



HILLSIDE HEALTH CARE INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

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Some Things Never Change

Hillside Clinic is *still* on the same quiet dirt lane in the small village of Eldridgeville. Our remarkable staff and volunteers *still* work to serve God by providing health care and disease prevention to the people of Southern Belize, and they are *still* devoted to helping improve quality of life through medical care, health education, and community outreach.



So what has *changed*? Our name. The board that manages Hillside Clinic recently restructured and changed its name from the Jericho Road Foundation to Hillside Health Care International. The newly-reorganized board visited Belize for a week in January to consult with the staff, evaluate the needs of the facility, meet with local healthcare professionals, and make some exciting decisions about the future.



HHCI Board Chair, Dr. Russ Robertson explains: “Although we’ve restructured, we still have many of the same people involved who served Hillside in the past. New board members have been added, and exciting things are happening to grow the Hillside program. Last year, more than 7,000 people received care through the Hillside project.”

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You make a living by what you earn. You make a life by what you give.

Winston Churchill

When You Support Hillside, You Support Them

The Toledo District is the poorest district in Belize. The poverty rate there is over 75%.

The patients seen at Hillside’s clinic and during mobile visits to villages represent a full cross-section of the population, but those seen during

Hillside’s home visitation program are primarily elderly and among the poorest. All the services through Hillside, except for the community health education component, are provided to the sick...and all services are free.

To learn how you can support this work, see page #4.



Student Nursing Rotation Begins With Grant From Private Foundation

HHCI recently received a grant from a private family foundation, enabling Hillside to begin a nursing rotation program in partnership with Concordia University Wisconsin. This article was submitted by Concordia Nursing Instructor, Teri Hicks.



Concordia nursing team in Belize

The Belize Mission Program at Concordia University Wisconsin began the spring semester of 2005. We have all been extremely touched by this opportunity, and we thank God for bringing it to us. Our first trip in February included Professor Dr. Grace Peterson and four students. Each group stays

Hillside Welcomes Joyce Lopez

Joyce Lopez, who once worked as administrator at Hillside, recently returned as Executive Director/ Nursing Facilitator. Her primary responsibility—among others—is to oversee the new nursing rotation program. Stateside CEO, Jackie Schmidt, expresses her excitement: “It is truly a gift to have Joyce Lopez re-join our team. She comes to us with twelve years experience in business administration and a true heart for service. It’s a blessing to have her at the helm of our Belize project!”

Ms. Lopez speaks of growing up in Punta Gorda and coming back to Hillside. “This little town and the people of the entire Toledo District mean a great deal to me. My return to PG and to Hillside began with prayer that God would give me the wisdom to

two weeks to assist in mission medical service. To date, sixteen have made the rotation.

We are considering a 2006 summer break rotation and a Christmas Winterum rotation, depending on funds and student interest. CUW’s Bachelor’s of Science and Master’s of Science in Nursing programs have expressed interest in having their students participate in the Belize mission trips. These students are Registered Nurses who have returned to college to obtain either their Bachelor’s or Master’s degree in Nursing. Over the summer, we will be working with Professor Dr. Lueders-Bolwerks, Professor Dr. Gresley, and Professor Kaul to begin the arrangements.

We have received many donations from individuals and organizations. These medical supplies, medicines, toys, hygiene products, and school supplies will be distributed by the students during home visits to shut-ins. Our local Parish Nurse organization is interested in participating in the fall trip preparations by creating and donating hygiene and safety kits for the students to distribute.

We are very excited about this opportunity to provide additional services to the people of Punta Gorda. We at Concordia have great visions for this rotation and we pray that the program will continue to flourish and develop.

Nursing Instructor, Teri Hicks

discern and that He would open the door to a position that would allow me to give of myself. Making a contribution to the world brings great joy and satisfaction to me. When I learned of this opening, I knew God had answered my prayer, and I embraced the opportunity.

I am amazed at the good things happening at Hillside. It is challenging, but every time we cross another hump, the feeling is very rewarding. I find joy in whatever is mine to do. No task is too great or too insignificant. I approach my work with enthusiasm and the anticipation of accomplishing something worthwhile. At Hillside every moment is an opportunity to prove God’s love.”

In Our Next Issue: Meet our Nurse Administrator.

The Volunteers—Photos And Reflections From The Journals of Hillside Medical Volunteers

1.) I came to Belize seeking an experience that would change the way I saw the world and my role in it—both as a health care professional and a member of society. Images of human suffering appear regularly in the media, and most medical courses offer an International Health component. The constant exposure to images on a TV screen can leave us somehow desensitized, but this can never happen when we are really a guest in the country or home of those served.

What I have learned in the last month will greatly impact the manner in which I interact with others and practice medicine in the future. The beauty of the experience is that it has benefited both my professional and personal development.

2.) One of the greatest rewards taken from this experience is

being able to learn our clients' home environments and how those environments impact health. On a recent excursion—a mobile clinic to the Kekchi Village of Otoxha—we were invited into the home of a local Kekchi family to partake in a traditional meal of caldo, a cultural food cooked on a fire hearth in a thatch hut. The food was delicious! And the opportunity enabled us to better understand their daily lives and customs.

3.) Finally we were ready to move on to Limon, an indigenous community of fifty-six inhabitants of Kekchi descent that is on a mule trail. We set up clinic inside the school. The teacher interpreted from Kekchi to Spanish.

As each patient was treated, they expressed their gratitude to us. Before departing, we were invited for a delicious meal of beans, eggs, and ground pepitos.



When the patient can't get to the clinic...you simply build a bridge and go to the patient!



*Heart to heart.
Treating a patient in the village of Santa Rosa.*



"Finally we were ready to move on to Limon, an indigenous community of fifty-six inhabitants of Kekchi descent that is on a mule trail."

A Distinguished Guest Visits Hillside

A distinguished guest visited Hillside on June 3rd: The Rt. Honorable George Price—often referred to as the “Father of Belize”. But this was not his first visit to Hillside.

On November 26, 2000, the day of Hillside’s official dedication, Mr. Price delivered the keynote speech. More than 400 guests from Belize and the United States came to hear him.

Arnoldo Melendez, Hillside’s Community Liaison, said, “How wonderful to have him back for a visit! He is loved and respected by all of us at Hillside. He officially gave us his blessing on opening day in 2000...and today he blessed us by returning!”

He was accompanied by Hon. Michael Espot, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Cooperatives and Dr. Raju who has a private medical practice in Punta Gorda.



Hillside staff and volunteers surround Rt. Honorable George Price (in white shirt in back row). Hon. Michael Espot, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Cooperatives (second from right) and Dr. Raju (far right) accompanied him.

Doctors Needed at Hillside in August and September

Hillside Clinic has openings for volunteer physicians in August and September at our facility in Southern Belize. Doctors will have the opportunity to serve the medically underserved in a remarkably beautiful rainforest region, work with the friendly, professional Hillside staff, have plenty of free time to enjoy the local attractions, and experience a diverse range of cultures: Mayan, Garifuna, Creole, East Indian, and Hispanic. There is a rich educational component to this experience, and volunteers can participate for a week or two or longer.

Language is not a barrier. Though many of the local residents speak their own native languages, English is taught in the school system and widely understood. In some of the remote villages, an interpreter is provided. Volunteers work as part of a medical team and at the direction of the Belize Ministry of Health. Lodging is provided either at the clinic residences or at one of our nearby houses.

Though the need for volunteer doctors to serve in the months of August and September is especially great, there are openings throughout 2005 and 2006.

For more information, email Hillside’s executive director, Joyce Lopez. joycebelize@yahoo.com

Considering A Donation to Hillside?

Hillside Health Care can’t accomplish its mission of serving those in need of medical care without the support of people like you. If you want to offer financial support, donations can be sent to: **Hillside Health Care International, P.O. Box 151, Brookfield, Wisconsin 53008-0151.**

Thinking Of Volunteering?

If you are a medical professional with a desire to volunteer, Hillside may be the perfect match for you.

Opportunities can be short-term (a week to one month) or long-term (several months to a year).

Imagine an environment far off the beaten path: jungles and rainforests dotted with small villages along a remote river or at the ocean’s edge.

Visit our website for more information: www.hillsidebelize.net

