Coco Eco met with Dr. Chris Tarnay at the UCLA Medical Center, where he acts as co-director of the Fibroid Treatment Program. There in the glistening and vast, newly built facility we learned about his work with Medicine for Humanity (MFH) where there is scarce access to women’s healthcare, or many times even the social acceptance of it.

Dr. Tarnay and his colleagues travel regularly to Mbarra, Uganda to work with expecting mothers and women who lack prenatal care and healthcare, which are the result of poverty, limited educational opportunities and lack of outlying health care infrastructure.

“Our mission is to improve the health of women in underserved populations by bringing much needed medical care and creating sustainable programs of education, prevention and treatment,” explained Tarnay. “MFH also spends great energies to maintain relationships with the local health-care community, doctors, nurses and particularly the women they help care for.”

One of the most difficult aspects is the sheer magnitude of need. Although MFH has worked in countries throughout the world, they have recently focused on regions where they can maintain a recurring presence, so that their colleagues know that they will return and can be counted on.

“Most people do not realize the scope of the problem, that women are dying during labor and sustaining debilitating injuries like fistula by the thousands. Only when countries begin to recognize and acknowledge this huge health and social blight on how girls and women are treated will real change occur. ”

Dr. Tarnay is also an Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. He is a recognized authority in his field, and specializes in both surgical and behavioral therapies with an emphasis on a compassionate approach to women’s health care.

www.MedicineForHumanity.org

GEORGE WHITESIDES

George Whitesides is CEO and President of Virgin Galactic, the spacelflight company founded by Sir Richard Branson. Whitesides previously served as Chief of Staff for NASA, where he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, the highest award the agency confers.

With Scaled Composites, the company has developed the WhiteKnightTwo and SpaceShipTwo vehicles, based on the X Prize-winning SpaceShipOne. Scaled expects to begin rocket-powered flights under the recently issued experimental permit toward the end of the year. Depending on a variety of internal and external conditions, Virgin Galactic is planning to begin commercial operations late in 2013.

Whitesides explained the process: “Flight time will be approximately two hours from takeoff to landing. At 50,000 feet, WhiteKnightTwo will release SpaceShipTwo for a thrilling Mach 3.5 rocket ride away from the earth’s surface to about 150,000 feet. Once in space, SpaceShipTwo passengers will have several minutes of out-of-seat weightlessness before returning to Earth.”

“Virgin Galactic is a unique, clean-tech project that has as its mission the transformation in safety, cost and environmental impact of access to space for private individuals and scientific research. Their willingness to invest and to take risk is already pushing the pace of change where government agencies and traditional industry have stalled. In achieving its mission, Virgin Galactic will also act as a test-bed for new and clean technologies, such as the use of carbon composites in large aircraft, which have applications across a range of industrial sectors.

“We believe that sending thousands and eventually millions of people into space will have a profound impact on planet Earth. Those who fly with us will come home sharing a view of the world that only very few have had before, developing a greater understanding of the fragility of our world and our position in the universe.”

www.virgingalactic.com