

Changing the world one smile at a time

By Staff Writer

The Smile Train is dedicated to helping millions of children worldwide suffering from cleft lip and palate. Launched in 1999, The Smile Train has a unique strategy of empowering local doctors and hospitals in developing countries to help the children in their communities.

Each year, in 50 countries, The Smile Train provides free cleft surgery to more than 35,000 children who would otherwise never receive it. The Smile Train receives no government support and instead relies on the support of generous individuals and organizations. One hundred percent of all donations go toward programs as the Board pays for all non-program expenses.

With both Dr. Sandy Bigman and a generous benefactor for The Smile Train matching dollar for dollar on all donations, \$3300 was

raised for The Smile Train at Dr. Bigman's annual 70's disco rollerskating party on May 29th.

Approximately 450 of his patients and their families and friends attended this event. The main feature of the event was The Smile Train's Smiles-Across-Miles Fundraising Program in which people raise money to help provide free cleft surgery for children in developing countries who would otherwise never receive it.

The money donated by Dr. Bigman and his patients will provide free cleft surgery for 13 children - 9 more children will receive surgeries this year versus last year! This cleft surgery - which costs as little as \$250 per surgery and takes as little as 45 minutes - can give a child not just a new smile but a new life.

Dr. Bigman has been participating in this fundraising program for The Smile Train for several years. "We love



Dr. Bigman celebrates at the disco rollerskating party with two of his patients, Jasmine Benito (left) and Megan Do (right).

working on this program because we feel that we are really making a difference in someone's life," said Dr. Bigman. "When you look at the before and after pictures you can see how awful it must be to live with a cleft. This program really made all of us realize how lucky we are and it made us want to pitch in and help."

For more information, visit www.smiletrain.org or call 1-877-kidsmile.

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