

Personal Travels Benefit The Open Door Clinic

Have you ever thought about taking a transcontinental road trip? What about walking 37 days in a row? Does just reading about it make you feel lazy? In 2017, the Open Door Clinic benefited from two adventures. Christiane Kokubo, a communications specialist with ODC, and her husband, Nathan Shepard, drove from their home in Starksboro to Kokubo's hometown of São Paulo, Brazil, hoping to raise \$1 per km they travelled. Larry Jones, also a resident of Starksboro, walked the Way of Saint James, a 500-mile trek from France to Spain, and also made it into a fundraiser for the clinic. "I was going to walk the Camino for fun and friendship, but it wasn't supposed to be about me. It was a pilgrimage, after all! Who could benefit?, I asked myself. Why not some organization which benefits others, especially those who are least able to help themselves with serious matters?", explains Jones. "I knew about ODC through the church I attend regularly, and so it was a good fit. The results are due to the good work of ODC, not to anything I've done!", he adds.



Larry Jones and his friend Steve Lytch arrive in the plaza in front of Santiago Cathedral, in Spain, after walking 500 miles during 37 days on El Camino de Santiago. Back to Vermont, he came to visit the Open Door Clinic. In the picture, Terry Naumann, ODC's volunteer Medical Director, Heidi Sulis, ODC's Executive Director, Jeffrey Maneval, UVM Medical Resident, Jim Runcie, a volunteer interpreter, Jones, and Ellen Bernstein, also a volunteer interpreter. Chris Kokubo and Nate Shepard enjoy a sunny day by Concepción Volcano on the Ometepe Island, in Nicaragua, during their road trip from Vermont to Brazil (photos by Carol Eichling Lytch, Christiane Kokubo and Pâmela Marangoni)

Kokubo and Shepard drove 30,000 miles going from home *para casa* (to home). It was an old dream of Kokubo's to discover South, Central and North America connections and differences as neighboring continents. For Shepard, a Spanish teacher at Mount Abraham Union High School, the journey will keep resonating in the classroom. "It was an amazing opportunity. We are very fortunate to be able to take a trip like this", he says. If the Americas were deeply transformative for the couple, Europe had a similar effect on Jones: "Perhaps the most important [take away], though, was that every now and then, once in a while, occasionally, we are permitted to do a miracle. I guess that's what a pilgrimage is all about in the first place. The response of my friends and acquaintances and fellow church members [to the fundraising] is proof of that. What a privilege it has been to be a part of that".

Fundraising Trips

El Camino Larry Jones June and July 2017 500 miles walked \$6,786 raised
From Home Para Casa: Chris Kokubo & Nathan Shepard Sep 2016 to Aug 2017 30,000 miles driven (route featured) \$5,250 raised

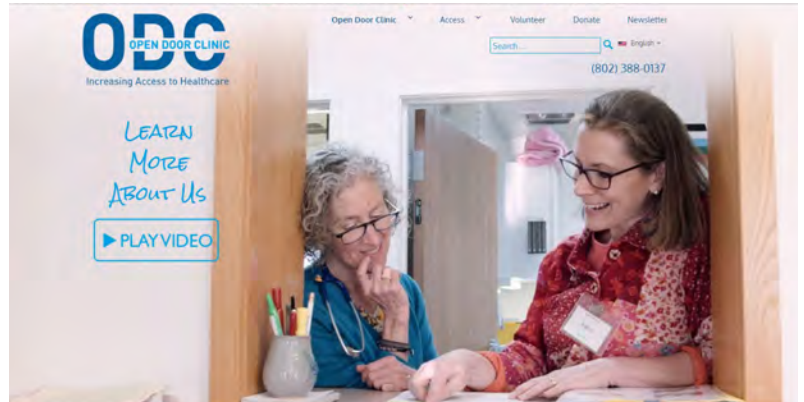
Both campaigns are still open! To donate, go to www.opendoormid.org/donate or www.fromhomeparacasa.com/challenge

We Are Spreading the Word

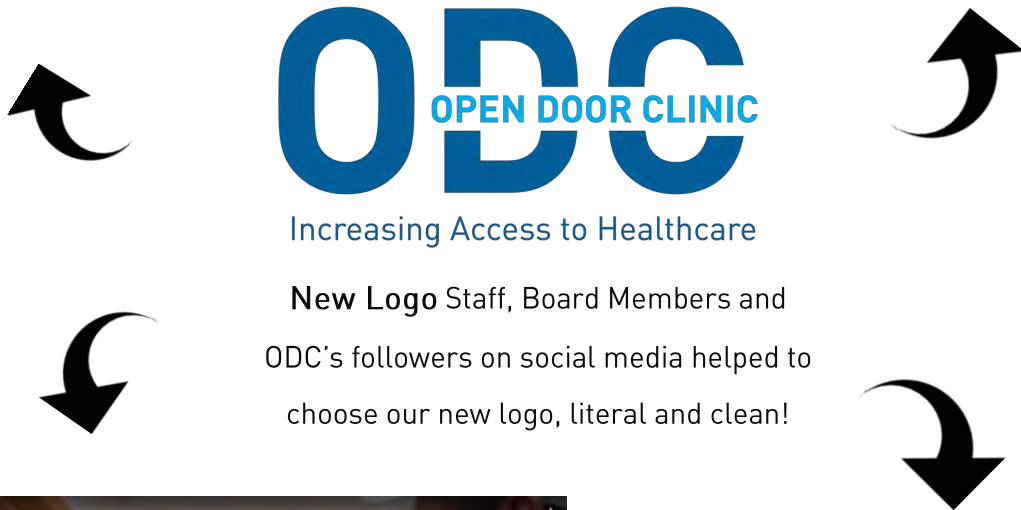
With the support of a Ben & Jerry's Foundation grant, the Open Door Clinic was able to invest efforts to strengthen our institutional image. This is how:



Amazon Smile Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to the Open Door Clinic. Sign in at <http://org.amazon.com> and look for "Community Health Services Of Addison County", or find us going to <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/03-0359531>



Bilingual Website Available in English and Spanish! ODC has a website *en Español* for the very first time! www.opendoormidd.org



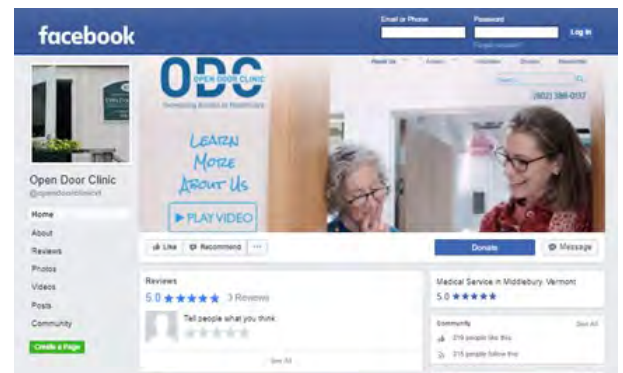
New Logo Staff, Board Members and ODC's followers on social media helped to choose our new logo, literal and clean!



Institutional Video Go to www.youtube.com and look for "Open Door Clinic". On our YouTube Channel, you will find a beautiful 4-minute video made by Corey Hendrickson, a local videographer. Check it out and please help us spread the word about who we are and what we do!

Facebook Page

Help us reach our first 1,000 likes!
www.facebook.com/opendoorclinicvt



A Legacy Continues



Courtesy of Marianna Boivin

Last September, our community lost one of its dearest members. We were deeply saddened to learn that Paul Boivin, a farm owner in Addison, passed away in a motorcycle accident in New York state.

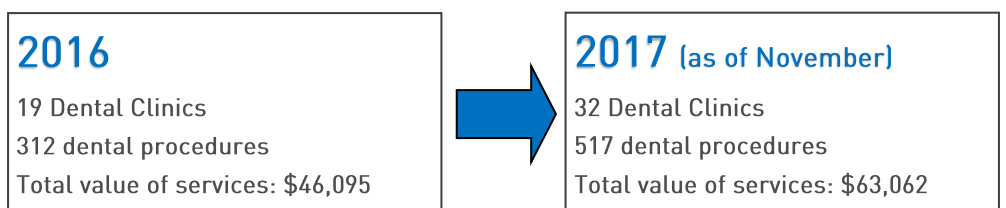
According to Marianna Boivin, his wife, Boivin was an avid reader: “No books, but journals and newspapers on science, farming, do yourself projects, consumer reporters, news. He almost never said good bye. Instead, he often said “see you later””.

Boivin strongly supported the migrant community. Therefore, his dear family asked, in lieu of flowers, that contributions be made in his honor to the ODC.

Donations honoring him have so far reached \$1,670. He was a generous person and his legacy continues on with his friends and family.

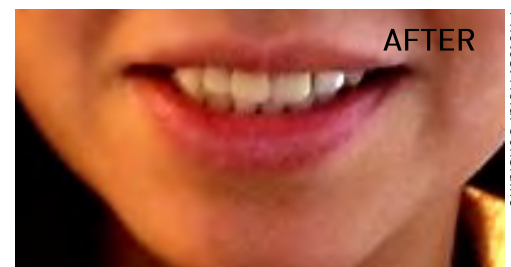
What Is New With ODC’s Dental Program?

Before the Open Door Clinic established its dental program and hired its very first hygienist, Heidi Considine, in January 2016, most of our patients were being referred to a local dentist for care. For many years, Dr. Brian Saltzman had been seeing ODC’s patients and making a special point to see people that were in extreme pain. Since then, we have welcomed aboard a volunteer Dental Director, Dr. Adam Fasoli, and eight other Addison County volunteer dentists who commit to treat a certain number of patients for free each year. We expanded our services from simply referring patients—though we still find a volunteer interpreter for each appointment—to broader case management for each patient.



“One reason why this program has been so successful this year is that we have streamlined our patients’ needs by becoming more familiar with what our volunteer dentists are comfortable treating. This fosters a positive relationship between us and the dental community”, says Considine.

While it is extremely rewarding to see the program growing, there are also challenges, as case management is more multi-layered for the majority of patients who are Spanish-speaking migrant workers. “Providing volunteer interpreters and making sure the patients understand the system—what we have to do to schedule and cancel appointments— is part of our daily effort. The staff at the ODC is well versed in chipping away at their barriers to care. It is in our DNA to find a solution to whatever barriers our patients face”, she concludes.



Photos: Heidi Considine

Happy Mouth, Happy Life

“When I arrived in Vermont, I had already lost two of my molars and my other teeth had been very sensitive and sore. Although it was a slow and arduous process because I had a lot of dental problems, the ODC changed my smile forever. May God bless those who support and work at the Open Door Clinic”, CGZ, 33 years old

It Is Open Enrollment Period!

This year, people looking to enroll for health insurance must pay attention to the shortened open enrollment period: only six weeks, ending on December 15. Melanie Clark, ODC's health insurance navigator, is concerned that people will be confused with recent changes promoted by the new federal administration. "With all the talk in the media these days about repealing and replacing the Affordable Care Act, it can be hard to understand how the health care debate is going to affect this year's open enrollment". Here's a brief summary of what is changing and what is staying the same:

Health Insurance Subsidies will remain intact. *Obamacare* subsidies will still be available for households making less than 400% of the federal poverty level. These subsidies allow individuals to reduce their monthly premium amounts when they enroll in a Vermont Health Connect plan. Because subsidies are set each year based on the second lowest cost Silver plan available, individuals making the same amount in 2018 should still expect a slight change in their 2018 subsidy amount.

Medicaid Eligibility Will Remain the Same. Individuals making up to 138% of the federal poverty level will still be eligible to enroll in adult Medicaid. There is no open enrollment period to enroll in Medicaid. Individuals can enroll in Medicaid any time of the year as long as they are income eligible.

Plan Prices and Details. Each year, the insurance companies have the ability to change their plans and their rates. They also have the option to add plans if desired. For 2018, there are a couple new bronze plans available to purchase and rates and plan details have changed for existing plans. Consumers should review the plans available for purchase in 2018 to ensure they are enrolling in the plan that best meets their needs.

Cost-Sharing Reductions will remain intact. Cost-sharing reductions lower the amount individuals have to pay for their deductibles, co-payments and other out-of-pocket expenses. Households making less than 300% of the federal poverty level are eligible for these savings if they enroll in one of the silver plans available on Vermont Health Connect. Although the Trump Administration has said they will stop making payments to insurance companies to cover these expenses, people that qualify for cost-sharing reductions will still get these benefits because the insurers are required to provide them whether or not they get reimbursed by the government.

Outreach and Advertising Have Been Cut. Funding to support outreach and advertising for *Obamacare* have been cut both at the State and Federal level. As a result, the number of in-person assistors available to help the general public has decreased. Individuals seeking assistance with enrolling in a health plan, or changing plans, should schedule their appointments now in order to ensure they can be seen.

This Year's Open Enrollment Period Was Cut in Half. The open enrollment period was cut from 12 weeks to just six weeks this year. Consumers wishing to purchase a plan for 2018 must enroll in a plan between November 1st and December 15th for a January 1st start date.

From patients and
volunteers

"Thank you for being there—most of my life I haven't had insurance!"

- Former patient who is now on Medicaid

"Thank you so much for all you do. I don't know what I would do without you. Thank you for everything you do to support me and the other workers. God bless you all."

- F., a patient

"Thank you for everything you do and the environment you help foster at ODC. It's incredible to be a part of"

- Muriel Lavallee is a Senior at Middlebury College and started volunteering as an EMT in February 2017

"Thank you for meeting with me. Your expertise and clear explanations are appreciated. And your completing the enrollment process is of great assistance"

- P. was assisted by Melanie Clark, ODC's health insurance navigator

