

A NTSP physician takes his expertise a world away to educate others

By Raquel Daisy

Fort Worth, Texas (September 7, 2011) – [NTSP](#) physician Dr. Phillips Kirk Labor is changing the way people see the world – not only through his ophthalmology practice but by educating surgeons more than a world away.

Growing up it was never clear to Dr. Labor that he would become an ophthalmologist. However, a third grade science project on how the eye works might have been a clear indication of his future career path. “I have no idea why I chose that for a project,” said Dr. Labor. Medicine also didn’t run in all generations of the Labor family. His dad is an English professor; his great-grandfather was a country doctor in Oklahoma.



All photos courtesy of Dr. Labor

Dr. Labor spent most of his life in Shreveport, Louisiana. He began his healthcare career as a physician assistant for an ophthalmologist in New Orleans. After becoming increasingly interested in the field, he decided to attend medical school at Louisiana State University in 1987. While attending LSU he met Gazi Zibari, a native of Kurdistan, a region in Northern Iraq. Zibari came to the United States when the Kurds were forced out of Kurdistan by then Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein. Labor said it was divine intervention that brought him and Zibari together. “I learned so much from Zibari about the Kurdish people,” said Dr. Labor. “I promised that if I had an opportunity to help the Kurds, I would.”

After completing medical school, the two friends parted ways but reunited more than 20 years later at a LSU football game. Zibari invited Labor to go with him to Kurdistan for a medical mission led by the charity Operation Hope and the International College of Surgeons. Labor accepted the invitation and in 2009 was the first American ophthalmologist to visit Azadi Hospital in Duhok, Kurdistan and he conducted the first modern cataract surgery while there. In an effort to contribute to the advancement of medicine in the area, Labor also donated surgical equipment to the surgeons there. Labor made a second trip to the region in May of this year and hopes to return again soon. “It was a great experience,” said Dr. Labor. “I hope to make another trip to the region soon.”



Aside from his work with surgeons halfway across the world, Labor is also dedicated to the advancement of ophthalmology technology here in the United States. He is a founding member of the American College of Ophthalmic Surgery (ACOS), a group of leading ophthalmologists and innovators of healthcare technologies. “It is an honor to be included in this group and among top minds in the country and world,” said Labor. ACOS recently hosted its first summer symposium in Deer Valley, Utah which brought together ophthalmologists and surgeons from across the country.

There are many exciting things on the horizon for this busy physician. Labor just completed a new Food and Drug Administration (FDA) clinical trial. He was one of eight physicians selected to participate. Labor also recently launched a new technology in the operating room of his practice called ORange. ORange is the world’s first intraoperative aberrometer FDA registered cataract surgery. His practice is the first in the metroplex to use it and one of few in the country to have it. Labor also contributed to the authorized biography of novelist Jack London written by his father, Earle Labor. In his free time, Dr. Labor enjoys playing the guitar, spending time with his wife and traveling. An interesting fact not too many people know about him is he learned how to speak Danish when he lived in Denmark in the ninth grade.

Dr. Labor founded Eye Consultants of Texas in 2002. The practice, located in Grapevine, celebrated the opening of its surgery center in 2010. Labor has been with NTSP since 2002. For more information about Eye Consultants of Texas, visit www.eyectexas.com. For more information about NTSP, visit www.ntsp.com.