

# BBF GLOBAL RELIEF QUARTERLY

## PITT FOOTBALL TACKLES DISASTER PREP WITH BBF

The Pitt football team scored big off the field when they volunteered at the BBF warehouse, assembling hygiene kits for our Disaster Response program.



## A LETTER FROM VICE PRESIDENT OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT LAURA KELLY

# Preparing and Caring This Summer

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the summer edition of our magazine! As the season unfolds, so do our efforts to make a meaningful difference in the world. This issue spotlights each area of our core programs, as well as our disaster response summer campaign, and an issue near to my heart, our Blossoming Beyond Breast Cancer Fund.

This spring when weather forecasters announced their predictions for the hurricane season, we began working on a fundraiser for BBF's Disaster Response Fund. I hope you've already received our campaign kickoff postcard, igniting a sense of urgency and unity as we prepare for active storm season ahead. Living in an area prone to hurricanes can be daunting, but your support can make a difference. By contributing to BBF's Disaster Response Fund, you not only help communities recover swiftly in the aftermath of a disaster but also enable us to prepare in advance and ensure that resources are readily available for a quicker recovery, including offering grants and dispatching essential items such as hygiene kits, bottled water, and other necessities for recovery.

This issue also contains a story about our Blossoming Beyond Breast Cancer Fund. I was honored to attend a fundraising event in April hosted by our newest Blossoming Beyond partner, Keepers of the Flame (KOTF) Foundation in Georgia. I first met with KOTF in February and was immediately interested in a new program they were developing to offer counseling and therapy services to breast cancer patients. They had everything in place to begin offering services as soon as they received funding. It was an absolute pleasure to be able to present KOTF with a grant from BBF to fund their program.

Our programs would not be possible without the support of donors like you. We are grateful for your commitment to BBF and thank each one of you for your continued support.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura Kelly". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Laura Kelly**  
**VP of Communications and Development**



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# From Our President Ozzy Samad

## MAKING AN IMPACT THROUGH COLLABORATIONS YOUR SUPPORT AT WORK

The email from Lawney Snyder, the CEO of the Eye & Ear Foundation, mentioned Dr. Eugene Myers and Dr. Jose Zevallos, the founding and current Chairs of Otolaryngology at UPMC respectively, wanting to visit BBF to discuss a potential program to get more surgical equipment to countries in need. Lawney said Dr. Myers was a big fan of BBF and it became readily apparent that in addition to being a long-time BBF volunteer and donor, he was a much-vaunted leader in the field of otolaryngology. Similarly, Dr. Zevallos' own standing and expertise would undoubtedly lend itself to the success of any program.



It took me a while to even consistently pronounce the word properly, but more importantly, what exactly was otolaryngology?



*Three generations of Pitt OTO chairmen, left to right: Dr. Jose Zevallos, Dr. Jonas Johnson, and Dr. Eugene Meyers*

Simply put, according to Wikipedia: *Otorhinolaryngology abbreviated ORL and also known as otolaryngology, otolaryngology – head and neck surgery (ORL–H&N or OHNS), or ear, nose, and throat (ENT) is a surgical subspecialty within medicine that deals with the surgical and medical management of conditions of the head and neck.*

*Doctors who specialize in this area are called otorhinolaryngologists, otolaryngologists, head and neck surgeons, or ENT surgeons or physicians. Patients seek treatment from an otorhinolaryngologist for diseases of the ear, nose, throat, base of the skull, head, and neck. These commonly include functional diseases that affect the senses and activities of eating, drinking, speaking, breathing, swallowing, and hearing. In addition, ENT surgery encompasses the surgical management of cancers and benign tumors and reconstruction of the head and neck as well as plastic surgery of the face, scalp, and neck.*

Extensive follow up discussions after our first meeting led to not only the Pittsburgh to Peru initiative, but to also exploring potential programs to similarly assist patients in need in Tanzania, Malawi, and Mozambique. Our ultimate goal is to expand the program to all areas of need around the world.

The reformulated excerpt following is from an article by Drs. Myers, Zevallos, and Craig Smith of the Eye & Ear Foundation in a publication of the American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head & Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS).



## Pittsburgh to Peru: Otolaryngology Excellence on an International Stage

The University of Pittsburgh and the Eye & Ear Foundation are collaborating with Brother's Brother Foundation to positively impact otolaryngology-head and neck surgery patients in Peru.

Dr. Eugene "Gene" Myers has been a leader in training and mentoring physicians from around the world. Recently, AAO-HNS has established the Eugene N. Myers Global Education Fund, which provides funding for otolaryngologists from resource poor countries to visit the United States and improve their knowledge base to enhance the care they provide their patients in their home countries.

Born in Lima himself, according to Dr. Zevallos, a major priority of the Pittsburgh to Peru initiative is to train Peruvian surgeons in the latest advances in a way that can be translated to the realities of caring for complex patients in a developing nation. "Not only does this lack of resources limit care that can be delivered today, but it also hampers the ability to train future otolaryngologists as well," added Dr. Zevallos.

Phase 1 of this project entails the acquisition and donation of instruments and equipment in partnership with Brother's Brother Foundation, which will be sent to hospitals in Peru. The University of Pittsburgh will also provide virtual educational programs for residents in Peruvian cancer programs.

Phase 2 intends to provide Pitt medical school residents with rotations in Peru, surgery fellowships for Peruvian doctors to train in Pittsburgh, as well as establishing a global health track and service projects to address the needs of patients in underserved communities.

Fundraising efforts for this project are already underway and are being led by BBF and the Eye & Ear Foundation. With the help of Dr. Myers and Dr. Zevallos, Mr. Samad sees this as the start of a successful and replicable program to help patients around the world.

"BBF is thrilled to collaborate with UPMC, and Dr. Myers and Dr. Zevallos in particular, on the Peru program. It is an initiative that directly addresses our focus on working with in-country partners to help improve patient wellbeing in underserved communities, while also providing educational opportunities for medical practitioners."

*The printing of this magazine has been generously funded by the Board of Trustees*



## Blossoming Beyond Breast Cancer

**B**BF Global Relief has given a grant to Keepers of the Flame Foundation to provide breast cancer patients and survivors with professional counseling services. Keepers of the Flame Foundation is a nonprofit in Savannah, Georgia whose mission is to empower breast cancer patients to weather their diagnoses both physically and emotionally.

Joyce Williams, the founder and Executive Director of Keepers of the Flame (KOTF), was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2017 at the age of 36. Her 10-month treatment plan saved her life—but it also left her exhausted. “I wasn’t fully prepared for the emotional scars nor how to heal from them,” Williams says. “I was in over my head; the coping skills I’d used my whole life were failing me.”



*Laura Kelly and her husband Col. TK Kelly attended the Keepers of the Flame fundraiser where Laura presented KOTF with their grant.*

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**90%**  
**OF STUDY**  
**PARTICIPANTS**  
**indicated therapy would**  
**have been beneficial**

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Williams shared her experience with others and realized she wasn’t alone.

“It was just the part of a cancer diagnosis that people weren’t talking about yet. With an incredible team of community leaders, survivors, and clinicians we set off to do something about it and started Keepers of the Flame Foundation,” she says.

Keepers of the Flame and Dr. Elisabeth Counselman Carpenter at Adelphi University, conducted a formal research study and found that 90% of breast cancer patients who participated in the study indicated that therapy would have been beneficial. Recognizing the critical need to provide support, KOTF designed a program to address this gap. In April, BBF Vice President of Communications and Development, Laura Kelly, presented Keepers of the Flame Foundation with a grant to fund the program, providing counseling services for breast cancer patients and survivors.

*“It was incredibly moving to see the gratitude and excitement from Keepers of the Flame and the area physicians and surgeons upon receiving the grant. I talked with several doctors who all shared how profoundly impactful this funding will be for their community and in particular, for uninsured patients. They spoke of previous patients they knew would benefit from counseling and therapy services who were unable to access them from lack of insurance. They were grateful BBF’s grant will allow patients like these to now have access to the critical care that will aid their emotional recovery and improve their overall well-being.”*

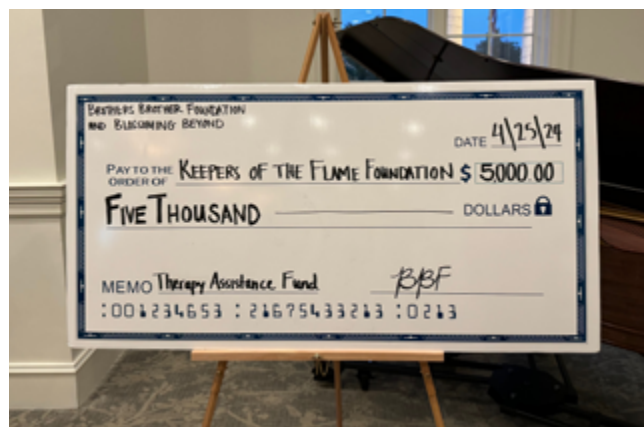
The grant’s impact extends far beyond the metro Savannah area, reaching into the rural corners where healthcare access is often scarce. Interest in the counseling program was immediate and the first patients received therapy through the program at the beginning of April.

“Therapy helps teach personalized coping strategies to help one weather their storm and make it to the lighthouse in the distance, and the partnership we have with BBF makes this possible. We are thrilled to be partnering with BBF in this way,” Williams says.

*To support the Blossoming Beyond Breast Cancer Fund, go to [brothersbrother.org/donate](https://brothersbrother.org/donate) and select Breast Cancer Fund from the drop-down menu.*



*Joyce Williams, founder and executive director of Keepers of the Flame Foundation speaks at their fundraiser.*



## HEALTHCARE

# Making Strides in Local Healthcare

## BBF'S FOURTH MOBILE HEALTH CLINIC IS NOW OPERATIONAL

**I**n April, BBF Global Relief celebrated the inauguration of its fourth mobile health van at a ribbon-cutting ceremony at BBF's warehouse. The van was donated to local healthcare provider Allegheny Health Network and will be used to provide primary care services to individuals in under-served areas.

*"We're in the North Side of Pittsburgh and you don't have to go too far from here to see the needs of people on the streets who are obviously in need," said BBF President Ozzy Samad. "We really wanted to have an impact on our own community."*

The van is equipped with an exam table, sink, and a refrigerator for medicine and vaccine storage. It will be used to provide screenings to adults and children across Western Pennsylvania who do not have access to care due to financial or geographical limitations. Following the exams, health care providers will connect patients with local care resources. This expanded access to healthcare is crucial in ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their socio-economic status, can receive the medical attention they need to lead healthy lives.



*"Caring for everyone often means meeting patients where they are to better engage and retain them in care," said Amy Crawford-Faucher, MD, vice chair, AHN Primary Care Institute. "We are extremely grateful to Brother's Brother Foundation for this significant donation which enables us to reach more people across our region and essentially provide them with a starting point on a path toward improved health and wellness."*

The impact of the mobile health van is already being felt in the local community. Prior to the start of the sports season, the van provided essential physical exams to students, ensuring their readiness for athletic activities while also identifying any underlying health concerns. This proactive approach to healthcare not only promotes physical well-being but also supports the overall development and success of young athletes. Looking ahead, AHN has scheduled regular clinics to commence in June, with the first one slated to coincide with Monroeville Community Day on June 8th. These clinics will serve as vital hubs for delivering primary care services, preventive screenings, and health education to individuals and families in need.



Launched in 2022 in response to the unmet need for specialized eye care in Pittsburgh, the program has since evolved to address a broader range of healthcare needs in underserved communities. BBF has currently donated four mobile health clinics: two in the Pittsburgh area - to Allegheny Health Network and to UPMC Eye and Ear Foundation; to KentuckyCare in Western Kentucky; and to Caridad Center in Palm Beach County, Florida.



*Amy Crawford-Faucher, MD, cuts the ribbon for the primary care mobile health van. Left to right: Kristen Macey, Project Manager at AHN, Heather Daugherty, VP of Population Health at AHN, Dr. Amy Crawford - Faucher, Vice-Chair, AHN Primary Care Institute, Ozzy Samad, BBF President, Terry Murphy, BBF Board Chair, Tom Wentling, BBF Board Member.*

*To support the BBF Mobile Health Clinic Program, go to [brothersbrother.org/donate](https://brothersbrother.org/donate) and select Mobile Health Clinic from the dropdown menu.*

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### A Sunny Solution: Chennai Water Filtration Project

Funding from BBF has facilitated a solar-powered water filtration system at the Velappanchavadi Government School in Chennai, India. The filtration system, which includes a solar array, a solar-powered borewell pump, and a water storage tank with a platform, will provide clean water to the school's 400 students and 12,000 surrounding residents.

The Velappanchavadi Government School serves as a cornerstone for the local community, providing essential educational services. However, a lack of reliable access to clean drinking water posed significant health risks and barriers to education, particularly in the aftermath of natural disasters. BBF partnered with Solar Village Project to address this critical need, installing a solar-powered, 1,000 liter per hour water filtration system to purify the water collected from the school's borehole.

The project began just a month after Cyclone Michaung brought widespread flooding to India's southern region in December 2023. In addition to taking 17 lives, the storm uprooted trees, collapsed walls and submerged roads in knee-deep waters.

The new filtration system has fortified the school and its surrounding community against the impacts of natural disasters by providing a dependable water source during emergencies. Access to clean drinking water will directly contribute to the health and well-being of students and residents, reducing the risk of waterborne diseases.



*The water filtration system is powered by solar panels, preventing the school from incurring additional electricity costs. | Photo courtesy of Solar Village Project*

India's long coastline exposes the continent to 10% of the world's tropical cyclones, putting nearly one third of the population at risk of disease from water contamination and damaged infrastructure.

The drinking water taps at the Velappanchavadi Government School before (left) and after (right) BBF's water filtration project with Solar Village Project. | Photo courtesy of Solar Village Project



A solar-powered borewell pump is installed at the Velappanchavadi Government School in Chennai, India, following BBF Global Relief's grant to Solar Village Project. | Photo courtesy of Solar Village Project





**Ready, Set, Respond!**

**BBF is Prepared For Hurricane Season, Are You?**



## DISASTER RESPONSE

**H**urricane season has arrived—and predictions are indicating a busy year. Researchers at Colorado State University are forecasting an exceptionally active hurricane season for 2024 with 23 named storms. A typical season produces only 14 named storms, and if experts' predictions are correct, this year may be one of the most active hurricane seasons on record.

Water temperatures in the “tropical Atlantic,” the region where storms are most likely to form, are the warmest they’ve been in a decade, creating a more conducive environment for hurricane formation. Meanwhile, cooler-than-normal water temperatures in the central and eastern Pacific Ocean are likely to create La Niña, a weather pattern that increases the chances of tropical cyclones.

Federal weather forecasters say there is an 85% chance of La Niña forming by late fall and a 69% chance of it developing by the summer. If La Nina does arrive during the summer, hurricane season, which peaks in September and lasts until November 30, will likely increase in severity.

While no one knows the exact number of storms that will arrive this year, one thing remains certain: the best way to combat a disaster is through preparation.

## ACTIONS TO TAKE AT THE START OF HURRICANE SEASON

- Assemble a kit with flashlights, a battery-operated radio, a first aid kit, and enough non-perishable food and water to last several days. include spare batteries for flashlights and the radio.
- Discuss an emergency plan with your family. Choose a location outside your neighborhood to meet up. Place written evacuation and communication plans inside emergency kits.
- Practice going through your emergency plan until your family feels confident they can evacuate should the group be separated in the days and hours up before a storm.
- Protect your home by removing outdoor furniture and grills from your backyard. Cover doors and windows with storm shutters or plywood. Check batteries in carbon monoxide detectors.
- Plan ahead by filling your car’s gas tank.
- Pay attention to updates from local authorities. Evacuation may be mandatory.

## HELP OTHERS WEATHER THE STORM.

**100% OF DONATIONS TO BBF’S USA DISASTER RESPONSE FUND ARE USED TO SUPPORT EMERGENCY RELIEF AND LOGISTICS.**

# 2023 US Disaster Response Program by the Numbers

**8** DISASTERS  
RESPONDED TO

**8** STATES  
SUPPORTED

Florida, Ohio, Tennessee,  
Vermont, Alabama, Arkansas,  
Mississippi, Hawaii

**12**  
GRANTS  
PROVIDED

**1,595**  
HYGIENE KITS  
SENT

**7**  
SHIPMENTS  
PROVIDED

**597**  
HARD HATS  
SENT

**6,720**  
CANS OF BABY  
FORMULA

**1,944**  
TARPS SENT

**46,368**  
BOTTLES OF  
WATER SENT

**4,704**  
RESPIRATOR  
FACE MASKS

**5,074**  
RESPIRATOR  
CARTRIDGES



## Teaming Up For Disaster Prep

The University of Pittsburgh Football team visited BBF's warehouse to take part in their annual Day of Service. The team's third year volunteering didn't disappoint—players assembled more than 300 hygiene kits that will be sent to communities impacted by natural disasters in the upcoming hurricane season. Each hygiene kit contains everyday necessities such as soap, tissues, a toothbrush, wipes, feminine hygiene products and wipes.



*To learn more about volunteer opportunities at BBF visit [brothersbrother.org/volunteer](https://brothersbrother.org/volunteer).*

## BBF Responds to War in the Middle East

BBF Global Relief has given grants to support four on-the-ground humanitarian organizations responding to the war in the Middle East.

### FRIENDS OF RAMBAM ASSOCIATION

Rambam Hospital is treating injured patients and soldiers from all over Israel. A grant from BBF has helped the hospital acquire essential medical equipment needed to expand its underground emergency hospital.

### ISRAAID

BBF gave a grant to IsraAID to provide psychosocial support to displaced families and communities affected by the war. The funds have helped establish child-friendly spaces and train psychosocial support specialists on emergency-specific methodologies of intervention.

### ANERA

In Gaza, BBF's grant to ANERA (American Near East Refugee Aid) has provided hot meals, food parcels, hygiene kits, shelter cleanings, and medical donations to displaced persons.

### LIFE FOR RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT

A grant from BBF Global Relief provided food baskets and hot meals to Gazans amid ongoing food shortages. Additional work includes providing tents and latrines in refugee camps.

*Help civilians in Israel and Gaza by donating to [BBF's Middle East Crisis fund](#).*

## EDUCATION

# Turning Pages, Transforming Lives

## LATEST DONATION FROM MCGRAW HILL BRINGS EDUCATION RESOURCES TO THE PHILIPPINES AND HONDURAS

Following a generous donation from McGraw Hill, BBF is sending over 120,000 books and vocabulary cards to schools in the Philippines and Honduras. On-the-ground partners ChildFund International and Children International will distribute nine shipments of education materials to schools teaching kindergartners to ninth graders.



The recent donation is valued at more than \$15 million. BBF has partnered with McGraw Hill to improve education in underserved communities for over 15 years, providing more than \$344 million of education resources to 47 countries.

Last year, donations provided 230,000 books to schools in Jamaica, Sierra Leone, Ghana, and The Gambia. The

donation made an enormous impact, supporting 57 schools in The Gambia, 135 schools in Sierra Leone, and 95 schools in Ghana. Read below to learn the impact of last year's shipments.

*"These textbooks will go a very long way in improving teaching and learning in the school because we were seriously challenged in terms of library books"* Mr. Musa E. Njie, Head teacher of Berending Lower Basic School, The Gambia

*"The books were received well by both teachers and parents of the children. As a result, parents volunteered and came to the school, cleared the library by removing all unused books and replaced them with the donated textbooks in the shelves for use by staff and children".* Sukai Jobe, Head mistress at Jamagen Joka Lower Basic School, The Gambia



**\$15M**  
Value of books  
donated

*“The textbooks are very much relevant to the curriculum and are very easy to read and understand. I can tell you children like them because I do see them using them even though we don’t have a library facility, but the books are kept in one of the empty classrooms in which children can access the books.”* Mrs. Jargne, head teacher of Challa Lower Basic School, The Gambia

*Thank you for these books that were distributed to us. These books would help improve teaching and learning.”* Aildu Adongo, 35 years old, teacher, Ghana

*“My name is David Adjei. Thank you for these wonderful books you have provided us. We would love to get more of this from you.”* David Adjei, 7 years old, student, Ghana.





# Driving Positive Change for Pittsburgh

## BBF GOLF CLASSIC RETURNS FOR FOURTH YEAR

**T**he Fourth Annual BBF Golf Classic will be held July 15th at Fox Chapel Golf Club in Pittsburgh. This year's platinum event sponsors are Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield and Allegheny Health Network, and UPMC Health Plan.

The event raises money for BBF's local healthcare and education initiatives. Previous year's support has helped us expand our Mobile Health Clinic Program and enabled continuing partnerships with The Education Partnership's Adopt-A-School program.

Sponsorships and player foursomes are still available for this year's event. Registration begins at 11 a.m., followed by lunch and a shotgun start at 1 p.m. For more information about how to support the Golf Classic, call us at 412-321-3160 or visit: [brothersbrother.org/support-us/bbf-golf-classic](https://brothersbrother.org/support-us/bbf-golf-classic)



*Caroline and Tom Wentling. Mr. Wentling, a current Board Member and former BBF Board Chair, started the Golf Classic in 2021*

## What You Missed Online

**Facebook:** BBF shipped nearly 1,600 medical supplies to Saint Nicholas Pediatric Hospital (SNH) in Lviv, Ukraine which is serving as one of the few hospitals in the country capable of providing specialized care like pediatric cardiovascular and neurosurgeries.

**Instagram:** Happy World Health Day! BBF is committed to supporting medical communities around the world whether it be through donating much needed medicine and supplies, or by supplying physician-led teams to communities with scarce resources.

**LinkedIn:** BBF Global Relief gave a grant to Heart Healers International to help fund a trip to Uganda that provided life-saving surgeries for 10 patients with congenital heart disease or rheumatic heart disease.

**BBF Blog:** A shipment of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies from BBF supported a training initiative to enhance the quality of maternal and newborn health services in Sierra Leone.

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To make a donation, please visit our website, at [www.brothersbrother.org](http://www.brothersbrother.org)

**THANK YOU!**



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