

Show Me Your Best Smile

DR. JAMES ROLFE AND HIS MISSION FOR HEALTHIER TEETH IN AFGHANISTAN

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Why should a successful dentist in Santa Barbara be concerned about the dental care of the orphans and widows in Afghanistan? Why should he organize a dental relief project that will provide extensive free treatment and education for the people in Afghanistan and fund the project out of his own pocket? The list of answers is endless, his dedication is admirable, and his name is, Dr. James Rolfe.

Practicing from his busy dental office in downtown Santa Barbara, James Rolfe is not the typical high profile dentist. With a family of four children and eleven grandchildren, one would imagine this successful dentist living in a lavish million-dollar home and driving around in his luxury car. On the contrary, you will find Rolfe in his condo and on the road either on his motorcycle or in his 1962 GMC truck, loading supplies and equipment for his latest project, ADRP. The Afghanistan Dental Relief Project is a non-profit organization established in 2003, to provide dental treatment facilities in underserved areas of Afghanistan. According to Rolfe, "the goal of ADRP is to staff dental facilities with vol-

unteers, to train the Afghan people in dentistry and dental technology, to provide dental treatment at no cost to the needy, and to provide instruction in methods of preventive dental care." Used equipment is being donated by practicing dentists in the United States which is being repaired, created, and shipped by sea to be used in facilities throughout Afghanistan. Networks of Afghan volunteers are being established to organize housing and supportive services for volunteer dental health workers who are going to do this work. Dental equipment and supplies are being donated by manufacturers and distributors for use in the treatment facilities. Dental technology textbooks are being purchased to educate the orphans and widows in basic sciences so that they can become dental professionals themselves. Four training programs will teach them the skills of the dental assistant, dental clerical worker, dental hygienist, and dental laboratory technician, both giving them a future and helping solve the long-term needs of the country.

During Rolfe's second visit to Afghanistan,