



## WORLD MEDICAL RELIEF, INC.

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



### 2020 VIRTUAL GALA

*COVID-19 Couldn't Stop Our Celebration*

On a chilly December morning, people around the world could be found watching World Medical Relief's 67th Anniversary celebration on their computer or laptop. With the Covid-19 pandemic still raging, the event was held virtually to keep the guests safe.

On the day of the event, the lobby at World Medical Relief's headquarters was turned into a television studio and control room from where the program was sent out through Zoom and Facebook.

A live chat with CEO Samson kicked off the celebration. The number of participants exceeded expectations and a fascinating conversation took place with a lot of questions fired at Samson. A woman from Mexico asked how World Medical Relief could help with a flood in the state of Tabasco, students wanted to know how World Medical Relief uses donated, not expired, medicines in its aid programs, and a man from the Philippines

joined to give a testimonial about how World Medical Relief kept his wife, who was ill with cancer, alive for fifteen years by donating cancer medications.

After the live chat, the countdown to the official start of the event commenced with many photos from previous events, an introduction to World Medical Relief's Board of Directors, and the sponsors of the event. At twelve - noon - Eastern Standard Time, it was show time!

The event was presented by Beaumont Health and Dr. Ned and Mrs. Marsha Fawaz and hosted by former longtime television anchor Sherry Margolis and motivational speaker, Dr. Sabrina Jackson. The intention of the event was to showcase the impact of World Medical Relief's work locally and internationally and how volunteers play a crucial role.

*Continued on page 3*

**SAMARITAN  
GOOD  
THE**

## CEO NOTES

George V. Samson, Ph.D.



As 2020 is coming to a close, I am relieved to tell you that our agency came through this year relatively unscathed. With your help along with several

emergency grants and the Paycheck Protection Program, we were able to continue our operations and serve our local and international clients with some adjustments to keep staff and volunteers safe.

During this challenging year, we did experience some key personnel changes. Carolyn Racklyeft, our longtime local program director stepped down from that position to hand over the baton to Karen Bush and Raymond Gibson, our pharmacist of over fifteen years, retired to take care of his wife, Ingrid, as she is struggling with health issues. Ray's position was filled with the hiring of Dr. Nassir Albassam. We are grateful to Carolyn and Ray as they each contributed so much to the mission.

In my twenty-nine years at the agency, I had my fair share of challenges. This year, I encountered a



seemingly unsolvable situation. The City of Southfield fined us for storing forty foot containers behind the building as it was a violation of a city code. The containers are crucial to create overflow storage space as the warehouse is really not that spacious considering the amount of goods moving through. With the help from Southfield Mayor, Ken Siver, and Neil Simon, World Medical Relief advisor for special projects, a solution was brokered with the city's planning department. A line of fast growing evergreens was planted on the West side of the property to conceal the back of the building and the containers.

The tree species suggested was expensive and I am very grateful for the following donors who stepped up to make this project reality in a very short amount of time. Thank you Cathy Castro Samson and Selwyn V. Samson, Elsie Consolacion, Nidhal Garmo, Chaplain Frank Julian and Peggy Julian, David and Kathy Bazy, Rebecca Tungol and Loida Moses. A special recognition goes out to Reverend David Lomasney from Integrity International for coordinating the recruitment of volunteers and planting of the trees.

While we are still restricting the number of volunteers in the building to prevent a spread of Covid-19 infection, World Medical Relief continues to be a popular destination for volunteers. Most notably are the young men teams from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' missionary program who quietly lend a steadfast support with the sorting of the medical supplies. We are thankful for their presence as it helps to offset the absence of many of the corporate volunteers who are not allowed to come due to the pandemic.

I cannot thank you all enough for all your help to get us through 2020. This year brought us closer than ever and you made my job easier with all your heartwarming support. My prayers are with you for a safe Holiday Season and I wish you a very Happy and Healthy 2021!



Missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

## CONTINUATION OF 2020 VIRTUAL GALA

Internationally, the impact was perhaps best personified by the story of Majd Faraj. Majd first became active with World Medical Relief through volunteering. As a native of Lebanon and a medical student, he was well aware of how his homeland's unfavorable economic realities were negatively affecting Lebanese citizens. Having gotten to know Dr. George Samson, he asked for advice on getting crucial supplies and medication to the people of Lebanon. Recognizing this commitment and drive to serve others, Dr. Samson designated Majd one of World Medical Relief's ambassadors to Lebanon.

When the Beirut explosion occurred on August 4, 2020, Majd had already established a GoFundMe campaign focused on Lebanese aid; however, that devastating event, which killed hundreds of people and left thousands more injured, prompted donations in excess of Majd's initial \$15,000 goal. Because of Majd's foresight, almost 3,000 people contributed to a campaign that raised a



Majd Faraj receiving his award from George Samson, CEO and Mike Baydoun, Chairman Board of Directors

multitude of the amount first set and sponsored four containers filled with medical supplies to the victims of the blast in Beirut.

The story about volunteers at World Medical Relief never gets old as it is a remarkable one and this year it was no exception. Located in Ferndale, Michigan, and led by Pastor Leo Abad, the Philippine American Ecumenical Church USA (PAECUSA) recently celebrated its 40th anniversary. Every week, PAECUSA volunteers can be found at World Medical Relief, working in various areas on the sorting floor. They truly put their faith into action during the pandemic, arriving at the World Medical Relief just as they had before COVID-19 impacted every aspect of our daily lives. It is not an overstatement to say that without these dedicated angels of mercy, the international shipments, which provide so much for those in need across the globe, would have stopped for the first time in 67 years.

To recognize their extraordinary effort, PAECUSA was honored with the Humanitarian Service Excellence Award.

Other honorees were Ford Motor Company Fund and Carolyn Racklyeft. You will find more about her on page 4-5 and Ford will be mentioned on page 6. For more information about this year's honorees and the 67th Anniversary event, please visit the electronic program book on our website [www.worldmedicalrelief.org/2020-gala-virtual](http://www.worldmedicalrelief.org/2020-gala-virtual)



Pastor Leo Abad and Council Chair Dr. Leds Dela Paz

**SAVE THE DATE  
ANNUAL GALA**



Saturday,  
November 6, 2021

*We hope to see you all next year!*



## CAROLYN RACKLYEFT RECEIVES IRENE M. AUBERLIN AWARD

*Irene M. Auberlin, founder of World Medical Relief, represented an example of how one person can make a difference in the world. Her mission, once described as “turning the sin of waste into a miracle of mercy,” lives on in the minds and hearts of those she has affected.*

It is in her honor that the Irene M. Auberlin Award is presented to an individual who, over time, has displayed the same commitment and dedication to helping the organization fulfill its mission of relieving human suffering throughout the world. At this year's gala, this most prestigious award was given to Carolyn Racklyeft.

Right out of school Carolyn started working at Grace Hospital in downtown Detroit. She worked her way up and became executive secretary to the director. In the meantime, Carolyn was very active in the Lutheran church where she met her future husband Bill who was widowed with 5 children. In 1976, they married and Carolyn retired from Grace Hospital to become overnight a mother of a large family. She and Bill raised 6 children and she now has 13 grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren.

Together with her mother and mother-in-law she was very active in the community. In 1981, an ad in the paper calling for volunteers introduced them to World Medical Relief. Carolyn was the one who spent hours in the office typing “thank you” letters. Apparently her work pleased Mrs. Auberlin and in 1985 she was hired as a part-time typist, then a full-time secretary who also did the payroll.

Eventually, she was promoted to manage the local prescription program for seniors. Under her leadership, other local services were added including a durable medical equipment program, medical supplies, adult diapers/briefs, ostomy supplies and liquid nutrition. Over time, the prescription program expanded to include low income people 18 years and older in the State of Michigan. Thanks to Caro-





Carolyn Racklyeft with Boy Scout Noah Chukwuma

lyn, thousands of low income people were assisted with their medical needs.

In 2010, the blanket relief for the homeless program was transferred to World Medical Relief from the Red Cross and Carolyn collaborated with around 60 partner agencies to distribute between 10,000-15,000 blankets and 5,000 hygiene kits each year. While managing the local programs, Carolyn also processed international applications, was confidential secretary to the Board of Directors and coordinated the volunteer schedule.

Carolyn says, "If you become involved in World Medical Relief and stay long enough to see all the workings and all the programs and can conceive of all the people that they touch, you will be able to talk about this organization for ever. It is in your own community, in your own back yard. And it all extends from there. And when you can say you work for an organization that affects people locally, nationally, and internationally. There are not many that do that...."

On September 8, 2020, after 35 years of dedicated service to humanity, Carolyn stepped down from her role as director of local programs and transitioned to the position of the executive secretary to World Medical Relief's CEO. In recognition of her untiring, selfless devotion in support of the mission of World Medical Relief for the betterment of humanity and to the service of God's sick and poor, the board of directors of World Medical Relief bestowed the Irene M. Auberlin Award upon Carolyn Racklyeft.

*Previous*  
**IRENE M. AUBERLIN**  
*Award Recipients*

Dorothy E. Kresge	1993
Clara L. Kohn	1994
Dr. Harold K. Burch	1995
Jerry F. Leonard	1996
John L. King	1997
George Simon, Sr.	1998
Mary Ann Mahaffey	2000
Lorraine Sievers, M.D.	2002
William N. Genematas	2003
Stella S. Evangelista, M.D.	2004
Mike Baydoun	2005
Donald L. Haney	2006
George V. Samson	2007
Bernardo M. Danan, M.D.	2008
Lorraine Sievers, M.D.	2009
Thomas Park, M.D.	2010
Dorothea Pompfret	2011
Ernestina De Los Santos Mac, M.D.	2016
Kim A. Eagle, M.D.	2017



Ford volunteers assisting with blanket distributions

## BLANKET RELIEF FOR METRO DETROIT

In 2010, the Blanket Relief for Metro Detroit transferred from the Red Cross of Southeast Michigan chapter to World Medical Relief. Since then, thousands of blankets have been distributed each year to area shelters, churches, street ministries, and human service agencies. It is an extraordinary project that exemplifies collaboration and community spirit which is only possible because World Medical Relief has the space to house and distribute these items and the logistical knowhow to carry out this gargantuan task.

The premise is simple - to meet the need of the community. And so, in early September, a letter goes out to partner agencies asking them to indicate what they foresee the need for twin size and crib (baby) blankets will be in the upcoming winter. World Medical Relief will then try to match this need with the help of the community through individual

donors, corporate and foundation grants.

This year's blanket relief is in full swing and almost seven thousand blankets have been picked up thus far by fifty-two partner agencies. Soon, they will also be able to pick up the more than three thousand requested baby blankets. The program goes hand in hand with the distribution of thousands of hygiene kits which will commence in the New Year. Agencies are also tapping into the many other resources that World Medical Relief has like linens, diapers, hats, scarves, sock, and towels.

During the pandemic year, funding was slow coming but at the end the program was greatly helped by our individual donors, a generous donation from Michigan First Credit Union, a grant from Ford Motor Company Fund for baby blankets, and grants

from the Molinello Foundation and Oliver Dewey Marcks Foundation for blankets and hygiene kits. Ford Fund also provided World Medical Relief with more than 50,000 face masks produced by Ford Motor Company which are distributed to the community partners through the blanket relief and also to the individuals who are client of the World Medical Relief's other local programs. Volunteers from the company also assisted with the distribution.

It is an exciting time for Karen Bush, the new local program manager. She says, "I made a point of trying to meet all the groups picking up the blankets, introduce myself and find out how they distribute them and to whom. It was a humbling experience as I met all these wonderful people who are loving on other people - no matter who they are, where they are or in what condition."

World Medical Relief works with many well-known agencies like the Salvation Army, MI Veterans Foundation, Capuchin Soup Kitchen, and Mariner's Inn. A new blanket relief partner agency is P.B.J Outreach,



Ford volunteer holding up Ford masks

a volunteer organization that has a Saturday street ministry that in 20 years never missed a Saturday. Volunteers leave early in the morning and arrive in Detroit at about 7:30 am. According to Gordon Micallef, one of the group's board members who has been involved in the charity for fifteen years, World Medical Relief's blankets are distributed to homeless people on two locations near Cobo Hall along with sandwiches and hot food. "People are waiting for us", he says, "we see people of all ages, all walks of life - some even barefoot - suffering from alcoholism, other addictions and mental illness. These blankets are great; they will keep them warm this winter."



Salvation Army picking up blankets

## 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.



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## VOLUNTEER SATURDAYS

**Jan. 2021:** 9, 16, 23, 30

**Feb. 2021:** 6, 13, 20, 27

**Mar. 2021:** 6, 13, 20, 27

**Apr. 2021:** 10, 17, 24

*(closed on Apr. 3)*

**May 2020:** 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

## 2021 GALA

**November 6, 2020**

## EDITOR:

**Josephine Jabara**



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

