

GLOBAL LINKS

Sharing Surplus. Saving Lives.

NEWSLETTER
VOLUME 28 NUMBER 1 FALL 2020

WAYS TO SUPPORT GLOBAL LINKS



Volunteer to Host a
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Donate \$10+ a month as
a Global Giver



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IMPORTANT DATE:

DOUBLE YOUR DONATION ONE
DAY ONLY:

December 1 #GiveBigPittsburgh
#GivingTuesday [https://
www.givebigpittsburgh.com/
organizations/global-links](https://www.givebigpittsburgh.com/organizations/global-links)

ABOUT GLOBAL LINKS

Global Links is a Pittsburgh-based medical relief and development organization dedicated to supporting health improvement initiatives in resource-poor communities. For 30+ years, Global Links has been collaborating with partners to improve health for vulnerable populations by sharing surplus rescued from the US healthcare system to support health programs both globally and locally.

**We Believe in Mobility, Independence,
Dignity and Health for ALL.**

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Mother and baby Esther Abigail in Honduras recuperate more easily with a Global Links donated crib

Enhancing Equity in Health Services for Vulnerable Populations in Honduras

“My nursing career has taught me that we must value ALL lives.”

DIGNA LILIAN MEJIA, SUB DIRECTOR OF THE SIGUATEPEQUE HEALTH NETWORK IN HONDURAS

Global Links' Medical Aid Program in Honduras began in 1998 with an agreement between Global Links, the Honduran Secretary of Health (SESAL), and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO). Since then, the program has benefited more than 180 health institutions throughout the country and impacted the lives of more than 2 million people.

Our program in Honduras focuses on supporting the efforts to strengthen the public health care

system, to improve the quality and access to health services in remote areas with emphasis on vulnerable populations, and to adapt the public health system to the country's changing epidemiological profile. Beneficiary regions and institutions are selected by SESAL, the Office of the First Lady and PAHO/WHO, based on the objectives, targets, and indicators contained in the country's National Health Plan and on assessments conducted by Global Links.

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In the past year, Global Links' program supported progress on key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and efforts to tackle extreme poverty and foster sustained economic growth. **The humanitarian aid provided by Global Links contributed to expanded access to quality primary health services with a focus on maternal and infant health, while enhancing equity in the provision of health services.** To mark the end of the 2019-2020 agreement, Executive Director Angela Garcia and International Medical Aid Program Manager Veronica Trimmino Marroquin, visited Honduras in February 2020, to monitor the donations sent in 2019 and to evaluate the collaboration between Global Links, SESAL and PAHO/WHO. In just a week they visited 10 health institutions in three different regions. **At each institution they met doctors, nurses, and other healthcare workers and learned about their experiences and the positive impacts of Global Links' donations on their ability to provide healthcare.** They also met with officials and health workers from PAHO/WHO, SESAL, and other organizations to



Nurse Digna Lilian Mejia, Sub Director of the Siguatepeque Health Network in Honduras



Program Manager Veronica with Global Links donated crash cart at Yoro Health Center in Honduras

discuss the challenges and successes of the previous year and priorities for the next year.

Digna Lilian Mejia, the Sub Director of the Siguatepeque Health Network in Honduras, had a particularly impactful story. She has been a nurse for 30 years and spent many years of her career working with the Lenca, an indigenous group in southwestern Honduras; **she traveled to do community health checks on foot, by boat, horse, oxcart, and even by helicopter with the U.S. Airforce assistance in Honduras. During these years she learned the importance of proper access to supplies and health care, especially for individuals living in very remote and under resourced communities, and expressed gratitude to Global Links for the supplies we have sent.** After her 3 decades of nursing in diverse settings, she commented, "My nursing career has taught me that we must value ALL lives."

Angela and Veronica were deeply touched by many of the patients they encountered. They met one mother and her 5 month old daughter Esther

Abigail, who was hospitalized in Yoro, Honduras with a recurring cough. **She received care in a new crib from Global Links and her mother could rest more easily knowing that her baby had a dignified and safe place to recover.**

Following the visit, a new agreement for 2020-2021 was signed to strengthen the country's health network according to the most pressing needs to include targeted medical supplies, clinical and mobility equipment, furnishings, and surgical instruments. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Global Links immediately prepared 2 shipments for the prioritized hospitals responding to the emergency. By increasing capacity and the preparedness of the public health system in response to the country's changing health needs, we are supporting their ability to fight Covid-19 and other epidemics like dengue, zika, and chikungunya, that affect the country all year round. **Global Links will need to raise an additional \$20,000 to fully fund our program in Honduras for 2021.** •

Nicaragua: Medical Backpack Project Provides Access to Care

Medical backpacks sent to Nicaragua improve the quality of patient care as well as the safety conditions for health professionals that do home visits or community health brigades. The backpacks have a basic content of supplies that were identified by health professionals that do field work. They are packed in Pittsburgh by staff and/or small groups of volunteers and then delivered to our partners.



Nurse in Nicaragua making a home medical visit to a patient with a high risk pregnancy

For patients in rural areas, a long journey to the nearest healthcare center can be a nearly impossible one. Fortunately, patients can safely receive medical attention during home visits thanks to Healthcare Backpacks from Global Links. Each distinct red



Volunteers prepping medical backpacks

backpack equips doctors and nurses with basic medical supplies that they wouldn't otherwise have such as blood pressure cuffs, gloves, thermometers, first aid kits, and protective supplies. Provide a medical backpack for \$125 at www.globallinks.org/donate

Bolivia: Serving Indigenous Communities

In Bolivia, we continue to work with indigenous communities, whose topography and location make traveling for healthcare difficult. In early 2020, Global Links staff visited the municipality of Poroma in Bolivia to see how Global Links donations were being used by the community in their 22 health centers. Staff there, including Estañia, expressed their gratitude. "The donation has been very useful. Now we can share out the supplies to the centers which are most remote, especially for the pregnant women. And this will make our work easier and safer for our patients. Thank you Global Links."

Estañia is a well loved community member. She's worked in the health centers for 3+ years and speaks the indigenous language and maintains part



Health center worker Estañia provides care to indigenous communities in Bolivia with Global Links donated supplies and crash cart

of her native dress, allowing female patients in this remote area to feel respected. Now she also has necessary supplies from Global Links so she can continue providing quality care to her community. Global Links will need to raise \$18,000 to equip each additional community health center in Bolivia in 2021.

Cuba: Celebrating the 500th Anniversary of Havana

Last November, Global Links executive director, Angela Garcia, joined our partners at PAHO/WHO in Cuba with a proclamation from Pittsburgh recognizing our 25 years of collaboration to improve health during the week of Havana's 500th anniversary celebrations.



Global Links staff and volunteers with PAHO/WHO in Havana in recognition of 25 years of collaboration

Local Partnerships Allow for More Impact: ACCESS Transportation Systems

Global Links' success has always depended upon strong partnerships and collaborations. We could not have grown from 60+ local distributions per year in support of our Community Partners Program to 700+ to date as part of our local Covid-19 response without the help and dedication of ACCESS. Their drivers previously brought volunteers to our headquarters to help sort and pack medical supplies.



ACCESS driver picking up local shipment for a Global Links Community Partner organization

Because ridership decreased due to Covid-19, ACCESS drivers have been helping us deliver critically needed supplies such as personal protective equipment (PPE), diapers, and more all over the region to help our neighbors in need. "Our Access drivers feel privileged to be part of delivering critical donations from Global Links to so many organizations in our community." Karen Hoesch, Executive Director, ACCESS Transportation Systems •

Getting Diapers Into the Hands of Families Who Need Them

Global Links formed a new partnership with the Western PA Diaper Bank this year to help meet the critical need for diapers and wipes. With more people out of work, a scarcity of diapers in the first months of the pandemic, and because public assistance does not cover diaper products, families have more need than ever. By leveraging the experience of the Western PA Diaper Bank and

Global Links' ability to buy in bulk, manage truckloads of product and plan large-scale volunteer events, we have been working to help meet this community need together.

The first drive-thru diaper distribution we held on June 25 with support of the Pittsburgh Penguins and their foundation and 700 families received one month's diapering supplies. The second event was held on September 25 with the support of the Pittsburgh Pirates and 400 families received two month's supply. Global Links will continue working with the Western PA Diaper Bank over the next few months to bridge this critical need to keep babies safe, dry and healthy. •



Volunteers helping at our second drive-thru diaper distribution



Cars lined up at our first drive-thru diaper distribution

GLOBAL LINKS DOMESTIC COVID-19 RESPONSE

MARCH 15 - OCTOBER 20, 2020

COMMUNITIES SERVED TO DATE INCLUDE: FREE AND CHARITABLE HEALTH CLINICS, SHELTERS AND GROUP HOUSING FACILITIES, HUMAN AND SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES, SENIOR CARE ORGANIZATIONS, CHILDCARE, YOUTH AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME ORGANIZATIONS, LOW-INCOME SENIOR HOUSING, AND UNDER-RESOURCED SCHOOLS.

6

COUNTIES IN WESTERN PA SERVED

342

AGENCIES IN WESTERN PA SERVED

600

CHILDCARE CENTERS IN WESTERN PA SERVED

140

SCHOOLS IN WESTERN PA SERVED

Over 1 Million

TOTAL PROTECTIVE SUPPLIES DISTRIBUTED

"WORDS CANNOT EXPRESS HOW MUCH WE APPRECIATE ALL OF THE WORK YOU DO. THANK YOU FOR ALWAYS BEING THERE FOR THE SUFFERING COMMUNITIES OF THE WORLD!"

-REV. PAUL ABERNATHY,
NEIGHBORHOOD RESILIENCE PROJECT

Sharing Surplus, Shining Bright with our New Solar Array

It doesn't always have to be sunny in Pittsburgh for it to be bright at Global Links. Thanks to a sustainability grant from the Green Mountain Energy Sun Club and a financing tool by Scalo Solar Solutions LLC who handled installation, our roof is donning 162 bi-facial panels and a reflective white surface. Green Mountain Energy Sun Club has provided over 100 grants to other nonprofits who are dedicated to environmental stewardship. Global Links is proud to be one of the recipients. This project also received guidance from the Pennsylvania Solar Center, a nonprofit who offers technical assistance to other non-profit organizations and businesses to go solar.

The array is expected to generate 82% of energy used by Global Links. Measuring 10,000 sq. feet, it should generate 63.2 kilowatts. To



put the energy savings in perspective, the energy produced will be enough to power 6.4 homes per year for the next 25 years and is the carbon equivalent of saving 6,000 gallons of gasoline per year, for 25 years. The financial savings can be used instead to improve health through our programs. We officially “flipped the switch” at our 30th Birthday Party on August 27th. Thanks to the help of all our partners in the project, we can continue to work towards improving health and caring for the planet, which is something we will keep celebrating for years to come. •



Year-End Giving Considerations

New this year! Check with your financial advisor whether you can qualify for the CARES Act “above-the-line” deduction for charitable gifts made in cash of up to \$300. If you are not itemizing on your 2020 taxes, you may be able to claim this new deduction.

Need to make a year-end Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from your IRA if you are 70 ½ or older? Talk to your financial advisor about whether you can make a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) to Global Links, and possibly take advantage of tax savings while supporting a favorite non-profit.

Have a Donor Advised Fund (DAF)? Consider making a donation from your DAF this giving season to improve mobility, independence, dignity and health for neighbors locally and globally. •

#GiveBigPittsburgh #GivingTuesday on Tuesday, December 1

Double your donation on December 1 as part of Give Big Pittsburgh and Giving Tuesday. From 12:01 am to midnight December 1, your donation to Global Links will be matched 100% thanks to the generosity of our Sustainability Committee members. On that day only, visit www.givebigpittsburgh.com/organizations/global-links to bring mobility, independence, dignity and health to a neighbor in need. •



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