Ten-year-old Daniel Pickett is quickly making a name for himself on the snowboarding circuit, earning the respect of professionals twice his age. His achievement in the sport is noteworthy, given the fact he was born with bilateral clubfoot. Daniel was treated by Dr. Ponseti and Dr. Morcuende at University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, and received follow-up visits at the Orthopaedic Institute at Children's Hospital of Orange County.

During his treatment, Daniel and his parents spent a few weeks at the Ronald McDonald house at the University of Iowa while getting his casts changed. His mother, Dessi Pickett (pictured with Daniel right), said the casts actually built his stomach muscles since he had to lift them up as he learned to crawl. Even with his brace, Daniel was climbing up the playground at day care and using all of the equipment the other kids were using. The brace did not stop him from moving the way the other infants were. Daniel never complained about wearing the brace. It was just something he was supposed to do – like a routine he was born with.

He was barely out of the brace when his parents took him to the snow. His older sister was joining a ski team at that time, so the family spent the weekends on the slopes. When Daniel saw a snowboard, he exclaimed, “It looks just like the Dr. Ponseti's shoes!” He got on that board at age 3 and took off!

Today, Daniel is nationally ranked in the USASA and wins many snowboarding competitions. This year, he won his division at the Monster Recon Tour at Mountain High and placed 1st in USASA Slopestyle, Half Pipe, and Rail Jam. Recently, he was named the Regional Champion in both pipe and slope. Slope has been his preferred so far – he loves flying and spinning off 40-50 foot jumps. Currently Daniel is being sponsored by Bataleon Snowboards, Sandbox, Switchback Bindings, and BASIC Spine. Daniel also plans to ride for Ponseti International, proudly sporting the PIA logo on his gear.

Daniel and his family are very grateful for the treatment. His mother told PIA, “Dr. Ponseti’s method is a life saver. No child should ever be put under the knife for clubfoot treatment. Daniel has been a normal, happy child, enjoying all activities any other child born with regular feet would enjoy, and beyond. I would do whatever it takes, again, to find a doctor performing the Ponseti method correctly.” Daniel and his family live happily in California.
**PERU**

Professor Tom Cook, Director of Operations for PIA, was in Nigeria from March 6th through March 15th as part of the recently awarded two-year USAID project to strengthen the delivery of clubfoot care. During his time there, Tom was hosted by Dr. Olayinka Adegbehinge. They visited six different clinics and had an extended meeting with the Minister of Health. He and Dr. Adegbehinge met and interviewed dozens of patients, parents, physicians, orthopedic residents, physical therapists, orthotists, cast technicians, medical directors, deans, and the provost of Obafemi Awolowo University, where the PIA-Nigerian program is headquartered. Currently there are twenty-eight active clubfoot clinics providing treatment using the Ponseti method.

Strategic planning is underway to expand the number of clinics to serve every child with clubfoot in the country of 170 million people by the year 2020. Another important outcome of the visit was the commitment by Professor O. Adjuyigbe, Chief Medical Director of the University Teaching Hospital, to host the Office of the Secretariat of the Nigeria Clubfoot Care Program.

Future visits this calendar year will include working to implement the international clubfoot registry in Nigeria, introducing the use of the Iowa web-conferencing system for clinical consultations and community building, and mobilizing a core group of parent advocates to increase public awareness that “Clubfoot is treatable.” In the short term, Dr. Adegbehinge has declared June 3rd to be World Clubfoot Day in Nigeria and plans to distribute thousands of posters around the country to draw attention to clubfoot deformity. He has already produced hundreds of clubfoot calendars and distributed them to medical facilities.

**USAID Grant Updates**

On February 19-22, twenty four participants took part in an advanced training course in Lima, Peru. Their national program, Programa Nacional de Pie bot en el Perú, is growing quickly with Dr. Gastón Terrazas and Dr. Julio Segura as PIA Peru Champions. While in Peru, Medical Director Dr. Jose Morcuende visited with officials at the Ministry of Health and several clinic directors.

**FRANCE/INDIA**

Ponseti International also sponsored trainings in France and India this winter. Both programs were very successful and we thank everyone who was involved in organizing and facilitating our global mission.
The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) will provide $4.3 million to support Sustainable Clubfoot Care in Bangladesh, led by Dr. Shafiqe Pirani, Medical Advisory Board Chair

Thousands of Bangladeshi infants born with clubfoot will be cured of the debilitating condition, thanks to a project led by two University of British Columbia professors, and supported by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Project leaders Shafique Pirani, clinical professor of orthopaedics, and Richard Mathias, professor in the School of Population and Public Health, will seek to replicate their success in creating a network of 40 clubfoot clinics in Dr. Pirani’s native country of Uganda. In the past year alone, that effort – which also received a grant from CIDA – has treated 1,100 Ugandan children, saving them from a lifetime of hardship and isolation. “Despite being on another continent and having a vastly different culture, Bangladesh faces many of the same challenges as Uganda, and clubfoot is just as much of a burden, for individuals, families and society,” said Dr. Pirani. “Once we demonstrate the impact such a coordinated response can have, I expect more countries will follow, and within a generation, clubfoot will no longer be the global scourge it is today.”

Dr. Pirani is the Medical Advisory Board Chair for Ponseti International. For the full report from the University of British Columbia, please refer to the article here.

Training the Trainers at UIHC clubfoot clinic

This Winter, we hosted four visitors from around the world thanks to the Ronald McDonald House Charities grant. Dr. Aryudi Kurniawan from Indonesia and Salim Ali from Tanzania/Zanzibar are pictured in the clinic with Dr. Morcuende (left).

Dr. Bhatti and Dr. Pirwani of Pakistan (below) take a tour of the Ronald McDonald House of Eastern Iowa, where many clubfoot patients stay while being treated at UIHC.

Providers come for two weeks to learn the Ponseti Method first hand in the clinic, with the goal of returning home to build capacity in their country to treat children born with clubfoot.
Donor Spotlight

Dr. Bill Olin and wife Bertha give generously to PIA

In the 1960s, two men with an interest in helping children were brought together at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics. One day, Dr. Ponseti called Dr. Bill Olin, a dentist in the Department of Otolaryngology, concerned about his patients who were wearing a Milwaukee Brace for scoliosis. He sought the help of Dr. Olin, who specialized in facial and oral deformities such as cleft lip and palate. The two quickly became friends and starting working together. Dr. Olin closely followed the work of Dr. Ponseti over the years and admired his tenacity as he worked to prove the effectiveness of the Ponseti Method for clubfoot treatment. Dr. Olin speaks fondly, “Dr. Ponseti was a true student. He took the time to study completely the foot and ankle before starting to develop his technique. He put up a fight trying to change the surgeon’s minds.”

Dr. Olin shared an interest in international work, starting a program called Iowa MOST (Miles of Smiles Team) which helps treat children all over the world with oral-facial deformities and promotes dental hygiene to children. He understands the disparities that exist in developing countries and the barriers to treatment for children born with congenital malformations. To this day, he keeps a picture on his desk of a little girl in a white dress from Vietnam that had untreated cleft lip. He says that it reminds him of the situation of these children. Today, Dr. Olin and his wife maintain an interest in the work of Ponseti International. In 2010, the two went to Guatemala for a Rotary Project Fair and to attend one of PIA trainings (pictured below).

Today, Dr. Olin finds passion in working towards a universal helmet law in the state of Iowa. PIA is so grateful for the generous donation that the Olin’s made to the UI Foundation to support our work!
We are happy to announce that a new non-profit charity, First Step, has awarded Ponseti International a $10,000 program partner gift to support the expansion of our work in Columbia, a country with a population of approximately 45 million people. Based on the current birth and infant mortality rates, we estimate that there are about 1,300 new cases of clubfoot each year. The number of currently untreated children is unknown but likely to be in the thousands. Although PIA is in various stages of providing training assistance to Columbia’s neighboring countries (Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, and Brazil), we have not had the resources to train the number of Ponseti providers required to meet the needs in Columbia. However, as a starting point, we do have an in-country champion who has had some training in the Ponseti method and who is poised to help us promote the use of the Ponseti method countrywide. PIA also has support from the Orthopedic Society in Columbia.

We propose to use the funding in two ways: 1) interested physicians from Columbia will be provided with two-to-three week mentorship training here at the University of Iowa or at one of our Latin American training sites; and 2) Spanish-speaking, PIA-approved trainers will be supported as visiting professors to spend several days at various sites in Columbia helping to hone the clinical skills of physicians who have completed their initial training. As part of their training, providers will learn to enter data on their clubfoot patients into the Iowa-based International Clubfoot Registry. This will assure the quality of care provided by those who have been trained as part of this program.

We are excited for this opportunity to expand the impact of the Ponseti method in Columbia, and are very gracious for this support! For more information on First Step, please visit: http://1ststep.org/

Upcoming International Trainings

Cyprus: May 2-3, 2013
Portugal: May 16-18, 2013
Ecuador: August 2013
China (Shanghai): June 7-9, 2013
Denmark: June 11-15, 2013

Follow Us on Social Media

We encourage you to join us on our social media outlets which are updated weekly with information about what PIA is doing in the office and abroad. Our goal is to encourage our amazing supporters to feel involved in the PIA community. Feel free to share our mission with others!

Please feel free to contact us anytime with concerns, stories, questions or just to chat—we love to hear from you! E-mail: rachel.ponseti@gmail.com Please find us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/PonsetiInternationalAssociation) and follow us on Twitter (@Ponseti).