing tacos, pizza, or holiday sides to customers. For every kit purchased, a portion of the proceeds will be donated to ConnectMed.

Proud to partner with these great local spots!

# CAMP COSMOS PROGRAMS 2020 - BY THE NUMBERS

There has been significant research on the pandemic's consequences on children's and teen's mental health. For instance, a July JAMA Pediatrics study in China found that after an average of 33.7 days in lockdown, "22.6% of [children] reported depressive symptoms and 18.9% were experiencing anxiety."

- **TWO Virtual Camp Cosmos Day Camps (4-5 hours)**

**June 20th**

- 53 families (appx. 212 registrants)
- 13 states represented
- 60% California residents

**December 12th**

- 40 families (appx. 120 registrants)
- 11 states represented
- 51% California residents

- **TWO Virtual Family Meet-Ups (90 mins.)**

**August 22nd & October 10th**

- 45 families (appx. 180 registrants)
- 16 states represented
- 35% California residents

These virtual programs yielded higher participation numbers, as well as improved participant engagement also increased. Attendees have shared that interacting through a screen can lessen nerves or hesitation to partake in intimate, meaningful exchanges.

*"Even though it's online, I think sometimes it's a little bit better 'cause not all parents are like willing to talk in-person, or they're a little bit more shy [whereas] online it's a little easier for us to talk..."- Yesica Trejo, mother of Camp Cosmos cutie Dany, shown above.*

We had the pleasure of joining SoCal Craniofacial Kids' and the Children's Craniofacial Association for their **Annual Gift Exchange** on December 20th. Gifts we received from the exchange will be delivered to the young surgical patients from our October medical outreach in Ensenada, Mexico.

# HOLIDAYS WITH CAMP COSMOS - Dec. 11&12

Holidays with Camp Cosmos was an absolute blast thanks to the wonderful families and our partner, the Children's Craniofacial Association, who hosted a movie screening of *Wonder, a* Career Roundtable, and arts & crafts activities. We enjoyed scavenger hunts, holiday challenges, trivia, theater games, art, and a lot of sharing during discussions. And we learned strategies for self-acceptance by guest speaker and amazing guitarist **Peter Dankelson**.

## TOY DRIVE

Many, many thanks to everyone who kindly contributed to our Toy Drive! **Over 49 toys** were donated or purchased for young, low-income patients from Tijuana and Ensenada. We delivered some of the gifts to clinics on December 11th and 18th, and will distribute the remaining on January 6th for the Mexican holiday of Día de Los Reyes (Epiphany).

## UPDATE ON 2020 INTL. FELLOW, DR. BEREKET ATNAFU

Plastic and reconstructive surgeon Dr. Bereket Atnafu of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, continues working virtually on his training and research focusing on finger and hand reconstruction with Baylor College of Medicine, attending four hand conferences a month that delve into issues for which he seeks further knowledge, such as hand burn injuries, hand infections, and hand amputation injuries.

Most recently he attended the **PSF SHARE Global Initiative for a New Time** and the **Baylor Spino-Plastics Conference**. Dr. Atnafu's hand amputation research is progressing with the support of Drs. Reece and Kaplan from Baylor.