

April 29th- Dr. Thomas Young- Shoulder to Shoulder Ecuador

Dr. Thomas Young is an incredible health advocate for children and youth not only throughout the State of Kentucky but also internationally. Dr. Young is the founder of Kentucky Child Now whose focus is on promoting the healthy development of Kentucky's children and youth through advocacy, consulting, training and coordination empowering them to become successful adults. The organization just celebrated it's 10 year anniversary. Another project that is dear to Dr. Young's heart is his program in Ecuador. The University of Kentucky's Shoulder to Shoulder Ecuador program began in 2002. That year, Dr. Young, Professor of Pediatrics, College of Medicine, led the first medical brigade to Ecuador with a small group of six committed participants who wanted to make a difference.

Dr. Claudia Hopenhayn Associate Professor of Epidemiology, College of Public Health joined Tom as brigade co-leader. Since then, services have evolved to include professors, clinicians, and volunteers. In the summer of 2008, Tom and Claudia led two brigades one in May and one in August and three brigades are scheduled for 2009.

In 2008 nearly 1700 patients attended the brigades. Of those, 711 were children, 653 were women and 229 were men. More than 60% of children five years and younger were anemic and many showed signs of stunt growth. Most common complaints: parasitic infections, respiratory disease, skin conditions, gynecological problems, and mental health issues. Dr. Young will discuss his recent trip to Ecuador.