



For the other half of the sky

By Ozzy Samad

Over the last few years, you may have seen some of the more visible changes at BBF such as a more reader friendly newsletter, updated website, and a greater social media presence, along with a defined programmatic structure under the H.I.D.E. umbrella of Healthcare, Infrastructure, Disaster Response, and Education, and our local efforts focusing on an Ophthalmology Mobile Health Clinic and diabetes screening community clinics. These have been in addition to some of the less apparent changes such as implementing BBF's new Strategic Plan and working to expand our impact to make a positive difference in people's lives around the world and here at home. These objectives could not have been implemented without first and foremost, your invaluable support along with that of our Board trustees and partners, combined with the relentless efforts of our dedicated staff to serve those in need around the globe.

As I happened to read about an organization that specifically focuses on improving the lives of girls around the world, there was mention of *for the other half of the sky*. My only reference to the line to date had been John Lennon's whisper at the beginning of his near ubiquitously popular song, *Woman*. Intrigued – having assumed that these words too had been about his love for his wife Yoko Ono as was the rest of the song, I read on to learn that Lennon was paraphrasing a Chinese proverb. His intent was to highlight the importance of, in his own words, *what women do for us and everything I take for granted* [sic. In that regard). An epiphany of sorts from my perspective but of what significance to BBF one might ask?

The question leads me back to the opening paragraph of this article. With no intent to patronize or exaggerate, there is not one employee at BBF whose work is not invaluable in achieving our goals and objectives, and while we work with a relatively small staff and through partners to contain costs and increase the impact of your donations, forty percent of our staff members are women. Their contribution to the organization's success cannot be overstated and it lies in the critical areas of program implementation, marketing and development, accounting, and organizational strategy.

BBF's VP of Global Partnerships and Development, Laura Kelly along with her team comprising Wendy Nawoichyk, Kim Hosan, and Michelle Little, are responsible for the changes and improvements you see in our newsletters and website, handling your donations, working with volunteers, and talking about the impact your support and BBF's work is making worldwide, Program Coordinator, Abigael Siecinski works with our partners to make offers of medical and humanitarian supplies and respond to disasters; Book Keeper and Accounting Assistant, Antonella Ferraro's numerical prowess ensures that our books are kept meticulously, and Director of Strategic Initiatives, Julia van den Berg's robust analyses form the basis of our local efforts and provide a roadmap for how BBF will grow to serve even more people around the world.

So, for the other half of the sky – be they our staff, colleagues, friends, or family, thank you for all you do. ■

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COVID-19 Support in Trinidad and Tobago

By Abigael Siecinski

In June of 2021, Brother's Brother Foundation worked with our long-standing partner **Food for the Poor** to send a container of medical supplies and equipment to the dual-island nation of Trinidad and Tobago. The country is one of the most prosperous in the Caribbean due to its oil and gas industries. However, low labor productivity, inefficient government bureaucracy, corruption, and lack of economic diversification have led to prevalent poverty among the general population, with roughly 20% of citizens living below the poverty line.

One group within Trinidad and Tobago providing services to the at-need population is the **North Central Regional Health Authority (NCRHA)**, their mission is to provide safe, quality, and cost-effective healthcare to the communities within their scope.

The medical supply container consisted entirely of hospital beds and mattresses which were essential in treating the overwhelming surge of COVID-19 patients in Arima, Chaguanas, and St. Joseph; the towns supported by the NCRHA. BBF is proud to continue

supporting all our partners throughout the ongoing fight against COVID-19, and we look forward to opportunities to expand our partnership with the people of Trinidad and Tobago. ■



Positive Impacts in the Kingdom of Eswatini

By Abigael Siecinski

Over the past year and a half, **Free Wheelchair Mission (FWM)** has become a diligent partner of **Brother's Brother Foundation (BBF)**. Many of our partnered shipments have gone to the Kingdom of Eswatini, previously called the Kingdom of Swaziland, a landlocked country in the eastern flank of South Africa, where it adjoins Mozambique. Eswatini has had additional needs for healthcare support due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our healthcare shipments include durable medical equipment, such as canes, crutches, walkers, and

wheelchairs. These items are often donated by individuals in the Pittsburgh area. This necessary medical equipment supports even more individuals in need without access to such devices. It also helps reduce our carbon footprint by keeping these items from going to the landfills.

An earlier shipment to Eswatini which had crutches, among other supplies, and were able to help a young man who had been bitten by a snake and required several debridement procedures and physical therapy to regain function in his legs. This man is named, Neliswa, the crutches allowed him to have mobility while his leg healed and slowly regained normal function.

Another major part of our healthcare shipments is mixed medical supplies which include IV sets, syringes, needles, and bandages; all of which have all been essential to the fight against COVID-19. We receive these donations from our generous hospital donors in the Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C., areas. The hospitals in Eswatini which received these items reported that as their inpatient numbers swelled the quality of these supplies allowed them to fill essential gaps and allowed their remarkable staff to save many lives.

These are a few examples of the ways in which our individual and organizational donors help our partnerships promote positive impact across the Kingdom of Eswatini and the globe. ■



Update on the Foundation Work in Sub-Saharan Africa

By Liam Carstens

Brother's Brother Foundation (BBF) has many longstanding partnerships throughout Africa to include Liberia, Sierra Leone, Malawi, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. We also support medical shipments, solar projects, and Med-Surg trips in many other locations throughout the continent and are always seeking to form new relationships to support those in need.

During the last 6 months of 2021, BBF sent several 40' container shipments of medical supplies and equipment to the **Healey Foundation** in Sierra Leone and the **Medical Benevolence Foundation** in Malawi. The contents of both shipments were distributed throughout networks of healthcare facilities within the region. Additionally, a separate 40' container of medical supplies and equipment was sent to our partner, **St. Joseph's Hospital and School of Nursing** in Limbe, Malawi.

We were able to provide the organization, **Life for Relief and Development**, with medical shipments and supplies along with (requested) brand-new birthing and operating tables to a hospital in Mozambique. Through our partners at Pittsburgh-based **Mission Vision**, BBF was able to arrange an air-shipment of eyeglasses to Kenya.

Besides healthcare cargo, we strengthened our infrastructure mission with continued support of solar



power projects. BBF assists with funding for the purchases of the solar panels, installation, and maintenance of solar generating systems for rural health clinics which have been selected by the Ministry of Health in Liberia.

Brother's Brother Foundation is deeply grateful for these critical partnerships throughout the African continent which has allowed us to not only bridge the gap between aid and sustainability but allowed us the opportunity to support localized programs and provide essential resources in the areas of healthcare, infrastructure, disaster response, and education (H.I.D.E.). We look forward to the opportunities to serve Africa in 2022. ■

Gratitude for the support received on Giving Tuesday

Your generous donations on Giving Tuesday, November 30, 2021, have provided several ways of supporting the **Brother's Brother Foundation (BBF)** mission in the areas of health, infrastructure, disaster response and education (H.I.D.E.). Through the help of your contribution, you will alleviate the discomfort and hardship of many individuals in the United States and around the world as they have faced catastrophes and disasters which have changed their lives completely throughout the course of the past year.

As COVID-19 continues to ravage nations around the world, we can distribute Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to the most vulnerable communities, including senior care homes, EMS providers, local government agencies and community-based organizations, such as food banks and community health fairs.

BBF has been able to support community hospitals in India with solar panels to allow for continuous care and surgical suites to operate without interruption of energy supplies. We have partnered with agencies in Africa to provide water towers and tank systems to bring clean, running water, plumbing and sanitation access.



There have been many people affected by recent hurricanes, earthquakes, wildfires, volcanic eruptions and other natural disasters which obstructed the rebuilding process from the devastation in 2020 and 2021. BBF will continue to source and stage resources, help with transportation coordination, and to sort and send disaster relief supplies and hygiene kits.

Finally, on the education front, BBF has partnered and sponsored programs in Guatemala in the native language of Ixil (a Mayan language), to provide women with the skills to achieve gold standard tailoring proficiency. Likewise, computer donations were sent to school children in Zimbabwe and a program supporting marginalized youth in Uganda and preparing them with life skills which will help in far reaching areas of personal growth for these individuals.

We remain optimistic as we forge ahead into the new year and are grateful that we can make a difference together. We will overcome challenges we continue to face, and we can do this because of your gift. **Thank you for donating and being a part of Brother's Brother Foundation.** ■



Cover With Address Label

New Donor Highlight: Tris Pharma

By Liam Carstens



Brother's Brother Foundation (BBF) is delighted to share the news of a new partner working with us, **Tris Pharma**. Since October of this year, **Tris Pharma** has begun donating medicines to support our Healthcare Program. More than 875,000 doses of medication for acute and chronic conditions, such as gout, have been received.

BBF staff have swiftly sent these requested medicines to our partners on the ground in Guatemala and Honduras. We are thankful for the support of **Tris Pharma** and the necessary medications helping many individuals around the world. We look forward to continuing our partnership with you. ■



Credit card donations can be made at www.brothersbrother.org. Checks should be made payable to Brother's Brother Foundation and sent to the address listed below.

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P.O. Box 645934
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Thank you for your consideration. ■

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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 2021 fall 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!

