BBF’s Hurricane Response in Puerto Rico

BBF continues efforts to assist the medical community in Puerto Rico. Through medical and humanitarian shipments since Hurricanes Irma and Maria struck last fall, BBF has participated in an alliance of the willing, addressing many needs in Puerto Rico. Coordinated and supported by Pittsburgh-based Screw It! on a Mission, this network has sent the equivalent of 51 shipping containers holding over one million pounds of relief supplies to the island. The Puerto Rican company Luis Garratón has cleared and processed 12 containers. Its dedicated team has worked tirelessly to get aid across the island to the areas of most need. Triple-S, a Puerto Rican affiliate of Blue Cross Blue Shield, has handled the distribution of medical items to more than 15 hospitals and clinic networks. Its medical staff has been able to match the available inventory with the facilities that need those specific items to ensure continuity of appropriate care for residents. The staff noted that the quality of the donated supplies coming from BBF was outstanding. In the first week of January, BBF President Luke Hingson, BBF Board Chair Phil Jones, BBF Advisory Trustee and President of the Pittsburgh Area Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Ron Alvarado and CBS News Affiliate and KDKA Radio Personality Robert Mangino visited Puerto Rico to review the work done to date and to best assess how BBF can be of assistance moving forward. (This report can be heard at http://bit.ly/2DRf4JN.) Plans are now in the works for the ongoing recovery and assistance across the island. BBF efforts will continue throughout 2018 to meet the needs of this community.

BBF Trustee Dr. Graham Johnstone in Niger

by Graham Johnstone

It was a beautiful Sunday morning when we arrived in Galmi, Niger. For those of you who don’t know, my wife Marilyn and I traveled to Niger in October of 2017 for a two-month service stint. It is a bit cooler than previous years, being 100-105º during the day and 65-75º during the night. So even the air conditioning can get too cool. The flight over was uneventful and all the luggage arrived at the same time. We did have to spend one extra day in the capital, Niamey, while the turbocharger, which we had brought with us, was installed into the plane that was to bring us to Galmi. Certainly glad that bag arrived! It was hard to believe that the two months were just about over. I thought I had no idea what I was expecting on Saturday before I leave! I also want to thank Brother’s Field News for putting me in the picture.

Countries Served in 2017

In 2017, BBF shipped requested supplies to 58 countries including Argentina, Bangladesh, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, China, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kosovo, Liberia, Malawi, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda, Ukraine, USA, Vietnam, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
This year commemorates the 60th anniversary of Brother’s Brother and has given me reason to consider the scope of our work over the decades. As I look back over all that BBF has seen and done in 2017, I can’t help but be excited about what’s to come in 2018.

I’d like to take a moment to thank everyone -- BBF Trustees, supporters, partners and staff alike, for all that they have given toward making 2017 a record year for BBF. In 2017, product contributions totaled $90,077,966 and product shipments totaled $94,375,735. Direct shipments and medical mission trip support went to people in need in 58 countries.

Incoming medical donations for the year are valued at $85,340,711, which includes 1,417,009 bottles and tubes of medicine. During the year, the BBF Medical Program sent 102 containers of assistance to countries in need while BBF’s Education Program sent 11.4 container equivalents holding more than 121 tons of library books, textbooks and teaching materials. Three hurricanes and an earthquake in four weeks brought widespread destruction and need this fall. They also pushed BBF to mount our largest disaster response efforts in the history of the organization. During this effort, BBF supported the delivery of 120 tractor trailer loads of relief supplies by air and sea to Florida, Texas, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. In each of these cases and the dozens more the team at BBF was able to quickly assess the situation, create a plan and launch our efforts to tremendous effect. During 2017 our staff established new routes to deliver desperately needed medication to Sub-Saharan Africa, built a pharmaceutical distribution network to underserved communities in Haiti and doubled both the number of interns and the number of volunteer hours provided across our locations.

So please join us at one of our galas in 2018 as we celebrate BBF’s six decades of connecting people’s resources to people’s needs and all of the opportunities to continue to do so into the future.

**BBF’s Mission Trip Staff**

BBF’s Medical Mission Trip Program is handled by our wonderful team of mission trip coordinators. Dinita Thomas in our NCA office has been serving in her position for the last five years. She brings a depth of knowledge and passion for the groups we work with every day. Dinita’s eye for detail and endless patience keep a steady guiding hand on the supply side of the program. In Pittsburgh, Gina Pearlman has just assumed this role. Gina has been with BBF for over a year and has proven herself an invaluable team member working with BBF Inventory Data Coordinator Velimir Letoja. She will be handling the medication side of the mission trip program and tracking all of the logistics and data associated therein. BBF supported 343 medical mission trips in 2017 and is looking forward to growing the program throughout 2018.

**BBF Thanks Its MVP Volunteers**

BBF’s volunteers are the heart of BBF’s medical supply operations. In 2017 BBF volunteers logged nearly 8,000 hours of service, up from 3,350 in 2016. Members of our dedicated team in Merrifield, VA continues to do the heavy lifting, sharing 4,700 hours of their time and talents with us this year. In Pittsburgh we tracked over 3,000 hours of volunteer time. A large part of our increase has come from corporate volunteer group members who found times in their busy schedules to serve in our efforts. Thanks to all who volunteered with BBF in 2017! We hope to see you back soon.

**ACMS President Dr. Jay Salameh, Dr. Barry Byer and Dr. J. J. Sverha**

On December 12, 2017, BBF Advisory Trustee Dr. Barry Byer received the Welburn Award for his humanitarian work and meritorious service to those in need from the Arlington County Medical Society. Also pictured are ACMS President Dr. Jay Salameh and Dr. J. J. Sverha. Both Dr. Salameh and Dr. Sverha are members of the Virginia Hospital Center Medical Brigade, for which Dr. Byer is the Executive Director.

The Virginia Hospital Center Medical Brigade recently traveled to Comayagua, Honduras to provide medical assistance with the aid of BBF-donated supplies.

In Pittsburgh, Gina Pearlman has just assumed this role.
Thank You Donors

This issue of Field News expresses our thanks to the many donors who contributed to Brother’s Brother in the year 2017. This year, BBF’s Circle Society lists donations of $2,500 to $4,999. In the past, the Circle Society listed donations of $1,000 to $4,999. This list totaled 404 donations! A big thanks to the 324 donors we were not able to list!

Many thanks to all BBF’s friends for their outstanding contributions to our work.

“Connecting People’s Resources with People’s Needs.”

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Gift-In-Kind Thanks

BBF would like to thank the many gift-in-kind donors that make our work possible. Listed below are BBF’s larger key donors.

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BBF-Supported Medical Mission Trips

African Women’s Cancer Awareness Association in Nigeria

The African Women’s Cancer Awareness Association, based in Greenbelt, Maryland, recently reported on its medical mission trip to Nigeria. The team worked in Asaba, Delta State to provide dental, diabetes, vision and general medical care to over 1,200 people. While team members worked, they also taught methods for identifying breast cancer as well as providing treatment where possible. BBF provided 254 bottles of medication and 88 pounds of medical supplies in support of the team’s efforts.

Mision Vida Nueva’s Medical Mission Trip to Guatemala

Mision Vida Nueva, a mission team from NOVA Southeastern University in Orlando, Florida, recently reported on its medical mission trip to Guatemala. BBF provided 79 bottles of medication and 56 pounds of medical supplies to the team that were put to good use, helping to provide a wide array of medical care to patients of all ages.

Three Strands Medical Mission Team in Haiti

The Three Strands medical mission team based in Winona Lake, Indiana, recently reported on its trip to Cap-Haïtien, Haiti. The team provided medical care to more than 600 patients at a local clinic of the same name that the team has supported for years. BBF supported the trip by providing 459 bottles of medication and 20 pounds of medical supplies and has worked with the good people at Three Strands for years. This was the third of four Three Strands medical mission trips that BBF has supported in 2017 alone!

iCare at Work in Mexico

The California-based medical mission team, iCare, recently reported on its trip to La Mision, Mexico. The team provided medical and vision care to roughly 100 patients at the Siloe Ministries Wellness Center. They also provided public health education and training for the local medical staff related to diagnosing eye disease and utilizing newly donated instruments. BBF supported the trip by providing 17 bottles of medication and 13 pounds of medical supplies.

Community Dentistry on Wheels in Nigeria

Maryland-based Community Dentistry on Wheels recently reported on its medical mission trip to Ilorin Gengal Hospital, Kwara State, Nigeria. The team provided medical, dental and vision care at the 750-bed facility, putting the 242 bottles of BBF donated medication to use while treating 3,300+ patients.

It was a very busy three days for the team. Fantastic work!

BBF’s Mission Trip Program in 2017

In 2017, BBF supplied medical supplies and pharmaceuticals to 343 medical mission trips to 53 countries.
In coming issues of Field News, BBF will be highlighting the history of the organization. As Brother’s Brother Foundation celebrates its 60th anniversary—to be marked with two galas and the republication of Operation Brother’s Brother (an account of the charity’s early history)—we reflect on BBF’s first decade.

Brother’s Brother Foundation began as the outgrowth of a 100-day, 45,000-mile medical mission trip around the world. Organized in 1958 by founder Dr. Robert Hingson, the team set out from San Francisco and traveled westward to East, South and Central Asia; the Middle East; and Africa.

Cyril Bryant, the Foundation’s earliest biographer, describes the successes of that first trip: the team visited 100 hospitals; participated in 120 operations; distributed $100,000 in humanitarian aid; gave 128 presentations in 47 conferences addressing students, health professionals and national leaders; and with the jet gun administered 90,000 vaccinations, including the immunization of all children then living in the Gaza Strip. The trip gave Dr. Hingson and his associates a vision for an ongoing commitment—institutionalized as a foundation—for dealing with some of the world’s most pressing and chronic maladies.

Throughout the 1960s, BBF dedicated itself to delivering mass inoculations against smallpox, polio, measles and other diseases carried out in Central America and Africa. BBF’s successes were so extraordinary that the World Health Organization (WHO) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) rushed to verify. Startled by the charity’s pushback against heretofore intractable illnesses, these organizations imitated its immunization program. One statistic sums up the efforts of BBF and those it inspired: in 1958, smallpox claimed 150 million victims worldwide; one decade later, there were only 65,000 cases.