

## ***LA LOMA LUZ ADVENTIST HOSPITAL***



Photo courtesy of La Loma Luz Adventist Hospital.

# La Loma Luz Adventist Hospital

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## JAIME ADAN SOSA

Jaime Adan Sosa is CEO of La Loma Luz Adventist Hospital in Santa Elena Town, Cayo District, Belize. He began his service at the hospital on June 15, 2009 as hospital chaplain. He soon took other responsibilities, namely human resources director, security supervisor, and supervising the laundry and housekeeping departments, until 2014 when he was voted assistant administrator of the hospital. On July 16, 2016, Adan was voted administrator of La Loma Luz Adventist Hospital. Adan is married to Mayra, and they have one child.

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La Loma Luz Adventist Hospital is a private, non-profit medical institution. It is recognized by Loma Linda University Global Health International (GHI) and Adventist Health International (AHI) as a partner site.<sup>1</sup> From the humble beginnings of two trailers and a thatched hut used to provide services to the community, this 15,000-square-foot facility now has two operating rooms, ten hospital rooms, an imaging department, a laboratory, a pharmacy, and other services.

## Origins and Vision

From his humble beginnings as the son of a farmer, Raymond V. Mundall acquired the unselfish love and gratitude required to help humanity and cultivate a love for missionary work. He set out to pursue his vision and graduated from Loma Linda University School of Medicine, where he emerged as a medical practitioner. In the early 1970s, Dr. Mundall was invited by the Inter-American Division to go as a medical missionary to British Honduras, now Belize.<sup>2</sup> He knew this was the beginning of great things to come, and in 1972, his family relocated. Dr. Mundall immediately saw the need for the establishment of an Adventist hospital that could provide a holistic Christian health experience for the people of Belize.<sup>3</sup>

## Establishment and Early Challenges

Dr. Raymond V. Mundall acquired the Santa Elena Estate with the assistance of Mr. Eduardo Luna Jr., the San Ignacio Mayor at the time.<sup>4</sup> The estate included a hill in the dense, primeval forest in Santa Elena, Cayo District of Belize. The facility was named La Loma Luz ("Light on the hill"). The initial idea was to establish not just a medical hospital but also schools, a bakery, and anything that could add value and impact the surrounding communities.<sup>5</sup> Difficulties of adapting to the culture and the lack of essential utilities such as running water and electricity were no hindrance for this purpose-driven family. They received blessings through extensive charitable donations of construction materials from local and international partners. Volunteers from the local community, the United States of America, Canada, and around the world were all eager and equipped to assist in any way possible in the construction of this little enterprise and made it possible for the hospital to be fully functional by the late 1970s.<sup>6</sup>

## Temporary Closure and Reopening

In the mid-1980s, the hospital was closed for approximately two years.<sup>7</sup> The hospital applications for their physicians' medical licenses were not approved because of an existing language barrier. The medical interview was to be conducted in English, and the hospital physicians spoke only Spanish. Upon the appointment and new leadership of Darald Edwards as the hospital's administrator, the hospital reopened and continued its way to success.

## Growth and Expansion

In the 1980s, the hospital received donations from Mission Projects Inc. (MPI), a supporting organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church dedicated to spreading the gospel via medical, educational, and evangelistic endeavors.<sup>8</sup> Through this partnership, major developments began, the hospital staff grew to 20, and mission houses were built to accommodate them.

The increase in staffing and the addition of a cafeteria were some of the highlights of the 1990s. In the 2000s, massive advancements were made through the addition of a new imaging center, a new hospital wing, new equipment and units, and the upgrading of the kitchen, laboratory, and pharmacy.<sup>9</sup>

## Collaborations and Key Milestones

In 2010, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Adventist Health International Services and the Belize Union of Churches Mission.<sup>10</sup> La Loma Luz Adventist Hospital became one more asset for the spreading of the gospel in Belize. In 2011, a similar Memorandum of Understanding was officially signed between WORTH (World Organization of Renal Therapies), the government of Belize, Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital (the main referral hospital in the country of Belize), and La Loma Luz Adventist Hospital.<sup>11</sup> This agreement led to the establishment of the first national hemodialysis program in the country of Belize.

## Present and Future

La Loma Luz continues to increase its staff and services. Always striving for excellence, the hospital is propelled to offer exceptional health care and customer service with unbeatable rates and a wide range of medical services.

The staff of 43 professionals provides services in general medicine, general surgery, pediatric care, pediatric surgery, obstetrics and gynecology, internal medicine, nephrology, optometry, physical therapy, otorhinolaryngology, nutrition and dietetics, and hemodialysis. The hospital also offers the Sylvan N. Roberts Jr. Memorial Imaging Centre, a laboratory, and a pharmacy, hosts mission groups, and gives students the opportunity to obtain elective courses. The hospital aims to provide service not only to the surrounding communities in the Cayo District but to the entire country of Belize. To do so, the hospital is in the process of establishing additional services that will cater to a wider scope of medical needs in its immediate surroundings and the country at large.

## List of Administrators

Raymond V. Mundall (1972-1983); Carlos Rosales (1984); David Hardwick (1985); Darald Edwards (1986-1990); Kerry Robson (1991-1992); William Borland (1992-2002); Jorge Newball (2003-2005); Collet Montejo (2005-2006 Interim); Grant McPherson (2006-2014); Jaime Adan Sosa (2015-2016 Interim); Jaime Adan Sosa (2016-).

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### SOURCES

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Memorandum of Understanding Between the WORLD Organization of Renal Therapies, the Government of Belize, Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital and La Loma Luz Hospital. June 3, 2010. La Loma Luz Adventist Hospital CFO Vault.

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## NOTES

1. "International Partner Sites," *Loma Linda University Health: Global Health Institute*, accessed June 26, 2024, <https://ghi.llu.edu/partnerships/international-partner-sites>.
2. David H. Baasch to Raymond V. Mundall, April 29, 1971, La Loma Luz Adventist Hospital CFO Vault.
3. Shellie Mundall, interview by author, Lake Arrowhead, California, USA, October 23, 2018.
4. Eduardo V. Luna Jr. to Raymond V. Mundall, November 5, 1971, La Loma Luz Adventist Hospital CFO Vault.
5. Gregorio Quintanilla, interview by author, Santa Elena, Cayo, Belize, February 13, 2019.
6. Leticia August, interview by author, Santa Elena, Cayo, Belize, February 12, 2019.
7. Gregorio Quintanilla, interview by author, Santa Elena, Cayo, Belize, February 13, 2019.
8. "About Us," *Mission Projects, Inc. Making a Difference for Eternity*, accessed June 26, 2024, <https://www.missionprojectsinc.org/about-us.html>.
9. Diana Roberts, interview by author, Santa Elena, Cayo, Belize, February 14, 2019.
10. Memorandum of Understanding Between Adventist Health International Services and Belize Union of Churches Mission, February 15, 2010, La Loma Luz Adventist Hospital CFO Vault.

11. Memorandum of Understanding Between the WORLD Organization of Renal Therapies, the Government of Belize, Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital and La Loma Luz Hospital, June 3, 2010, La Loma Luz Adventist Hospital CFO Vault.

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