

How You Can Help

Volunteer to help sort and pack supplies or prepare furnishings at our office or warehouse.

Make a financial contribution through our website, or by sending a check.

Organize a fundraiser to support our International Medical Aid program.

Donate crutches, canes, wheelchairs and nebulizers.

Support new mothers with our New Baby Bag collection as described in the Volunteer Program Update on page 5.

Invite us to speak at your next event and introduce your friends and colleagues to Global Links.

Take a tour to learn more about our work and find new ways to get involved.

Attend a Tour

Global Links invites you to attend an introductory session to learn more about our work, our mission, and to meet key staff members. We are also looking for current volunteers and supporters to "host" a tour and invite friends and/or colleagues. Please sign up for an hour long session on our website, www.globallinks.org, or by emailing Community Outreach Manager Jennifer Novelli at jnovelli@globallinks.org or by calling 412-361-3424 ext. 204. Additional dates/times can be arranged.

Long-term Assistance for Haiti

Vodka as an antiseptic. Hacksaws for amputations. That was the reality facing some of the first medical responders after the devastating January 12th earthquake in Haiti. Global Links, which has been helping Haiti since the early '90s, swung into action immediately to provide essential medical supplies to the traumatized country. IV kits, surgical gloves, bandages, sutures, hypodermic needles, X-ray film and supplies were packed for medical personnel from the area who were traveling to Haiti to provide assistance.

"The pipeline into Haiti was small," explained Global Links Chief Executive Officer and co-founder Kathleen Hower, "so we were careful to provide very specific materials."



A street in Haiti after the earthquake.

An estimated 5000 Haitians lost limbs in the quake, many with multiple amputations. Our partner, Hôpital Albert Schweitzer (HAS), escaped structural damage from the quake, and patients were flooding in from Port-au-Prince. The hospital made an urgent plea for crutches.

"Their supplies were being rapidly depleted," said Global Links Deputy Director Angela Garcia. "HAS sent out desperate appeals for certain urgently needed items." The hospital always needs crutches and at one time produced them on site, but deforestation throughout the country makes that impossible now. Crutches must be imported, and are expensive. Global Links began organizing collections of crutches and canes throughout the area, and the community responded. From January through April, with local organizations serving as drop-off sites, over 3000 pairs of crutches and hundreds of walkers, wheelchairs and canes were donated to Global Links for shipment to Haiti.



Young earthquake victims.

In late January, Global Links was one of two organizations to receive a \$250,000 grant from The Atlantic Philanthropies for ongoing medical relief efforts in Haiti. (The other organization was

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International Medical Aid Projects

Global Links collaborates with a broad range of partners, both overseas and domestic, to improve health in our nine program countries. These partnerships have always been essential components in our model of targeted aid through cooperation, and provide the framework for our mission. For more detailed information, please visit our website: www.globallinks.org.

Guatemala

This past spring, Program Officer Patti Skillin traveled through Guatemala with staff from the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization and the Ministry of Health. Collaboration with these partners in Guatemala has been very successful, enabling Global Links' donations to reach 22 of the 43 hospitals in the national health system, in addition to many smaller regional health centers.

The purpose of Global Links travel is to evaluate potential partners for upcoming projects, and assess the results of previous Global Links projects. For example, by collaborating with a hospital in New York, Global Links was able to recover twelve equipped endoscopy towers and donate them to the Guatemalan Health System, enabling selected hospitals with trained personnel to perform less invasive surgical procedures. The surgeons told Skillin that their patients recover more quickly from endoscopic procedures, making surgeries economical as well as more comfortable. In Hospital Huehuetenango, an additional operating room, furnished in part by Global Links, has been set up to accommodate these procedures. And in Hospital Nacional Santa Elena in El Quiche, the chief surgeon qualified for special training in Japan because the hospital had the towers.



One of the endoscopy towers in Guatemala.

Global Links' ability to find appropriate homes for such valuable items as these towers, or the electric beds we included in a donation sent May 3, is a testament to the effectiveness of our collaborative method. Specialized equipment can raise the standard of healthcare throughout a system – but only if it reaches a hospital that can fully utilize it.

Bolivia

Mountainous terrain in Bolivia has led the government to decentralize healthcare, so that people far from La Paz will be able to seek basic treatment close to where they live. One recent Global Links project benefited a small hospital near the Amazon that serves a population of 35,000 and has difficulty getting equipment due to its remote location. Because a lack of supplies has led the hospital to cancel surgeries, Global Links provided over 600 cases of basic surgical supplies. Another project, closer to La Paz, made three health centers fully functional by providing clinical furnishings and diagnostic equipment for primary care and maternal-infant health. Due to the terrain, house calls are a necessity, so the donation included backpacks containing minor surgery kits and diagnostic tools.

Cuba

Last fall, Global Links hosted a visit by Cuba's pediatric transplant team, who spent a week training with transplant specialists at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC. One of the highlights of the trip for the team was meeting transplant pioneer Dr. Thomas Starzl. This historic event required cooperation between the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization, the Ministry of Health in Cuba, and US Senators and Congressional Representatives from Pennsylvania to make the visit possible.

"We are very glad that we had a chance to meet Dr. Starzl and the staff of doctors and nurses who work in the transplant center here," said Dr. Ramón Villamil, Chief Surgeon and Director of the national pediatric transplant center at Hospital William Soler in Havana. "They are the most experienced transplant professionals in the world and we have learned a lot from them." The team observed procedures as well as follow-up care, including a middle of the night surgery when a suitable liver became available.



The transplant team poses with CEO and co-founder Kathleen Hower, left, in Global Links' warehouse.

The open exchange of information on surgical techniques, drug protocols and nursing practices are helping the Cuban team further develop their transplant program and serves as a first step in what is hoped will be an ongoing collaboration. Since the visit, Global Links has provided two anesthesia machines and other equipment and materials for the pediatric transplant program.

In our ongoing program to help Cuba recover from the hurricanes of 2008, Global Links recently donated office and patient room furniture, laboratory and medical equipment, and beds to several provinces most affected by the hurricanes, as well as a shipment of electric beds for a reconstructed ward at the Cardiology Institute in Havana.

Guyana

Georgetown Public Hospital is the most important hospital in Guyana's public health system, with 500 beds, 480 births per month, and 6000 emergency room cases per month. The hospital also offers the most specialized care available in the country. Global Links' second shipment to Georgetown hospital last year contained a wide range of medical materials that will help this busy urban hospital improve care for its patients.

Nicaragua

Since the re-election of President Daniel Ortega in 2007 and the institution of free health care, Nicaragua's public health system has had a greatly increased patient load. The Nicaraguan Ministry of Health asked Global Links to help meet the increased demand for healthcare services by providing equipment and furnishings that will improve the capacity of Nicaraguan hospitals and clinics.

Program Officer Patti Skillin saw many Global Links donations in use at Hospital Bertha Calderón, which serves as a national reference hospital for OB/GYN as well as women's oncology. She was also gratified to know the physical therapy materials Global Links donated to the rehabilitation hospital Aldo Chavarría last May are in use, and that the prosthetic limb components we included have restored mobility to some of their patients.



Physical therapy equipment at Aldo Chavarría.

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Boston-based Partners in
Health.)

"Supporting an organiza-
tion with the capacity to
address both the short-
and long-term needs of
the thousands of Haitians
affected by the disaster
was a priority for Atlantic,"
said Marcia Smith, senior
vice president, The Atlan-
tic Philanthropies. "We
recognize Global Links'
experience in international medical relief. They have a track record of directing a swift,
organized response to specific medical good needs as well as a long-standing commit-
ment to improving the quality of care afforded to the poorest segments of populations in
developing countries through providing healthcare supplies to hospitals and clinics."

Global Links has joined forces with Medical Education Cooperation with Cuba (MEDICC)
and the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO)
to provide ongoing medical care to the Haitian people. Global Links is also working with
PAHO and the Oral Health of Haiti Coalition to provide an organized approach to restor-
ing and improving oral health services in Haiti.

This summer, Global Links staff are visiting affected areas of Port-au-Prince to assess con-
ditions and plan future projects. Updates on this trip and our work in Haiti will be posted
in future communications from Global Links.

Supplies and equipment from Global Links will directly support the work of the medical
personnel in the field, and are part of a coordinated long-term effort to improve health in
Haiti.



Global Links' truck, filled with crutches and canes for Haiti.

Chief Executive Officer Kathleen Hower receives 2010 Johnson Institute Award for Exemplary Leadership

The award, presented on March 25, is
given annually to an individual with a
Pittsburgh connection who exempli-
fies outstanding public service, ethics
and accountable leadership.



Suture Program Update

Global Links' dedicated Suture Donation Program addresses a very specific problem common in developing countries – the lack of sutures, or surgical stitches. Without sutures, or with inappropriate or poor quality sutures, life-saving surgeries are canceled, wounds don't heal properly, or struggling families impoverish themselves to buy sutures for a loved one's surgery.

Because sutures are small and easily carried, the suture donation program sends sutures all over the world -- reaching 81 hospitals in 2009. By providing recipients with a supply of appropriate sutures, we can save lives and improve health in disadvantaged communities.

One of the newest recipients is India's Society for Education, Action and Research in Community Health, or SEARCH. This organization was begun in 1985 by Abhay and Rani Bang, two physicians who received Masters Degrees in Public Health at Johns Hopkins University and then returned to India to develop a community health institution. In 2006, they received the MacArthur Award for Creative and Effective Institutions.

The organization focuses its efforts in Gadchiroli, Maharashtra, and serves patients who earn less than \$1 a day. Shown here is Dr. Santosh Patil correcting a three-year-old boy's cleft lip, a condition that is generally corrected in infancy in the United States. The condition can cause difficulty in eating, speech, and hearing if untreated, a common condition in developing countries. Global Links provided some sutures for this camp, and for an orthopedic camp scheduled for later this year.



Volunteer Program Update

"Volunteers love this project," said Christina Gerstel, Global Links Volunteer Program Manager, about the New Baby bags that our International Medical Aid program has been sending for years. "They are familiar with the items, and they like what it means."

These big, sturdy bags are made just for Global Links, some by a volunteer quilter and artist in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and filled with items that will make life with a new baby a bit easier. Baby clothes, hygiene items, and other supplies appropriate in a developing country are packed into each bag and included on any shipment that goes to a maternity hospital or clinic. These bags also provide an incentive for women to come to the hospital to deliver in safe and clean conditions. This year, most of the bags will go to Haiti, where conditions since the earthquake have made difficulties faced by new mothers even worse.

"Volunteers see that the bags themselves will have a long and functional life," Gerstel adds. "They aren't just diaper bags."

Global Links always needs more materials and volunteers for this ongoing project. Interested donors can find the list on our web site, under Get Involved – Community Collections.





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Global Links would like to thank our hospital partners who work with us to identify and recover surplus materials throughout their facilities. Global Links collaborates with nursing staff, materials managers, purchasing and supply chain teams, environmental service staff, biomedical engineers and green teams throughout each hospital. Recovering usable equipment and supplies benefits the environment and lowers storage or disposal costs. Even more important, by finding appropriate recipients for each item, Global Links improves healthcare around the world.

Global Links' growing list of hospital partners includes:

- Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC
- Excelsa Health
- Heritage Valley Health System
- Jefferson Regional Medical Center
- Johns Hopkins Medical Center
- Magee-Womens Hospital of UPMC
- Monongahela Valley Hospital
- Ruby Memorial Hospital, West Virginia
- St. Clair Hospital
- Uniontown Hospital
- University of Pittsburgh Medical Center
- West Penn Allegheny Health System

Global Links is proud to be a winner

