WORLD CRANIOFACIAL FOUNDATION

Face to Face

NEWSLETTER / FALL 2026

The Miracle of Connection

Nearly four decades ago, Jack Accola had almost stopped believing further craniofacial care would ever be possible. Today, at 82, he is still finding ways to pass forward the gift that changed his life.

Born with hypertelorism, a condition in which the eyes are spaced farther apart than usual, Jack grew up alongside a twin brother he remembers as a real support. He underwent 19 surgeries during his early life, but the specialized craniofacial techniques that could address his underlying facial structure were not yet available.

Jack with his twin brother as babies

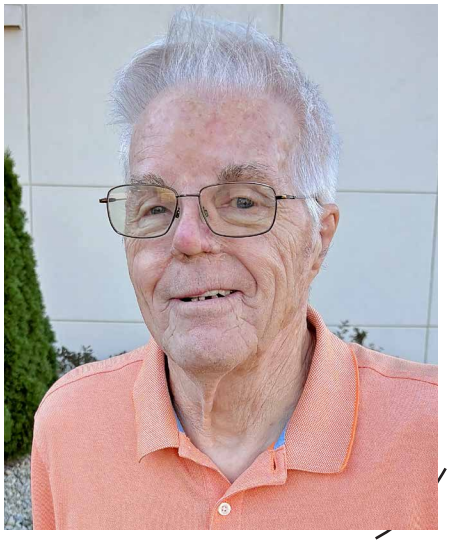
By his early 40s, Jack had stopped believing further surgery was financially possible. Then came what Jack calls his "God wink"—a remarkable chain of circumstances that ultimately put his photograph in the hands of pioneering craniofacial surgeon Dr. Kenneth E. Salyer.

> **"Don't tell me God doesn't work through people." — Jack Accola**

Around the same time, Jack happened to see a television program about physicians providing reconstructive surgery and wished someone could do the same for him. Soon afterward, his sister called and said Dr. Salyer had seen his photograph and wanted to meet him.

At 42, Jack finally had access to specialized craniofacial care that could address his underlying facial structure. Dr. Salyer and his medical team provided their expertise, while Jack's Wisconsin community rallied around him. Friends and local businesses contributed. Children organized fundraisers—including Jack's own children. As his care continued, WCF and its supporters became part of the network helping make it possible.

Jack before and after receiving specialized craniofacial care from Dr. Salyer



Jack today at age 82

Jack never forgot. Today, he tells strangers his story and talks about WCF in hopes another family might find help. That gratitude has become part of his purpose. This October, his community gathered for the fourth benefit concert Jack has organized for WCF.

Years ago, friends and strangers rallied around Jack. This time, Jack was bringing them together for the children who come next.

WCF Board Chair Ken Salyer Jr. was among those in attendance—the son of the surgeon who changed Jack's life, and now a good friend. Nearly four decades later, the generosity and expertise extended to Jack are still moving outward. Perhaps that is Jack's legacy: the help he received never stopped with him.

JACK'S REMARKABLE JOURNEY
Scan the QR code to discover the extraordinary chain of connections that changed Jack's life—and how he's passing that gift forward today.

WCF Around the World

Rossmery

Dylan

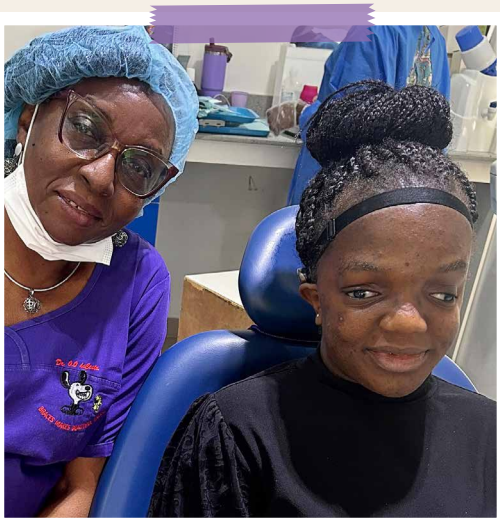
Sara

Under the care of WCF medical directors Dr. Diego Steinberg of Buenos Aires, Argentina, and Dr. Rolando Prada of Bogotá, Colombia, six children will undergo procedures during a Bogotá Surgical Week later this month. Receiving treatment at Hospital Universitario San José Infantil are three children from Guatemala—Rossmery and Dylan, both 2, and Sara, 3—and three from Colombia: Alana, 2; Melany, 7; and Joseph, 12.

Alana

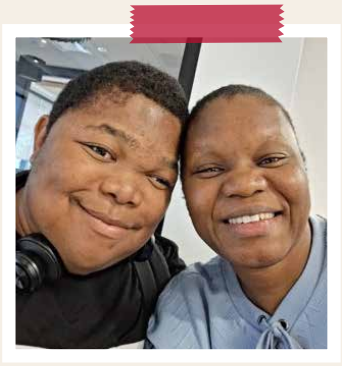
Melany

Joseph

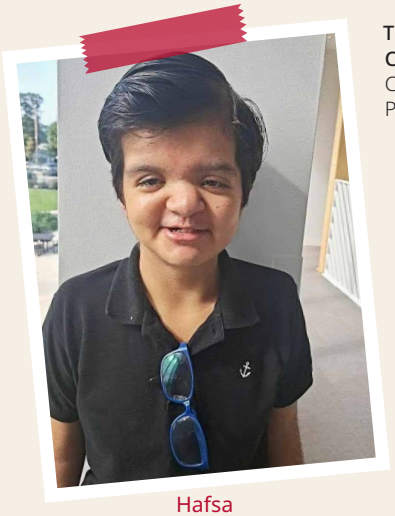


Akikere, 16, from Nigeria. With WCF's coordination and support, she receives orthodontic care in her home country with Dr. da Costa and will return to Shriners Children's Ohio in 2027.

Lucrece, 4, from Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast). She will begin WCF-supported care in 2027.

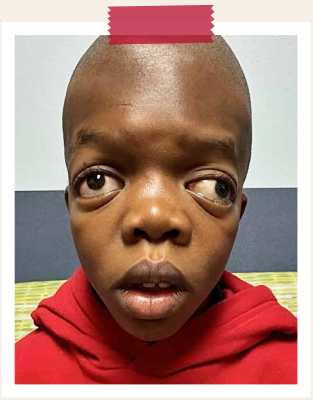


Michael



Hafsa

Three children are undergoing treatment this fall at Shriners Children's Ohio. Under the care of WCF Medical Director Dr. Christopher Gordon are Michael, 18, from Jamaica; Hafsa, 11, from Pakistan; and Somto, 10, from Nigeria.



Somto

WCF Director of Global Medical Surgery & Operations Dr. Diego Steinberg was invited to lecture at the Craniofacial Brazilian Society Meeting in September.

WCF Medical Director Dr. Akira Yamada (left) and Dr. Fabio Mazzoleni at Cleft 2026 in Prague, also attended by WCF Medical Director Dr. David Chong. Dr. Mazzoleni's team presented on non-osteotomy distraction of the craniofacial skeleton, citing related work by WCF founder Dr. Salyer 25 years earlier. Dr. Salyer was the congress's honorary Permanent President.

Wilson Fairchild is the country music duo of Wil and Langdon Reid, sons of Statler Brothers members Harold and Don Reid. The pair performed earlier this month at the benefit concert organized by Jack Accola in support of WCF.

Jack Accola's family and friends rallied their community in support of WCF. Among their efforts they organized a Culver's ice cream fundraiser, participated in local parades, and encouraged neighbors throughout Prairie du Sac to attend.

From left: Wil Reid, WCF Board Chair Ken Salyer Jr., WCF Director of Programs & Operations Stacey Tarkington, and Langdon Reid. Wilson Fairchild headlined the benefit concert organized by Jack Accola earlier this month in Prairie du Sac, Wisconsin, raising awareness and support for WCF.

Training that Travels

Dr. Nicolás Restrepo-Salamanca and Dr. Luis Carlos Giovannetti Villegas completed their World Craniofacial Foundation fellowships through training at the Hospitales de San José and Fundación Universitaria de Ciencias de la Salud (FUCS) in Bogotá, along with a rotation in Monza, Italy, supported by Smile House.

Their fellowship included multidisciplinary training in Colombia and rotations in Italy, where they learned from established craniofacial teams in a different healthcare setting. Both physicians say one of the most important lessons extended beyond surgical technique: children with complex craniofacial conditions need coordinated teams and long-term care pathways that support the entire family.

Now, that knowledge will travel.

Dr. Restrepo-Salamanca plans to strengthen care in Bogotá through his work at Hospital Universitario San Ignacio. He also hopes to build multidisciplinary capacity in his hometown of Pasto, creating local treatment options when possible and clearer pathways to comprehensive care in Bogotá when needed. As a faculty member, he intends to help open this field to future generations of plastic surgeons.

From left: WCF Medical Directors Dr. Rolando Prada and Dr. Domenico Scopelliti; fellows Dr. Nicolás Restrepo-Salamanca and Dr. Luis Carlos Giovannetti Villegas.

Dr. Giovannetti Villegas plans to return to northeastern Colombia and help develop an integrated craniofacial program centered in Bucaramanga. His vision is to bring specialists together around patients and, over time, establish a regional referral center serving families from Santander and surrounding areas—and potentially patients from neighboring Venezuela who face barriers to specialized care.

For both surgeons, completing the fellowship is not the end of their relationship with WCF. It is the beginning of a new chapter within an international network they can turn to for knowledge, collaboration, and support.

That is the multiplier effect of fellowship: an investment in two surgeons can strengthen medical teams, expand access for families and help prepare the next generation of craniofacial specialists. The support that helped prepare these physicians will continue traveling through the patients, families, and medical professionals they serve.

CREATING CHANGE TOGETHER.

Learn how your continued support helps expand care, connection, and opportunity worldwide. **SCAN THE QR CODE TO LEARN MORE.**

LOOKING AHEAD

Please consider including WCF in your estate planning. Your legacy can help expand access to care for children and families for generations to come.

GIVING WITH GREATER IMPACT

Gifts of appreciated stock may provide tax advantages while helping expand access to life-changing care.

Visit our website to learn more about stock gifts and planned giving.

SHARE YOUR WCF CONNECTION

Every connection to WCF has a story. Whether you are a patient family, surgeon, medical partner, donor, or supporter, your experiences help reflect the impact of this work around the world.

We'd love to hear your story. Please email us at facetoface@worldcf.org

World Craniofacial
FOUNDATION

Face to Face With Hope

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