Jhony's Story, continued from p. 3

After his total hip replacement on his right side, Jhony was up and walking as soon as he was cleared to try. Testing out his new hip in the halls of the hospital, he couldn't help but share a grin with everyone he passed.

Jhony's grateful that he'll be able to support his wife, two sons, and daughter again. And he looks forward to getting back in the classroom to teach his favorite subject.

About a month after his surgery, Jhony took time to post a photo and message on the OpWalk Facebook page. He writes, "I am a happy man

and feel like a new man. The pain is gone and little by little I am walking better every day. Thank you

and God bless all of you, today and every day!"

Find us on Facebook to see Jhony and others whose lives you've helped change: Facebook.com/ **OpWalkDenver** 

"Thank you, and God bless all of you, today and every day!"

#### Save the Date:





Connecting You to the JOY You Help Restore | 18.1

Today, that's no longer the case.

Thanks to your generosity, the Operation Walk

Denver team traveled to Honduras to perform free

walk and couldn't afford the care they needed.

joint replacements for those who, like Bety, couldn't

# You Helped Bety Overcome Her Past

on family and

friends more

than she'd

she hasn't

find work

that would

accommodate

her disability.

like because

been able to

## Bety has lived with a bullet in her hip for 18 years. At last, thanks to your support, she's pain-free and bullet-free!

For Bety, who was shot by a jealous boyfriend when she was 16, the Operation Walk Denver team gave her a new lease on life, both physically and emotionally.

**∧** single mom of three boys, Bety faced a lot of **A**challenges — and one of the most constant was the pain in her hip.

Walking short distances was a challenge for her, and climbing stairs was out of the question all because a jealous boyfriend shot her in the hip when she was 16 years old.

Despite the pain, Bety has done her best to raise her sons well. It has been a struggle, and she's had to rely



In most cases, the team operates on patients with severe forms of arthritis. Often they have been struggling for years, fighting the pain of deteriorating joints. Bety's story was a little different, and the surgery not only gave her the ability to walk again, but it gave her a sense of closure.

After Dr. Todd Miner performed the surgery, he saved the bullet to give to Bety. It represents a chapter of her life that's over.

Bety is no longer in constant pain. She's able to work to support her family, and she's looking forward now, not backward. She has a future to celebrate, all because people like you chose to give generously to change lives like hers.



Bety has freedom from her past, p. 1 A Message from Dr. Dennis, p. 2 Jhony's smile grows even brighter, p. 3





## Made Possible by YOU

### A message from Dr. Douglas Dennis

This past year was another productive one for Operation Walk Denver. Most recently, we completed a great mission trip to San Pedro Sula, Honduras, where we performed a total of 65 free joint replacements.

Honduras is one of the poorest countries in the Northern hemisphere, and access to medical care is limited. This was reflected in the severity of the arthritic joints we treated, which had much more joint destruction than we ever see here in the United States. The people we operated on have needed joint replacements for years and were simply unable to afford them, so their knees and hips continued to deteriorate. For each of them, this opportunity to receive the procedure was lifechanging.

I've said many times before how proud I am of my Operation Walk team members because they work so hard to allow Operation Walk Denver to care for more and more patients with quality care that is every bit as good as what we can provide at Porter Adventist Hospital.



Dr. Dennis had the joy of reconnecting with a previous joint replacement recipient, who spent the week volunteering to help the Operation Walk team on their latest trip.

This is evidenced by the dedication of Jena Humer. She is a superb cardiac nurse and team member, and she deals daily with patients with severe cardiac disease. She just secured a \$52,000 donation of cardiac equipment, including sophisticated electrocardiographic machines and heart defibrillating devices, that will now travel with us on every trip. JENA – MANY THANKS!!

The Operation Walk Denver board has been very active studying what we can do to further help those in need. We are developing plans for a new fundraising campaign to support **two additional programs** for Operation Walk Denver.

One of these programs would be **Operation Walk University**, which would provide funding to invite doctors, nurses, and physical therapists from the countries we visit to spend 6 weeks in Denver working side-by-side with my Operation Walk Denver team members. The purpose is to enhance their skills so they can provide better care to the patients they serve in their own countries.

Our second initiative is to **purchase joint** 

implants that can be given to the trained local surgeons after our mission is completed. The problem is that while we can train them, their ability to continue to perform joint replacement procedures after we leave is very limited because the patients can't afford the implants. If funding for this effort is obtained, I believe it will be one of the greatest accomplishments of Operation Walk Denver!

In closing, I want to give my most sincere thanks to you, the donors who have made the work of Operation Walk Denver possible.

Sincerely,

Douglas A. Annes, Md

Douglas A. Dennis, MD Executive Director Operation Walk Denver

# Jhony says, "Thank You!"

# 37 years of pain never stopped Jhony from smiling. But your generosity made his smile grow bigger than ever!

Jhony suffered from arthritis since he was eight years old, and it wasn't until the Operation Walk Denver team came to Honduras this year, that he had hope of being healed.

#### by Peggy Kettler, Colorado Joint Replacement Outcomes Coordinator

We met Jhony sitting outside the hospital with his wife of 20 years.

They had arrived a day earlier than scheduled from Port Tela, Honduras, just to make sure Jhony would not miss the opportunity to be considered for a total hip replacement.

His smile was the first thing I noticed.

Then I saw the crutches.

When he stood up, Jhony cautiously placed all his weight on his left leg, keeping his right foot off the ground. He had severe arthritis in his right hip as a result of something called Legg-Calvé-Perthes disease.

Legg-Calvé-Perthes disease is a childhood hip disorder. It causes a disruption of the blood flow to the ball of the femur, called the femoral head. And when there's no blood flow, the bone dies (known as osteonecrosis or avascular necrosis) and stops growing.



As painful as it is at first, Jhony is determined to get up and walking as soon as possible!

For most with this disease, degenerative arthritis of the hip begins at an early age. A total hip replacement is the only treatment once the joint has lost its cartilage protection and developed severe arthritis.

Jhony's problems began when he was just eight years old.

The symptoms of severe arthritis that Jhony was experiencing were constant pain, stiffness, extreme pain at night that kept him from



Jhony's contagious smile grew and grew after his surgery.

sleeping, and the inability to move or rotate his leg.

"All this time, the pain is very hard," says Jhony. His only wish is to be able "to leave the pain."

Jhony is a math professor. He taught math in high school for several years until the loss of movement in his legs and the constant pain made it simply impossible to keep standing in front of a chalkboard.

For Jhony, it was heartbreaking not to be able to support his family.

Yet in spite of his frustrations and pains, he kept smiling. And when we was selected for surgery by the Operation Walk Denver team, his smile grew even wider.