

# PfS Newsletter

|| December 2023



## Partner Spotlight:

Marta de la Cruz has been a devoted health promoter for Partner for Surgery (Pfs) since 2006. For 17 years, she has embodied resilience, compassion, and unwavering dedication in her work. Marta is from Purulhá, Baja Verapaz, the very region from which many of our surgical patients come, and her roots are deeply entwined with the cause she's served through the years with PFS.

She came to Pfs through a friend involved in establishing a medical mission in rural Baja Verapaz. Fluent in the Mayan languages of Queqchi and Pocompchi, Marta's presence as a translator was essential in bridging the linguistic gap between doctors and local patients. Because a significant portion of patients come from these

rural areas where Mayan languages are prevalent, Marta's contribution was pivotal to mission success, and it still is now more than ever.

As time progressed, the Pfs team introduced Marta to our programs, and she quickly transitioned into the role of a health promoter. Her responsibilities ranged from serving in rural and medical missions to actively participating in Pfs's cleft infant nutrition program.



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before the first mission that Marta would serve as translator, Marta attempted to secure a loan for her mother's surgery, a daunting Q12,000, an astronomical sum for her family in 2006. So, Marta brought her mother to the medical mission and Susana was scheduled for free surgery a few short weeks after an evaluation.

Today, Marta shares a compelling truth, "I love my job because I know what it means to our patients. I have stayed through the years to do everything I can to support PFS because I feel so grateful for what they did for my mother back then. I know that if PFS had not intervened and helped us, I would not have had the joy of celebrating mother's 77th birthday this year."

**"I love my job because I know what it means to our patients."**

Marta is the picture of hard work and resilience. She has tirelessly strived to help us reach the farthest and most forgotten patients. As a single mother of three, she persevered in raising her children and enabling her eldest daughter to pursue her dream of higher education. Her daughter recently achieved the milestone of graduating from law school.

Marta's history is proof of how a confluence of circumstances, compassion, and gratitude can transform lives and fuel an unwavering commitment to uplifting others. Her story echoes the essence of our mission as Partner for Surgery: to improve health, empower communities, and overcome barriers through the dedicated efforts of amazing people like our beloved Marta de la Cruz.

Through the years, Marta has become closely acquainted with many patients for whom she becomes an advocate. Marta's most memorable patient was her first, her mother Susana. At the time Susanna was afflicted by severe uterine prolapse after bearing ten children. Just days

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