Note from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

As I near completion of my first year with Health Horizons International, what stands out most for me from my experience over the past ten months is the fervent commitment and integrity of our partner communities.
I’ve witnessed HHI Community Health Workers (CHWs) encourage and accompany their neighbors in HHI’s Chronic Care Program with pride and professionalism. I’ve met visionary individuals form health committees to seek grants and other resources from international foundations and governments. And of course, the patient beneficiaries, who are impressing HHI’s visiting doctors time and again by controlling their blood pressure and diabetes at faster rates than most of the doctors’ American patients!

It is a pleasure to share with each of you, who form part of HHI’s extended family, this newsletter including HHI’s 2012 financial results and 2013 Spring Progress Report. As HHI continues to refine and strengthen its unique model programming applying a community-based approach to address primary health care needs and chronic disease in the DR, we are expanding our partnership base and beginning new exciting projects!

As you know, our work is incomplete without the generous continued support by our individual supporters. Contributions from people like you are what make HHI’s work possible, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all your continued support, and remind you that now is a perfect time (now that tax season is behind us!) to consider making a donation to HHI so that we can continue to help less fortunate families and communities in the Dominican Republic generate their own opportunities through improved health and well-being.

If you wish to make a contribution, you can do it here:

With warmest regards and thanks,

Paul
pguggen@hhidr.org

Financial Results from 2012

2012 was an extremely successful year for HHI in terms of fundraising, and enabled us to expand programmatic initiatives and increase quality of impact! In 2012 we raised over $231,000 and we are pleased to be making strides toward growth and financial sustainability for the future. We are grateful to recognize the following individuals and institutions for their generous grant support:

photo by Michael Good, MD
Brad and Mary Wilkinson
Rich Meelia
Covidien Partnership for Neighborhood Wellness
David, Helen and Marian Woodward Fund
Physician Assistant Foundation
Stare Foundation

Thank You Covidien!

2012 Expenses: $195,775

- Development: $18,270 (12%)
- Operating: $38,050 (25%)
- Program: $139,460 (63%)

2012 Revenue: $231,841.35

- Other Income: $13,940 (6%)
- Foundation and Trust Grants: $74,550 (32%)
- Individual Donations: $121,720 (53%)
- Volunteer Fees: $21,640 (9%)
HHI is proud to have received support from Covidien’s factory branch at San Isidrio, Santo Domingo, in the Dominican Republic. Site Director Paolo Tolari and Human Resources Director Ivan Peralta presented HHI with a check for US$10,000 to continue its work with local communities this Spring. HHI vigorously thanks Covidien for its confidence and support.

Medical Service Trips in 2013

So far in 2013, HHI has implemented two extremely successful Medical Service Trips, providing over 700 consultancies in total, consistently accompanying 130 patients in our Chronic Care Program and matching other patients with specialists through HHI’s extensive Referral Partnership Network around the region and country.

Six local professional medical interpreters and all 19 CHWs team for each Clinic week with 5-12 doctors and medical students, a local doctor and pharmacist, and the HHI Staff to implement the Clinics. Weeks of preparation take place prior to the Operativos to ensure patients are appropriately registered, and equipment and supplies are in order.
Community Participation with HHI

Year round, CHWs volunteer in the HHI office and pharmacy building skills related to patient care: filling patient medication prescriptions, computer work, and documenting patient medical data in the patient medical records system. Their spirit of volunteerism is truly inspiring. As one community health worker put it: “We at HHI are a family. Families help each other. That’s why we’re here, volunteering in the office and pharmacy, helping out.” Two CHWs have been promoted into employment positions; Willy Destin now works as a Clinical Referral Specialist, and Carlos Castillo is HHI’s Community Health Worker Coordinator.

CHW Spotlight
Before becoming a Community Health Worker in Pancho Mateo, Marc “Ribe” Evans served as a medical interpreter at HHI’s field clinics, interpreting for the HHI Doctors in Kreyol, English, and Spanish. Now he is also our “lab guru,” running the lab in the HHI field clinics, and training other volunteers in lab protocol and operations. Due to his Haitian heritage, Ribe is able to bridge the cultural gap for Haitian patients who often feel marginalized in the Dominican medical system. He has volunteered in the HHI office, filling meds in the pharmacy, and documenting patient data in charts. He is also a leader in “Citizens United for a Better Pancho Mateo,” the grassroots citizen group working with HHI to bring clean water and proper sanitation to Pancho Mateo. Ribe’s willingness to share his time and skills is improving the quality of life in four communities.

German Embassy Supports Sanitation Project

Last year in response to the 25,765 cases of cholera reported in 2012 in the Dominican Republic with 411 resulting in death, HHI constructed and improved 28 latrines in Severet with Peace Corps volunteer Maria Salinas. Now, in the summer of 2013, the communities of Negro Melo and Arroy de Leche are partnering with the German Embassy with accompaniment of HHI to implement a new latrine project.

The German Embassy to the Dominican Republic approved a $20,000 grant to HHI for a sanitation education and latrine construction project for the communities of Negro Melo and Arroy de Leche. Paul Guggenheim, HHI’s Executive Director, and Gregorio Alcantara, the President of the Neighborhood Association gratefully accepted the grant from Ambassador Dr. Thomas C. Bruns. Click here to read more about the grant.
Tracy Kaye, Public Health Director, and Marc Evans (Ribe), CHW, attended a 3 day workshop in Jarabacoa, sponsored by the Peace Corps, to learn how to facilitate the Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST) methodology. PHAST engages all community members, regardless of their age, gender or literacy levels by centering activities around drawings, community maps, and stories to guide communities in identifying issues, developing solutions, and making step-by-step plans to improve community health and hygiene. Ribe will use the skills he gained from the workshop to work with CHWs and community members in Arroyo de Leche and Negro Melo in the PHAST methodology as part of the Sanitation Project to be implemented this summer.

**Medical Student Volunteers 2013**

Through HHI’s ongoing partnership with Quinnipiac University Physician Assistant Program in Connecticut and several U.S. medical schools, we had the pleasure of hosting, teaching, and working alongside 10 Medical Students and Physician Assistant Students in the first half of 2013. Six first-year PA students from QU came in January to work alongside HHI Board and Volunteer physicians during the January Field Clinics in Negro Melo, Severet, and Pancho Mateo. They enjoyed the opportunity to observe and co-consult with, and learn from the HHI physicians in the local rural, Dominican context. (Read more in Dan Kent’s blog post here!)
Brad Crerar and Meg Bonner, final-year PA students from QU volunteered with HHI for one month completing the final rotation of their PA school career in the Dominican Republic. As a part of HHI’s on-going partnership with QU, students are selected to complete rotations in the DR for four weeks in the Spring and two weeks in the Fall, in addition to the first-year PAs who come every January.

The Spring and Fall QU students work alongside the physicians in the Field Clinics, and provide support for the CHWs and HHI Chronic Care (Hypertension, Diabetes, Epilepsy and Asthma) patients by accompanying the CHWs to the homes of their patients in four communities, providing medical follow-up. This partnership with QU has become an important part of HHI’s year-round clinical programs.

HHI also welcomed two 4th year medical students: Eric Weber from Tufts Medical School (back for his second Medical Service Trip with HHI) and Nyasha George from Yale University. Eric spent two weeks with HHI in January, working in the field clinics alongside HHI MDs, and doing patient home follow-up visits with the Community Health Workers in January. Nyasha worked alongside HHI’s physicians in the field clinics in May, and has just completed her studies. Congratulations Nyasha! Visit Eric Weber’s blog post!

Health Horizons International is committed to improving community health and expanding access to primary health care in partnership with communities affected by poverty in the Dominican Republic.

Thank you for your support and belief in our cause.