MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT
by Ozzy Samad

As we face one of the most challenging times in modern day memory, we hope that you and your loved ones are safe under such trying circumstances. Foremost in our thoughts lie the well-being of family and friends, the wider BBF community, along with anxious and suffering people the world over. Our hearts go out especially to the elderly and those who have preexisting conditions or are in frail health, knowing that this makes an already difficult situation even more challenging.

BBF has responded to the COVID-19 crisis by providing Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) to our partners both here at home and in other areas of the world. We are working closely with local government agencies, major healthcare providers, and front-line responders locally here in Pittsburgh, nationally, and with our partners worldwide. PPE includes, but is not limited to, safety glasses, medical coveralls, disposable scrubs, face shields, surgical and respirator face masks, gloves, and infection control kits. As the pandemic spreads and evolves BBF jumped into action. Along with a strong coalition of partners new and old, we have provided hospitals and healthcare providers on four continents with the protective gear that they need to treat patients with this new virus. Closer to home we’ve worked with agencies serving in the neighborhoods where our staff members live and work as well.

As the pandemic spreads and evolves BBF continues to source and provide the resources needed by our healthcare professionals and responders. Constant communication with our partners from Pennsylvania and across the globe is key in the ever-evolving effort to address the unprecedented challenges of the pandemic.

CONTINUING EFFORTS IN PUERTO RICO
by Javier Janik

Thanks to the generous support in response to the recent earthquakes in Puerto Rico, Brother’s Brother Foundation has been able to support several communities affected by the disaster. These efforts, all in coordination with our partners, included:

- Assisting Puerto Rico Rises with the distribution of food, water filters, cooking stoves, tents, and more throughout affected communities. Pictured to the left, (back row, on the far right) BBF staff member Javier Janik helped unload supplies being distributed to a community center in Lares. Javier was in Puerto Rico from January 19th to the 24th.
- Two 40-foot containers of supplies were sent out of BBF warehouses to partners Ponce Medical School Foundation, Puerto Rico Rises, and the municipality of Loiza. The shipments included cleaning and hygiene supplies, batteries, medical equipment, and other relief items.

Along with the partners referred to above, BBF would like to thank its friends at Luis Garratón LLC, another local partner in Puerto Rico, for taking on so much of the logistics, making this work possible.
W.A.S.H. VOLUNTEERING

On February 28th Brother’s Brother hosted a volunteer event. We had five women come in to sew reusable menstrual pads that we are now making at our Behan Street location. This was the third time we had this particular group come in. With lots of trial and error we were finally able to decide on a pattern that suits our needs. Although not everyone was able to sew, there was plenty of work for everyone to do. The non-sewers kept busy tracing patterns, cutting fabric, and attaching snaps while those with sewing skills were busy assembling the pieces.

All in all, it was an incredibly productive day. With the addition of a serger, which is a special type of sewing machine that can trim the seam and enclose the seam allowance or edge of the fabric all in one step, we were able to make dozens of flannel inserts. In addition to the inserts we also completed quite a few of the liners.

Our ultimate goal is to get enough pads made so that we can send them to a rural clinic in Guatemala later this year. They will be part of a kit that, in addition to the pads, will contain soap, underwear, a towel or washcloth, and a bag in which to carry everything discreetly.

Even though we are in the beginning stages of the program, we are making good progress. Although we have volunteers helping out, we can always use more. Feel free to contact Gina Pearlman at gpearlman@brothersbrother.org if you’re interested.

EDUCATION UPDATES

In February, Brother’s Brother Foundation was able to support several Peace Corps Volunteers through various grants being completed in host countries. We were able to provide funding for computer labs in Guinea and Madagascar. In both countries, the computers will be used by students and teachers to administer technology courses, for mentorship programs, and for basic research. The computer lab in Madagascar will allow access to computers and resources for two universities and one high school across the island. With this funding, two volunteers will be able to equip those schools with 73 computers. We were also fortunate to be able to support a training camp for community members on sexual health in Madagascar. These camps can vary from exploring hygiene practices, decision making, healthy relationships, HIV and STI prevention, and pregnancy prevention.

BBF also provided support in building a student learning center for a community in Indonesia. Student learning centers allow students to have a safe space to go after school and provides access to education resources, technology, tutors, and afterschool programs.

Earlier this year, BBF worked with a family in Pittsburgh to donate supplies to a Special Education and Rehabilitation Center in a community in Turkey. In 2008, the school began providing alternative resources and education to young adults and children in the community. While serving students ages 0-18, the school provides about 100 students with access to physical therapy and education. In 2019, we were able to work with a school in Charlotte, NC to gather math resources and children’s books in braille for the school. We were excited to continue our work with them to donate basic braille readers, swell paper that can be embossed at the school, tactile kits and manipulatives, and canes for the students.

BBF is also excited to be working with All Hands and Hearts as well as The Reuse Network to send two containers of desks, chairs, and other school furniture to schools recovering from Hurricane Dorian in Abaco.

LAROCHE SPRING BREAK TRIP WITH PUERTO RICO RISES

A team of nine students and two advisors from LaRoche University participated in a service-learning trip to Puerto Rico in the second week of March. During this time the team completed service projects with Brother’s Brother partners Puerto Rico Rises and One Human Family Coalition over three days. They also spent a day with Endeavor in Arecibo. Visiting the northwest corner of the island, the team worked in the communities of Aguadilla, Isabela, and Quebradillas.

Working with Puerto Rico Rises on Monday, the students helped an elderly couple with limited mobility to remove debris still left in their yard from Hurricane Maria. They cleared the lot and arranged for the debris to be hauled away. They also did some minor yard work to make the space more welcoming and friendly.

On Thursday they traveled to the Puerto Rico Rises community center to assist in the conversion of the former school site to another community center and emergency shelter. They painted a pavilion, two offices, and even some creative desks and chairs for the classes that will be offered in the space.

Friday brought a visit to Quebradillas and One Human Family Coalition where the team met with Obama, their community liaison. Obama, who works for the municipality, and the team assisted with trash pickup and removal from a popular local park and overlook. Once the work was completed, they enjoyed a late lunch at a local food truck and a tour of the hurricane damage across the region which included the monumental project of the reconstruction of a dam by the Army Corps of Engineers to keep the valley from flooding again in the future.

W.A.S.H. VOLUNTEERING

by Gina Pearlman

On February 28th Brother’s Brother hosted a volunteer event. We had five women come in to sew the reusable menstrual pads that we are now making at our Behan Street location. This was the third time we had this particular group come in. With lots of trial and error we were finally able to decide on a pattern that suits our needs. Although not everyone was able to sew, there was plenty of work for everyone to do. The non-sewers kept busy tracing patterns, cutting fabric, and attaching snaps while those with sewing skills were busy assembling the pieces.

All in all, it was an incredibly productive day. With the addition of a serger, which is a special type of sewing machine that can trim the seam and enclose the seam allowance or edge of the fabric all in one step, we were able to make dozens of flannel inserts. In addition to the inserts we also completed quite a few of the liners.

Our ultimate goal is to get enough pads made so that we can send them to a rural clinic in Guatemala later this year. They will be part of a kit that, in addition to the pads, will contain soap, underwear, a towel or washcloth, and a bag in which to carry everything discreetly.

Even though we are in the beginning stages of the program, we are making good progress. Although we have volunteers helping out, we can always use more. Feel free to contact Gina Pearlman at gpearlman@brothersbrother.org if you’re interested.

LAROCHE SPRING BREAK TRIP WITH PUERTO RICO RISES

by Sarah Boal

A team of nine students and two advisors from LaRoche University participated in a service-learning trip to Puerto Rico in the second week of March. During this time the team completed service projects with Brother’s Brother partners Puerto Rico Rises and One Human Family Coalition over three days. They also spent a day with Endeavor in Arecibo. Visiting the northwest corner of the island, the team worked in the communities of Aguadilla, Isabela, and Quebradillas.

Working with Puerto Rico Rises on Monday, the students helped an elderly couple with limited mobility to remove debris still left in their yard from Hurricane Maria. They cleared the lot and arranged for the debris to be hauled away. They also did some minor yard work to make the space more welcoming and friendly.

On Thursday they traveled to the Puerto Rico Rises community center to assist in the conversion of the former school site to another community center and emergency shelter. They painted a pavilion, two offices, and even some creative desks and chairs for the classes that will be offered in the space.

Friday brought a visit to Quebradillas and One Human Family Coalition where the team met with Obama, their community liaison. Obama, who works for the municipality, and the team assisted with trash pickup and removal from a popular local park and overlook. Once the work was completed, they enjoyed a late lunch at a local food truck and a tour of the hurricane damage across the region which included the monumental project of the reconstruction of a dam by the Army Corps of Engineers to keep the valley from flooding again in the future.
ONE HUMAN FAMILY COALITION IN PUERTO RICO

by Corey Fritz

“It was a long week. Logging 2,300 miles in five days and seeing almost 100 patients, I am incredibly proud of my team’s ability to provide the hand up that the people needed when they needed it most. It was meant to be that we showed up immediately following the earthquakes and once again, Brother’s Brother gave us the support we needed. I have been working for the beautiful people of Puerto Rico for the past two years and our work would not be possible without Brother’s Brother. We are incredibly grateful for our continued relationship.” One Human Family Coalition is a Puerto Rico-based organization.

G3 FOUNDATION IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

BE LIKE BRIT IN HAITI

After missing a year of service due to civil unrest in the region, the Be Like Brit Foundation team returned to Grand Goâve. The team of medical professionals and translators provided medical care, training for local health professionals and patients regarding pregnancy and infant food transitions.

In addition, future educational efforts were prepared for by collecting demographic information. This included information about the patient’s living situations, access to food and water, employment, and education levels. As always, the goal is to elevate.

BBF contributed to the six large hockey bags filled with medicines, medical supplies, and hygiene kits that the team used to provide care to 63 women and girls.
Juan is Senior at Guanica High School who I had the honor to meet on March 11th. He dreams of a career in computer technology and being able to take care of his family. Juan has already been accepted to his first choice of University and smiles sheepishly when his teachers talk about academic talent and leadership among his peers. Juan is an All American kid with hopes and dreams, but Juan and his classmates have one huge hurdle left in front of them. Graduation.

Long before the sun rose on January 7th, citizens of Guanica and surrounding communities were awakened by the largest earthquake to rock Puerto Rico in a century. A quake wasn't entirely unexpected, the cluster of earthquakes started on December 28th and continues today. The shock was the strength and damage. People in southern Puerto Rico are marking the day I visited. The unflappable spirit of these students, their teachers, and determination of these students, their teachers, and determination of these students, their teachers, and administrators was contagious. In Guanica, there is hope. In Guanica people are looking to the future, and they know that their students are that future. Guanica started this school year with 95 Seniors, now they along with their fellow high school students, meet in an improvised tent on the athletic fields. They complete their assignments on folding tables and chairs. The “elementary school” sits about ten yards away with a similar set up. The “middle school” was under construction the day I visited. The unfappable spirit and determination of these students, their teachers, and administrators was contagious.

In Guanica, there is hope. In Guanica people are looking to the future, and they know that their students are that future. Guanica started this school year with 95 Seniors, now they along with their fellow high school students, meet in an improvised tent school built on the athletic fields. They complete their assignments on folding tables and chairs. The “elementary school” sits about ten yards away with a similar set up. The “middle school” was under construction the day I visited. The unfappable spirit and determination of these students, their teachers, and administrators was contagious.

Looking to the Future in Puerto Rico
by Sarah Boal

OPERATIONAL CHANGES DUE TO COVID-19 RESPONSE MARCH 15, 2020

Due the current public health emergency caused by the spread of the novel coronavirus, to protect the health of members of the community, volunteers, partners, and staff, BBF has instituted the following policies with immediate effect. We sincerely regret any inconvenience this may cause but hope you understand the necessity of such actions:

BBF has suspended its volunteer activities at the Behan Street location. We hope to welcome back volunteers as conditions improve and warrant a safe resumption of such activities.

With the exception of approved and scheduled incoming deliveries and outgoing shipments, BBF’s office and warehouses will be closed to all visitors until further notice.

BBF has suspended all pickups from business and institutional donors in both the Pittsburgh and Washington D.C / Baltimore markets. We will also be unable to accept any donated equipment and supplies from individual donors at the Pittsburgh and New Windsor, MD facilities.

Thank you for your understanding of our need to take these actions to help stem the effects of this global pandemic. These actions are subject to change as the situation evolves and we hope to be able to resume normal operations as conditions improve.

BBF wishes you and your loved ones the best of health in such times of crisis.

Please see the following links for information on the COVID-19 Pandemic:


PA Department of Health website https://bit.ly/33wegXN


GIVING IN HONOR/MEMORY

Did you know? You can send a donation to BBF in honor or memory of a friend or loved one and BBF will send a personalized note at your direction.

In the first two months of 2020, BBF received 23 gifts in honor or memory totaling $2,085. For additional information about BBF honor or memory cards, please call 412.321.3160.

uellement aćcepted to his first choice

HONOR/RECOGNITION

ACCRREDITED CHARITY

CHARITY NAVIGATOR

Four Star Charity

COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN

BBF’s new Combined Federal Campaign number is 12228

Brother’s Brother Foundation is pleased to announce that financial support from federal employees continues. Many thanks to both our new and renewing CFC donors.

Look for BBF in the fall 2020 campaign brochure. For donors who are not government employees, please remember that some employers match individual donations. Ask about your employer’s matching gifts program.

This is a great way to give to BBF.

Thank you!