



## **Dr. Steven Chavoustie Teaches Medical Sustainability in the Dominican Republic**

**Miami, Florida. February 25, 2011** — Routine maintenance is a staple of life; changing your car's oil, visiting the dentist for a teeth cleaning or your yearly check-up with a physician. For many regular care is second nature, but in the rural villages of the Dominican Republic, "Medical Students in Action" (MSA) bring the yearly dose of medical care to those most in need.

Medical Students in Action is a nonprofit organization operated by medical students from the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine and volunteer community physicians in the area. They provide year-round care to several villages in the Dominican Republic culminating in a weeklong trip by physicians and students in the spring. Dr. Steven E. Chavoustie, MD, FACOG, CCRP is the organizations Medical Director and a leading advocate for its services in the community.

"Last year we taught health education classes that emphasized preventative care," said Dr. Chavoustie. "The goal of this program was to provide our patients with the knowledge they need to live a healthy and disease free lives within the context of their own culture and our community."

Dr. Chavoustie is an Investigator at Segal Institute and a graduate of the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, where he now holds a dual appointment as Voluntary Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Family Medicine and Community Health. Among his many accolades, Dr. Chavoustie's students have voted him "Best Academic Society Teacher" several times in the last eight years, which matches the number of years he has volunteered with MSA.

The trips have been extremely beneficial, including the diagnosis and treatment of several young children with congenital heart defects, discovering treatable pre-cancerous cervical lesions in female patients and treating patients for critical kidney and liver diseases.

"This March, physicians and students will make their way to these remote villages and set up a full scale clinic where we see over 1,500 patients and provide the basic health checkups to all residents in the area," said Dr. Chavoustie. Our full time medical doctor in the DR works along our medical team and continues to provide the necessary follow up care throughout the year.

The Medical Students in Action are instituting a Community Health Worker program in the villages that will encourage community sustainability throughout the year. The MSA will teach several residents of these villages fundamental skills, which in turn are meant to care for the rest of their community. The education efforts are complimented by constant clinical support by local Dominican physician funded by the MSA.

The routine of medical care is certainly a luxury. The Medical Students in Action are bringing their hands-on expertise to a community for one week, but will leave knowing they've educated the residents to be fully capable of sustaining preventative medical care. And that is a routine worth maintaining.

**Segal Institute for Clinical Research** is a consortium of research sites specializing in psychiatric, neurological, addiction, medical and women's health clinical trials. A 60-plus staff of full-time Principal Investigators, Subinvestigators, coordinators, research assistants and Master's- and Doctorate-level raters conducts clinical trials in outpatient, inpatient, nursing homes, and sleep laboratories. Founded in 1998, Segal Institute for Clinical Research was created as a division of Compass Health Systems, a multi-specialty group practice.