



Globally, one in 500-700 babies are born with a cleft lip and/or palate. ISKRA’s mission is to improve the lives of children with cleft lip and palate and facial differences on a global scale, through healthcare partnerships, education, research, and resource sharing.

Children born with conditions like cleft lip and palate, encounter significant challenges from birth, including difficulties with eating, breathing, speech, hearing, and differences in facial appearance. Without advanced care, affected children may suffer from malnutrition, speech disorders, and poor mental health. Our goal is to help build sustainable multidisciplinary programs that can provide the highest level of medical care for children with facial differences around the world.



ISKRA was founded in 2021 by Dr. Oksana Jackson a pediatric plastic surgeon at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia and an associate professor in the Division of Plastic Surgery at the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine. She serves as the Co-director of the Cleft Lip and Palate and Velopharyngeal Dysfunction Programs and holds the Donato D. LaRossa Endowed Chair in Plastic Surgery. Dr. Jackson also serves as the President of the American Cleft Palate Craniofacial Association.

Since 2007, Dr. Jackson has participated in clinical care and educational missions for children with facial differences in South America, Central America, and Eastern Europe. The missions include collaboration with local physicians of varying specialties to provide medical resources and advanced training, and guidance on complex pediatric plastic surgery cases. Following the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, ISKRA has dedicated its efforts to treating 150+ children in Ukraine, that required surgery procedures for cleft lip and palate, other congenital disorders, traumatic injuries, hand and upper extremity disorders, and burn deformities.



The ISKRA team travels to Ukraine on 2-week mission trips bi-annually. We collaborate with the Zakarpattia Regional Children’s Hospital in Mukachevo, St. Nicholas Children’s Hospital in Lviv, the Regional

Children’s Hospital “Okhmatdyt” in Lviv, the Western Specialized Medical Center in Lviv, and the National Specialized Children’s Hospital “Okhmatdyt” in Kyiv. Each trip is focused on, not only providing immediate surgical care to children, but also on teaching Ukrainian surgeons and surgical residents. Donations to ISKRA support travel and ground costs for the ISKRA team, as well as procurement of medical instruments and supplies for the pediatric hospitals.



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