



## WORLD MEDICAL RELIEF, INC.

*Serving the Sick & Poor Locally, Nationally, and Internationally Since 1953*

### WORLD MEDICAL RELIEF RESPONDS TO COVID-19

When World Medical Relief's Board Chair Mike Baydoun, who is a Wayne County Sheriff Reserve police officer, found out that many police departments in Wayne County were in desperate need of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), World Medical Relief was the first to help.

#### THE PANDEMIC UNFOLDS

Early in the year, World Medical Relief received requests for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) from humanitarian organizations active in Covid-19 struck areas in China. The amounts requested were enormous, an eerie warning of what was to come.

At the end of February, the pandemic hit home and the requests for PPE assistance started to come in from Metro Detroit. HOPE/HOPE Hospitality & Warming in Pontiac was the first to ask for help to keep its homeless clients safe.

Then, things came to a screeching halt. Governor Whitmer signed the "Stay Home, Stay Safe" Executive Order on March 23 and World Medical Relief's international partners temporarily halted any container shipments from World Medical Relief out of fear that it would import the virus into their countries. For a few weeks there were no volunteers

coming in and, World Medical Relief's building went into lock down mode.

With measures in place to keep staff and clients safe and prevent any spread of the virus, World Medical Relief was determined to continue its local programs as they are so critical to our low-income clients in Metro Detroit. Emergency funds were sought and received from United Way, Ford Motor Company Fund and the Dresner Foundation to continue operations and respond to Metro Detroit's community needs. A few donors also stepped up and helped to offset the starkly reduced cash flow from the decline in international shipments. A couple from Oregon made a heartwarming and very generous donation in honor of an emergency physician in Detroit, her team and co-workers.

When volunteers started to ask for action from World Medical Relief in response to the local PPE need, CEO George Samson remembered that in December 2019, three 40-

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From left to right: Mike Baydoun (WMR Chair), Joe Dabaja (Officer), Bill Bazzi (WMR Advisory Board), George Samson (WMR CEO)

## CEO NOTES

George V. Samson, Ph.D.



In these unprecedented times, I am profoundly grateful for World Medical Relief's Board of Directors' wholehearted support of our relief efforts focused on the needs of our neighbors in Metro Detroit. I am proud of World Medical Relief's staff, working harder than ever to find ways to keep the agency doors open to serve those who are in need.

It has been a while since we published the newsletter, and I would be remiss if I did not honor the memory of a few people who played a crucial role in the history of World Medical Relief.

On October 23, 2019, John Kim passed away. John was the first Asian American board chair and also the first board chair who actually had hands-on missionary experience. Together with his wife SunHee Lee, John built a church in Thailand, drilled wells that improved villages around the world, and they brought energy, both literally and figuratively, to a Christian university in Uganda. John pushed World Medical Relief to be a more outward looking agency with better communications and public relations and facilitated more concerted fundraising efforts. A few months before his passing, John and SunHee toured World Medical Relief's facility in Southfield.

John (Jack) L. King died Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2020,

in Falls Church, Virginia. Jack was the attorney for Irene Auberlin, the founder of World Medical Relief. He joined the Board of Directors and eventually became the board chair. Till this day his signature is visible on the Articles of Incorporation as he was instrumental to further define the limits of liability for World Medical Relief's board directors in an amendment made in 1988.

Jack and one of his daughters, Sara DeCarlo, visited in 2018 in preparation of a shipment to orphans in Kenya. Jack was impressed with the new building and especially Project My Heart Your Heart, the pacemaker reconditioning project. After his passing, arrangements were made to donate his pacemaker to World Medical Relief.

More recently, we were saddened by the death of Bernardo Mendoza Danan, of Bloomfield Hills, who passed away at home on April 2, 2020, surrounded by his loving family.

During his 30-year career as a general surgeon, Dr. Danan held various leadership positions and also served on the Board of Directors of World Medical Relief. Dr. Danan was instrumental in coordinating the funding and shipment of over 2 million dollars' worth of supplies and equipment for the disaster victims of the Mt. Pinatubo volcano eruption in the Philippines in 1991. In a span of over 20 years, he participated in numerous international medical missions and performed general surgery on a countless number of impoverished patients in rural areas of the Philippines.

As a representative of World Medical Relief, Dr. Danan traveled to Africa in September 2003, with Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson, Ambassador Richard Holbrook and other various medical organizations to investigate HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria pandemics affecting African countries. Their mission was to seek new and creative ways to improve and expand U.S. humanitarian efforts in Africa.



Boardmember Frank Julian, SunHee Lee Kim, Former Board Chair John Kim and George Samson, CEO



Former board chair Jack King, his daughter Sara DeCarlo, George Samson, CEO, and former board member Dr. Danan.





## CONTINUATION OF WORLD MEDICAL RELIEF RESPONDS TO COVID-19

foot containers located behind the building were filled with supplies as the warehouse was too full. In January, when unloading and sorting these supplies, many boxes of gloves and other protective items were found and stored away. Now, they came in handy and a flurry of PPE distribution activities ensued to nursing homes, police and fire departments, hospitals, Wayne County Jail, and human service agencies.

World Medical Relief board members stepped up and were the ears and eyes in the community. Dr. Ned Fawaz, a new board member, connected World Medical Relief with the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS) as the workers at their Covid-19 test site were in need of PPE to be able to safely do their job. Dr. Ernestina Mac, a longtime supporter and board member, connected a senior living community with much needed supplies.

The thank-yous are still coming in. Starfish Family Services says, "You are a true Hero in this unprecedented time in our history. So often when times are bad, those living in poverty are the first

to sufferer, the most to suffer and likely to suffer the longest. This pandemic situation is no different. Every day, we connect with families who need our assistance to get through another day. YOU are the reason we can accommodate them and remain available to them.

HOPE/HOPE Hospitality & Warming in Pontiac, "As concerns about COVID-19 were rising, HOPE anticipated the need to acquire PPE in order to appropriately serve our shelter guests (people who are experiencing homelessness). The needed PPE was **beyond our budget** and very hard to acquire – even at the beginning of the pandemic. World Medical Relief responded to our call for help and enabled us to keep our staff and guests virus-free."

Oakland County Chief, Michael J. Bouchard, writes, "I truly appreciate your support of our first responders as well as your commitment to the community"

Detroit Area Agency on Aging: "Thanks to your donation we can help protect our staff, community partners and vulnerable seniors during this crisis."

World Medical Relief's warehouse turned out to be a PPE treasure trove, and almost 90,000 PPE items, like gloves, masks, gowns, etc. were distributed to 28 community partners, possibly saving many lives.

With the incredible support of our donors and community partners, the local programs continue to serve vulnerable citizens and those who lost their jobs due to the pandemic.

In the warehouse, thankfully, a sense of normalcy is returning as World Medical Relief's weekly volunteers are coming back.



Volunteers of the Philippine American Ecumenical Church-USA processing 5,000 bottles of hand sanitizer



## SHAPING YOUNG LEADERS

*Volunteers have always been an intricate part of World Medical Relief's operations. They shape the agency and, as it turns out, World Medical Relief shapes them. Meet a few of World Medical Relief's amazing young volunteers, who are not only working hard to build a better future for themselves but also for those around them.*

**Alexander Exler** is a Detroit native who attended the Roper School in Birmingham, bringing several of his classes to volunteer at World Medical Relief. He is currently studying biology at Calvin University and hopes to become a doctor.

'My grandmother was a librarian and used to bring students to volunteer, taking my mother (who was a child at the time) to volunteer with her. When I was 11, my mom started bringing me to the agency every Saturday. We worked at the sorting tables for many years before tackling the suture department, where we work now,' says Alexander.

According to Alexander, volunteering with WMR for so long has shaped him by showing that everyone can make a difference. 'Often it's easy to think, I'm too young; I'll do something when I'm older or have more education or more experience, but at WMR, from working at the sorting tables to helping pack the containers, there's something for everyone to do,' said Alexander.



**Rylee Richardson** is a Bio-medical Engineering student at Wayne State University. She grew up on a small equestrian farm in southeast Michigan. She plans to continue her education and obtain a doctorates degree in veterinary medicine.

Rylee started sorting medical equipment and supplies at World Medical Relief when she was a sophomore in high school and spent many Saturdays working side by side with other students and families.

'The positive atmosphere among the volunteers was contagious! Everyone was helping and we were all working for the same goal of aiding others - whether they were near or far,' says Rylee.

During her junior year in high school she became a pacemaker interrogator for Project My Heart Your Heart, testing and sorting the devices. 'World Medical Relief has shaped me professionally and personally by giving me the opportunity to work with world class professionals. I can take this knowledge that I have obtained and turn it towards the bio-medical engineering and veterinary medicine profession and look at other ways that we can better the world around us by using what we already have - one device at a time,' says Rylee.







**Jad Baki**, who has a degree in Bio-molecular Science with a Minor in Sociology of Health and Medicine is currently applying to medical school. Jad started volunteering at World Medical Relief in the winter of 2017, when he became a member of United 2 Heal at University of Michigan. Every Saturday he would primarily do macro and micro medical supply sorting.

Later that year, he joined the Executive Board of United 2 Heal as a leader of the Technical Team, a small group of passionate individuals whose task was to work closely with My Heart Your Heart on the brand new pacemaker reconditioning project. Jad led the volunteer effort of the processing of over ten thousand donated pacemakers.

In 2019, Jad became President of United 2 Heal at University of Michigan. Around the same time, he began an unpaid internship at World Medical Relief, during which he was at the agency six days a week as a medical supply team leader coordinating volunteer activities.

Being a volunteer team leader at WMR helped Jad grow his confidence and public speaking abilities. Three years ago, as an introverted underclassman, the thought of standing in front of a large crowd of new volunteers and using a loud projecting voice to describe how sorting works every Saturday morning terrified him.

'Now, there is nothing I would rather do on Saturday mornings than see everyone's smiling faces while we review sorting procedures. In sum, the person I am today is, in large part, a product of my time spent volunteering at World Medical Relief.'

**Anita Sehra** is a sophomore at Wayne State University majoring in Biological Sciences and on the pre-med track. She is the founder of Wayne State's chapter of United 2 Heal.

Anita has been contributing to World Medical Relief since 2014, when she raised funds to expand a clinic in Kilimanjaro, Tanzania. Until the Covid-19 pandemic she has volunteered every Saturday in the past two years by sorting medical supplies. Anita has also organized fundraisers for My Heart Your Heart in her hometown Windsor, Canada and through United 2 Heal at WSU. Currently, as the President of United 2 Heal at WSU, she coordinates the organization's weekly volunteer activities at the World Medical Relief and assists new volunteers with the sorting process.

According to Anita, volunteering with the World Medical Relief has made her understand the life-saving impact simple actions have on individuals around the world. It has inspired her to continually be involved in community service projects throughout her career. 'I am very grateful for all the opportunities and inspiration WMR has given me and am looking forward to continue contributing to this organization in the future,' said Anita.





## LOCAL PROGRAM EXPANSION

*Help for diabetes patients has arrived*

Even though insulin access is literally life or death for all type 1 and some type 2 diabetics, prices have steadily risen over the past years. Each person has different insulin requirements ... for some people, one vial a month may be enough; for others several vials or pens are needed, with costs anywhere from \$25 to \$1,300 per month.

Through its local Affordable Prescription Program, World Medical Relief witnesses first-hand the need for expensive drugs, such as insulin. People come to World Medical Relief when they cannot afford their medications through a regular pharmacy. A staggering 80% of the new enrollees in the Affordable Prescription Program are insulin dependent. Purchasing the necessary insulin needed by our clients exceeds the available funding, and for years, World Medical Relief was forced to send people away. United Way acknowledged this problem and is supporting insulin purchases for around 100 people in need of this Health Safety Net.

A recent grant from the Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation strengthens the Prescription Program with diabetes coordination, navigation to additional services, and education. Wayne State University's Mu Omicron Pi chapter of Kappa Psi Pharmaceutical Fraternity is assisting with resource development and the creation of online resources.

Many Americans have medical debt or trouble paying their bills and the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation funding could be seen in light of recent increased interest to support World Medical Relief's Prescription Program. The Metro Health Foundation committed to a multi-year stabilization grant and the Dresner Foundation awarded a grant to aid people affected by the COVID-19 pandemic with their medications. Satisfied with the impact of their funding, United Way renewed its insulin support for yet another year.

## SAVE THE DATE ANNUAL GALA

*Due to the COVID-19 pandemic,  
World Medical Relief's Gala  
will be **virtual** this year.*

*Please mark your calendar:*

**Saturday, November 7, 2020.**

**Get the latest updates and  
information on how to  
participate by subscribing to  
our email list at**

**[www.worldmedicalrelief.org](http://www.worldmedicalrelief.org)**



*Last Year's Gala Fundraiser*

*From left to right: Sook Hee Stirling, Steven Stirling, Dr. Ned Fawaz, Dr. George Samson, Dr. Sheila Samson*



## CARES ACT BENEFITS DONORS WHO WANT TO HELP THEIR FAVORITE NONPROFIT

The CARES Act (the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act) contains funding opportunities for charities and enhanced charitable giving incentives.

### 1. TEMPORARY UNIVERSAL CHARITABLE DEDUCTION

Taxpayers who do not itemize their deductions can take a one-time deduction of up to \$300 for gifts made to charitable organizations. The deduction is ONLY for gifts of cash made in calendar year 2020 and does not cover other types of gifts or contributions made to donor-advised funds or private foundations.

The provision is intended only for the year 2020; however, in the text of the bill, it states taxable years "beginning in 2020 ..." and does not include a sunset date, thus it conceivably could extend beyond 2020.

### 2. SUSPENDS THE 60 PERCENT ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME LIMITATION FOR INDIVIDUALS' CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE YEAR 2020

In a typical year, individuals can only take a charitable deduction of up to 60 percent of their adjusted gross income, no matter how much they give. For 2020, there is no limit, making cash contributions fully deductible.

In these trying times, your support is crucial and very much appreciated.

**Please give with the enclosed envelope, or go to [www.worldmedicalrelief.org](http://www.worldmedicalrelief.org) to donate online or call (313) 866-5333 and make a contribution with your credit card over the phone.**

World Medical Relief also accepts gifts of stocks, life insurance, and donor advised funds.

If you have questions, please call Josephine Jabara, Director of Development & Community Affairs, at (313) 866-5333, ext. 243, or email [jjabara@worldmedicalrelief.org](mailto:jjabara@worldmedicalrelief.org). And, always consult your financial advisor.

## AMAZONSMILE NOW AVAILABLE IN APP!

Turn on AmazonSmile in the Amazon app to generate donations.

amazon smile



Good news! AmazonSmile, which donates .5% of what you spend while shopping on Amazon to your designated charity, is now available in the Amazon Shopping app on iOS and Android mobile phones. Until recently it was only available on the computer.

### SIMPLY FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS AND START GENERATING DONATIONS FOR WORLD MEDICAL RELIEF.

1. Open the Amazon Shopping app on your device
2. Go into the main menu of the Amazon Shopping app and tap into 'Settings'
3. Tap 'AmazonSmile' and follow the on-screen instructions to complete the process

### STILL HAVE TO SIGN UP FOR AMAZON SMILE? THAT IS EASY!

1. Go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and login with your existing Amazon account or create a new one using your preferred email address.
2. Once logged in, scroll down and type 'World Medical Relief' in the box to pick your own charitable organization and click 'search'.
3. Click 'select' to choose 'World Medical Relief'.



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## VOLUNTEER SATURDAYS

**Jul. 2020:** 11, 18, 25

**Aug. 2020:** 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

**Sept. 2020:** 5, 12, 19, 26

**Oct. 2020:** 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

## VIRTUAL GALA

**November 7, 2020**

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