

U-VOICE STUDENT STORYTELLER MISSION



AMPLIFY THEIR VOICES

In one of the most unique roles of a medical mission, undergraduate students serve as journalists who capture the stories of Operation Smile's patients and volunteers. These students conduct interviews, take portraits, and package it all together into feature stories that Operation Smile shares with its followers on social media and its generous supporters.

YOU SHOULD APPLY FOR
2020 U-VOICE TRAINING IF:

- You're an undergrad in your sophomore, junior or senior year
- You've been an active member of an Operation Smile club for a year
- You've attended our International Student Leadership Conference or Step UP Symposium
- You're an empathetic listener

ONLINE: <http://bit.ly/os-u-voice>

Operation  Smile
Student Programs

www.studentprograms.operationsmile.org | @osstudpro | email newsletter: <http://bit.ly/ossnapshot>

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U-VOICE STORY by KAREN MAYET

AN OPERATION SMILE LOVE STORY COMES FULL-CIRCLE

Ana María and Pablo laughed softly when they learned that their story could be recited by every Operation Smile volunteer at the Hospital Jápones in Santa Cruz, Bolivia.

When you hear a story like theirs, it's almost impossible to keep it to oneself.

Eight years ago, in 2009, Ana María traveled to Santa Cruz with her mother to receive surgery for her cleft palate. Although most patients only stay a night in the post-operation ward, Ana María stayed a full week.

The day after her surgery, she met Pablo. He had traveled by himself from Cochabamba, a city 12 hours away from Santa Cruz, to receive care for his cleft palate as well.

Although his surgery was the day after Ana María's, and his bed was not close to hers, the pair quickly became friends.

Ana María had realized that Pablo had come alone, and she wanted to help him eat and drink after his surgery.

After the medical mission came to an end, the two remained close friends – and became even more than close friends.

“We married seven months later,” she said with a bright smile.

Now eight years later, Ana María watched two of their children play with puzzles and bubbles at the Hospital Jápones in Santa Cruz. Her middle child, Vanesa, was sitting in her lap. Like her parents, Vanesa was born with a cleft lip and cleft palate.

And just like her parents, Operation Smile repaired her cleft lip and cleft palate, too.