



Dear Friends,

As we step into spring, we are reminded that relief is more than a moment—it's a commitment. Disasters may strike suddenly, but recovery takes time, resources, and unwavering dedication. At BBF, our approach to humanitarian aid means we are equipped to support a variety of initiatives—from medical shipments and disaster relief grants to education programs and solar infrastructure. With your support, we are not just reacting to disasters—we are building sustainable solutions that help communities recover and thrive.

One of the most impactful ways to sustain BBF's work is by becoming a monthly donor. Reliable, ongoing support allows us to plan ahead, respond immediately when disasters strike, and ensure long-term recovery efforts remain strong. If you haven't already, please consider making a monthly gift to help us provide aid when and where it's needed most.

Another way to leave a lasting impact is through a legacy gift. By including BBF in your estate plans, you can help build a future where relief leads to resilience. To learn more about legacy giving, please call our office—we'd be honored to discuss how your generosity can create a lasting difference.

Thank you for being part of BBF's work. Together, we're creating a lasting foundation for relief, resilience, and recovery.



Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura Kelly".

Laura Kelly
Vice President of Communications and Development

S
T
R
E
T
N
O
C



Photo Credit: Bounty and Soul

- 04 From our President
Ozzy Samad
- 06 Guest Contribution: Establishment of First Otology
Surgical Training Fellowship in Africa
- 09 Mobile Health Update
Community Care in Action
- 10 Guest Contribution: Vita Nova's New Funding from
Brother's Brother Foundation
- 12 Hurricane Helene:
The Role of Local Nonprofits During Disasters
- 16 Trip Report
Bridging the Healthcare Gap in Guatemala
- 18 Hurricane Milton:
Guatemalan Maya Center




FROM OUR PRESIDENT



From responding to hurricanes and wildfires to addressing critical healthcare needs – your support making a difference in the lives of so many.

By Ozzy Samad
BBF President

Whether speaking to the media about our response to a disaster, signing thank you letters, or writing a note of appreciation to a donor, the one thought that always stays with me is that of *We couldn't do it without you*. As the new year gets underway and BBF responds to the Los Angeles wildfires soon after Hurricanes Helene and Milton, our appreciation and gratitude for your support could not be greater. Your impact in making a difference in so many lives is felt through BBF's regular relief work around the world, and by those in dire need facing crises here at home.



Similarly to Hurricanes Helene and Milton, BBF's response to the California wildfires is centered around our disaster response strategy which broadly encompasses three phases:

1. Providing financial support to:
 - a. Foodbanks to address the immediate needs of those impacted through the purchase of critical supplies such as food and water
 - b. Healthcare organizations such as Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), FQHC Look-Alikes, and Free Clinics that provide medical care and counseling
 - c. Local community nonprofits offering shelter, mental healthcare, humanitarian supplies, legal aid, affordable housing, animal rescue, and other essential community-focused services spanning from acute response through long-term recovery
2. Sending relief shipments of requested humanitarian and medical supplies such as blankets, hygiene kits, nutritional supplements, water, diapers, cleaning products, PPE, goggles, wipes, and generators or other needed items
3. Providing recovery and resilience support including infrastructure repairs and upgrades if and as needed (for example, repairing damage to free clinics in the Carolinas after Hurricane Helene or putting solar panels on outlying clinics in Puerto Rico after the 2017 hurricanes)

As the initial part of our response, BBF donated \$100,000 to two food banks in the Los Angeles area. Our financial support to partners will

continue given the generous donation we have received from both individual donors and the foundation community nearing three quarters of a million dollars as of this writing. BBF concurrently sent two truckloads of supplies including over 250,000 N95 masks donated by the Allegheny Health Network (AHN), 10 pallets of water from Giant Eagle equaling 20,000 bottles, along with thousands of hygiene kits donated and packed by organizations and community members across Pittsburgh and the surrounding areas. We are also sending microwave ovens and refrigerators donated by AHN, safety equipment from MSA, disinfecting wipes and cleaning supplies from Apter Industries, and additional N95 masks from Ohio Health Systems.

BBF's response to the wildfires continues to evolve with the assessment of damage and needs across all impacted areas. We expect our ongoing relief efforts to somewhat mirror those of Hurricanes Helene and Milton where BBF has supported and worked with twenty-five different organizations and sent eleven shipments to address the needs of the those affected. These include foodbanks, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), free & charitable clinics, local non-profit community associations, and public-school districts. The one new area that we were specifically asked to consider by a foundation donor given the wide-ranging devastation caused by the wildfires was that of animal rescue and welfare. This had been something we were looking at on a personal level so were pleased to incorporate it into BBF's response.

Thank you so much for your trust and support – *We could not do it without you!*

Establishment of First Otology Surgical Training Fellowship in Africa: In Person and Remote Learning to Train the Future of Otology in Africa.

By Greg Basura, MD, PhD
Professor, University of Pittsburgh Department of Otolaryngology,
Head and Neck Surgery

Preface by BBF President Ozzy Samad:

As you may know, a major part of BBF's work includes sending medicines, medical supplies, and equipment to partners in need all around the world. As a complement to these relief efforts, we also support the impactful work our physician partners who are helping with both the ongoing training of their colleagues both near and far, and the strengthening of health systems where need be.

One such dedicated physician with a passion for service to others, is Dr. Greg Basura. Per his bio, Dr. Basura is an experienced neurotologist, educator, and funded surgeon-scientist. He is a leader in global otolaryngology outreach and has worked to develop sustainable educational and clinical initiatives in underserved nations. He is the current Chair of the Humanitarian Committee for the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery. Along with Drs. Johan Fagan and Tashneem Harris in Capetown, South Africa, Dr. Basura helped launch the first otology fellowship in Africa and continues to work closely with the fellows through online education and biannual trips to South Africa. In addition to his clinical and research roles, Dr. Basura is leading global otolaryngology efforts for the University of

Pittsburgh Department of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, including oversight of our international educational programs and ongoing work in South Africa, Mozambique, and Peru.

BBF's work with Dr. Basura and his colleagues, includes supporting and expanding his Fellows program in South Africa. Here, otolaryngologists from other countries in Africa come to further their training and return to their home countries to assist patients in need. Dr. Basura envisions having similar Fellows programs in other countries also given the shortage of such specialists. An additional goal is to better equip medical facilities to accommodate surgeries as needed. On an operational level, one of BBF's first tasks is to ship a donated microscope (please envision a dentist's chair equivalent with a similarly sized accompanying unit connected to a large arm) to their collaborating medical facility in South Africa. BBF has also shipped surgical instruments to a hospital in Peru to assist with their otolaryngology program and will be supporting the building of a hospital in Mozambique.

This is only the beginning of the partnership and Dr. Basura writes in more detail about his work in South Africa in the article following:



The University of Cape Town, South Africa

Otologic disease within low-income countries (LIC) poses many challenges. Limited training opportunities for physicians in LICs to gain necessary surgical skills to treat otologic problems within a rapidly expanding population exists. Millions suffering from chronic ear disease (i.e., chronic otitis media with cholesteatoma) and hearing loss in LICs, requires changes in how otolaryngology/head and neck surgeons are trained to meet these demands. A sustainable dedicated otologic surgical training fellowship beyond otolaryngology residency training is one approach/solution to provide focused training in medical and surgical management of ear disease.

The Department of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery at the University of Cape Town (UCT), in Cape Town South Africa has been a leader in otolaryngology/head and neck surgery training and a model for the development of dedicated surgical subspecialty fellowship training in Africa for nearly 2 decades. Under the direction of Professor and former Chair, Dr. Johan Fagan, head and neck surgical fellowship training has been well established as a proven model for subspecialty

surgical training beyond residency for African general surgeons and otolaryngologists. Now, in addition to the one-year head and neck fellowship that was started 18 years ago, one-year fellowship training opportunities have been established at UCT in pediatric otolaryngology, rhinology/anterior cranial base and now, as of March 2022, in otology.

Dr. Tashneem Harris, under the funded support of the cochlear implant company MedEl (Medical Electronics; Innsbruck Austria), initiated the first dedicated otology fellowship program at UCT in South Africa in March 2022. The first fellow, Dr. Erasmus Muganda from Harare Zimbabwe was selected and began training in April 2022. Dr. Muganda completed this one-year dedicated otology fellowship in April 2023 and has returned to Harare to practice with a focused emphasis on otologic surgery including cochlear implantation. At the time of this article, he has performed at least 14 cochlear implant surgeries in his home country of Zimbabwe and in neighboring Botswana. Last year he also led the 6th annual temporal bone dissection course in Harare that was attended by over a dozen international African trainees.



Dr. Greg Basura at the BBF warehouse with donated surgical instruments.



Surgical microscope in an Ophthalmological clinic.

One of BBF's first tasks is to ship a microscope - similar to the one pictured above - to a medical facility in South Africa.

The second fellow, Dr. Peter Appiah-Thompson, otolaryngologist from Cape Coast Ghana trained at UCT from April 2023-April 2024. He has since returned home to Ghana and is now a sectional leader within his department and actively engaged in specialized otology care.

Dr. Lillian Mohkoh, from Nairobi Kenya is the current and third otology fellow. She is scheduled to complete fellowship training in April 2025 and will return to Nairobi shortly thereafter.

The fourth fellow, Dr. Amina Seguya, from Kampala Uganda will begin her one-year training fellowship in March 2025.

During fellowship, trainees spend a dedicated 1-year at UCT in Cape Town and spend their time in the otology clinic and in the operating theater under the daily direction of Dr. Harris. To supplement their training, Dr. Gregory Basura (otologist from the University of Pittsburgh), delivers a weekly online/virtual lecture series every Friday morning where otology topics and cases are discussed. These lectures cover all topics of otology, audiology, vestibular neuroscience with associated clinical cases to supplement the fellow's and UCT residents' training. This hybrid approach to training has been quite effective and has continued from the first to the current fellow.

In addition to the weekly virtual lectures, Dr. Basura started the online African Otological Society (AfOS; www.afotos.org) in November 2023. This monthly held online society is designed to create community within otology and audiology in Africa to expand educational resources and training opportunities. The goal is to establish multiple dedicated otology fellowships across the continent of Africa and ideally the AfOS will serve as an overseeing body to standardize training and to facilitate ongoing training, educational and community opportunities.



AHN Pediatrics team at Baldwin High School preparing to provide pediatric sports physicals

Community Care in Action: Mobile Health Update

The AHN Primary Care and Pediatrics Mobile Clinic recently provided healthcare services at multiple community sites, focusing on areas with high socioeconomic challenges and limited access to care. Patients received primary care, influenza vaccinations, hypertension screenings, and pediatric sports physicals, helping ensure students met school health requirements. Schools reported improved vaccine compliance, allowing more students to participate in sports and stay up to date on essential health guidelines.

The clinic also partnered with AHN Healthy Food Center events, offering medical care alongside food distribution. Patients appreciated the convenience of accessing both healthcare and nutritional support in one visit.

We cannot put a price on a person feeling that they matter. When we provide mobile health services and go into someone's world, not expecting them to come into a traditional clinic setting, they feel that they matter. And they do. Their experience matters, their overall health and wellness matter, their time and access to care matters.

Vita Nova's New Funding from Brother's Brother Foundation: Supporting Employment Loss Due to Hurricanes

By Ashley Berry
Director of Development & Community Relations at Vita Nova

Vita Nova, a nonprofit organization committed to assisting former foster youth, and other homeless youth ages 18-25, has recently received a generous grant from the Brother's Brother Foundation to address the growing issue of job loss caused by hurricanes Debbie, Beryl, Helene, and Milton that passed through Florida. This new funding is crucial in helping the organization expand its services to youth who have been significantly affected by the devastation of natural disasters, offering them a pathway to recovery and sustainable employment opportunities.

Hurricanes have long been a source of disruption and devastation, particularly for vulnerable communities. In recent years, the frequency and severity of these storms have increased, leading to widespread destruction of homes, businesses, and infrastructure. As a result, many individuals have faced job loss, displacement, and financial insecurity. Vita Nova recognizes that these impacts extend far beyond the immediate aftermath of the storms, as individuals often struggle to regain stable employment and rebuild their lives. The new funding from the Brother's Brother Foundation is a vital lifeline for our youth, as it will enable Vita Nova to provide a range of services aimed at helping them navigate the challenges of unemployment, housing instability, and overall recovery.

The grant will be used to expand Vita Nova's employment assistance programs, which are designed to support youth in finding meaningful and sustainable work. This includes job training, resume building, interview preparation, and career counseling. Many of the individuals impacted by the hurricanes may face additional barriers to employment, such as lack of access to transportation, childcare, or education. With this funding, Vita Nova will be able to provide the necessary resources and support to address these challenges, ensuring that those affected by the hurricanes have the tools they need to re-enter the workforce and secure stable employment.

In addition to employment support, the funding will also allow Vita Nova to provide housing assistance to those displaced by the storms. Many individuals

who lose their homes in hurricanes are forced to live in temporary shelters or crowded conditions, which can exacerbate mental and physical health challenges. The funding will help Vita Nova secure safe, stable housing options for these displaced individuals, offering them the peace of mind and security they need to focus on rebuilding their lives.

Furthermore, the collaboration with the Brother's Brother Foundation highlights the importance of community partnerships in times of crisis. The Brother's Brother Foundation has a long history of supporting disaster relief and recovery efforts, and their commitment to helping Vita Nova underscores the power of collaboration in addressing the needs of vulnerable populations. Through this partnership, Vita Nova will be able to extend its reach and enhance its capacity to serve youth affected by hurricanes, ensuring that they receive the comprehensive support they need during this difficult time.

In conclusion, the funding from the Brother's Brother Foundation marks a significant step forward in Vita Nova's mission to support youth facing employment loss and housing instability due to hurricanes. With this vital grant, Vita Nova can continue to provide essential services that help individuals regain their footing and rebuild their lives. As the community recovers from the devastation caused by these storms, the partnership between Vita Nova and the Brother's Brother Foundation offers hope and a brighter future for those who have been impacted.

Vita Nova youth participating in a GED class.
Photo Credit: Vita Nova



Hurricane Helene: The Role of Local Nonprofits During Disasters

By Julia van den Bergh
Director of Strategic Initiatives

In the winter newsletter, I described BBF’s network of partners on the ground, focusing on Foodbanks and Free & Charitable Clinics. As a short recap, BBF’s disaster response begins with analytics, but is shaped, refined, and implemented through human connection. We started by mapping organizations in the anticipated path of disasters and created databases of potential partners on-the-ground such as foodbanks, nonprofit healthcare providers, and local community associations. As the disasters evolved, we connected with partners across the southeast, who painted a full picture of how and where our support was most needed. This is why we invest so much time in researching partners and coordinating with them – their insight is invaluable.

Today, I’m excited to share stories from our partner local community associations and nonprofits. Hurricane Helene landed in late September 2024, but relief efforts are still in full swing and will be for the foreseeable future. All disaster responses go through stages, starting with acute needs such as food, water, shelter, emergency medical care, and communication. After this, more stable living situations, legal advice, accessible healthcare, and fresh food become a priority. Long-term activities include community planning, mental health, affordable housing, and infrastructure repair.

Amy Cantrell, one of our local partners and Co-Director of Beloved Asheville, described their response to each of these stages. Beloved Asheville is now building a community of affordable housing called

“Beloved Villages” for those who lost their homes during Helene.

“BeLoved Asheville is dedicating all our resources to help everyone in our mountain home. In the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, we have been on the ground providing essential aid to those affected in Western North Carolina focusing on the most impacted and the most vulnerable.

We are now serving 15,000 people daily in impacted zones. We have also worked in medium-term recovery providing temporary water infrastructure to get schools and childcare centers open and to provide temporary shelters for winter including RVs, yurt-style tents with heat and bathrooms, and tiny homes... We are working for long-term recovery through policy advocacy, home repair to homes with major damage that were not insured, and to re-home Hurricane survivors that lost everything.” Amy Cantrell, Co-Director, Beloved Asheville

Two of BBF’s partners near Asheville focus on supporting farmers and connecting people with fresh, healthy food. Canned and prepared food is of vital importance during the acute phase of a disaster, but communities voice requests for fresh, pre-washed ingredients as the months wear on.

The Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP)’s mission is to help their network of 850 Appalachian farms thrive, link farmers to markets and supporters, and build healthy communities through connections to local food. In the acute stage, ASAP provided Immediate Needs Grants for farmers. Within three weeks of the storm, they connected directly with over 100 farms and 25 farmers markets. Community members enrolled in Medicaid and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits gained access to local fruit and vegetables across 23 counties through ASAP’s Farm Fresh for Health incentive programs.

When children returned to school, ASAP’s Growing Minds Farm-to-School program matched educational sites with farms for local purchasing of meals and snacks. ASAP is currently planning the Business of Farming Conference in February, during which local farmers plan for long-term recovery.

“A grant from BBF will help ASAP to sustain responsive programming critical for supporting farms and communities impacted by Helene through next phases of recovery... One farmer shared that within the chaos of the storm’s aftermath, ‘ASAP offered clear steps of where to start and knowledgeable and supportive staff that helped address my specific needs’. BBF funding will help support both individualized assistance to farmers and dual benefit programs that support small family farms as well as households experiencing food and nutrition insecurity. Support from BBF will fill an important gap in covering the time and care required to continue these core dual benefit programs. This will be key in helping impacted farms and communities move towards stabilization for short- and long-term recovery.” – Nora Scheff, Development Director, ASAP



Bounty & Soul, located slightly east of Asheville in Black Mountain, NC, is another community-driven organization working at the intersection of food, farms, and health. In the three-week aftermath

of Hurricane Helene, Bounty & Soul partnered with the World Central Kitchen to provide 2,000 hot meals daily, delivered via pickup trucks or on foot to 19 of the hardest hit neighborhoods, along with requested supplies and equipment. They also provided fresh ingredients to both local restaurateurs and volunteer chefs making meals for impacted individuals. The MANA food bank, which served 18 counties in their region, was completely washed away, so Bounty & Soul took responsibility for the perishable food while MANA rebuilt.

Within a month, Bounty & Soul re-opened large-scale markets and Farmers Market Truck, providing fresh produce to over 5,375 people weekly, while their Benevolent Box program continued to deliver food boxes to households with medical and transportation challenges.

“We are focusing on purchasing food from local and regional farmers to support the sustainability of our local food system.... Our overarching strategy is to build increasing efficiencies into our food sourcing, purchasing and distribution systems so as to be able to meet the growing need for fresh food for Helene affected communities while we also support the local food economy. These efficiencies will allow us to serve more communities that we have already identified as in high need, investing in restoring stability for these households with food, and necessary home goods.” - Ali Casparian, Executive Director, Bounty & Soul



Photo Credit: Bounty and Soul



Photo Credit: Legal Aid of North Carolina

Our partner network brought a new need to my attention: legal support. I think it's safe to say that many of us struggle to fully understand insurance and government programs during the best of times. Adding the loss of a home, income, power, and cellphone/internet service can make navigating insurance and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grants exponentially more difficult.

Legal Aid North Carolina, a nonprofit that provides free legal help, employs a team of attorneys just for this purpose. Legal Aid created a dedicated Helene line to the statewide helpline, staffing it with 10 temporary workers to cut down on wait times. The attorneys inform individuals of their rights, apply for or appeal recovery fund assistance, intervene against fraudulent contractors and unethical landlords, assist with the recovery of necessary legal documents, and address many other disaster-related needs. BBF's grant helped Legal Aid NC operate the Helene hotline until additional federal funding arrives late 2025.

“In the aftermath of Helene, we mobilized our project team and Western NC offices with several strategies to provide urgent assistance in Western NC. We know these urgent strategies will connect with and prevent fraud and additional harm to affected families. However, our response is there for the long-term. Our staff across the state are supporting Western NC offices in staffing Red

Cross shelters, FEMA centers, public library clinics, and other community-based efforts to connect with affected families on a variety of disaster issues. We manage the LANCMobile (a mobile disaster response unit) to reach rural places, with Starlink wifi access on board. Recognizing the need for comprehensive support, the Disaster Relief Project serves as a ‘one-stop-shop’ for locating available resources and has hired additional disaster attorneys and pro bono coordinators to help clients with medical, food, housing, and other basic needs.” - Missy Hatley, Chief Development Officer, Legal Aid NC

A key component of disaster relief is mental health. To address this, BBF partnered with All Souls Counseling and the Buncombe County School Foundation.

All Souls Counseling Center's (ASCC) mission is to provide quality mental health counseling, outreach, and education, with a focus on those who are uninsured and underinsured in Western NC. In the aftermath of Helene, ASCC opened “Comfort Care Sites” in collaboration with FEMA, ran free online Mental Health Mondays in partnership with the Asheville Chamber of Commerce, and facilitated meetings for a range of community partners to help people process the impact of the hurricane. Long-term, ASCC will focus on a campaign in collaboration with media outlets to raise awareness of mental health and the suicide prevention hotline.

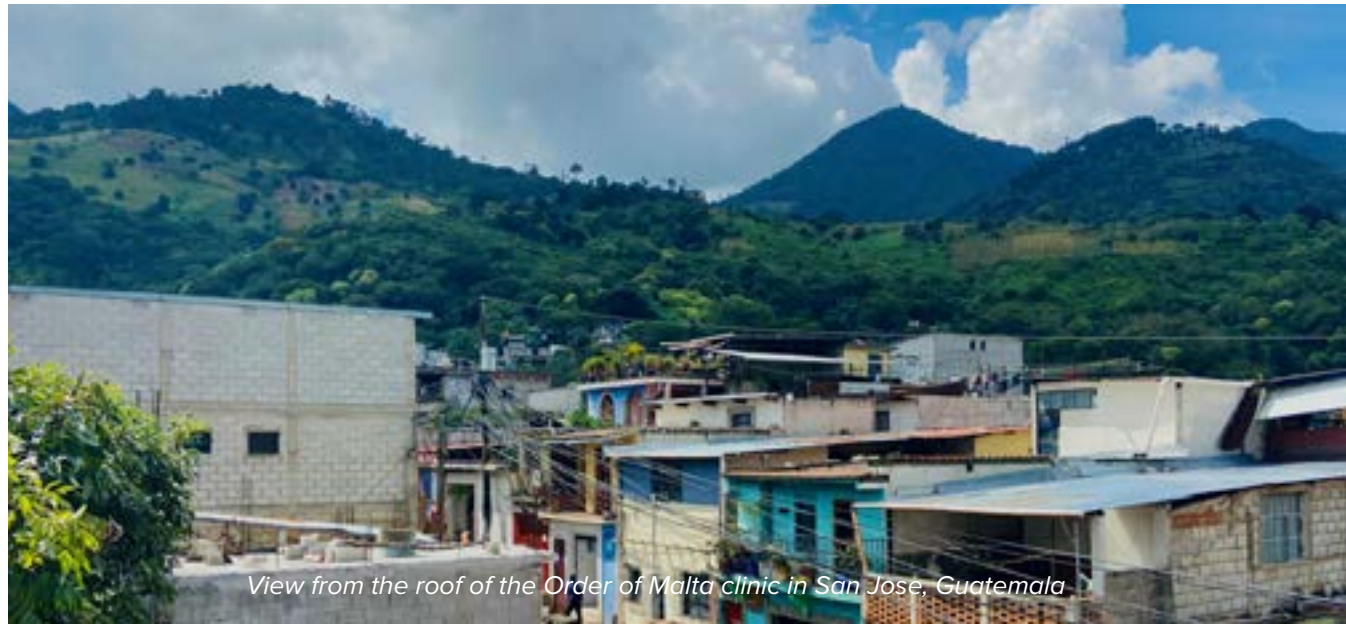


Photo Credit: All Souls Counseling Center

“In line with our core mission and in the wake of Hurricane Helene, we have expanded our service availability and placed therapists at “comfort care sites” close to recovery resource locations to offer mental health check-ins and support. This makes it possible for ASCC to meet some of the critical needs of our fragile, yet resilient community, and to reduce logistical barriers for individuals accessing help. We are flexible and these sites can change as the community needs evolve. Through this new mental health crisis work, our goal is to help individuals tackle the small actions they can now as they begin the long recovery period toward improving their well-being and finding hope.” - Meredith Switzer, Executive Director, All Souls Counseling

Buncombe County Schools (BCS) is the public school system overseeing education in Buncombe County, NC, including parts of Asheville. The BCS Foundation launched a mental health initiative immediately after Helene in the wake for four student deaths, featuring new therapeutic tools to help students process the impact of Helene and a Calm Room for faculty and staff where “they can talk together about their experiences, laugh and cry together, and heal together.”

“We would like to be able to fund this restorative practice at all 46 schools in our district.... We feel that this would not only impact faculty and staff members, but in a larger sense impact the children they work with as well. This would impact all school staff and faculty and the 22,000 students we serve... We would also like to provide the five hardest hit elementary schools... to purchase sand trays and supplies for therapeutic healing to be used by the counselors. This was a tool that was recommended by Cheri Lovre to help students have a hands-on activity to deal with the trauma they experience.” - Christy Cheek, Executive Director, BCS Foundation



View from the roof of the Order of Malta clinic in San Jose, Guatemala

Bridging the Healthcare Gap in Guatemala

By Emily Umble
Assistant Director of Programs

I had the privilege of traveling to Guatemala in November of last year with BBF Global Relief partner, Food for the Poor. When I arrived in Guatemala, I quickly realized the magnitude of the healthcare challenges faced by its people. The journey I embarked on revealed not only the immense need for healthcare but also the transformative power of compassion and aid. I was based in Guatemala City and on our first day, traveled from there to Mixco where the Order of Malta (OOM) administrative offices and warehouses are located. The Order of Malta is one of the biggest organizations in Guatemala that distributes BBF donations, mainly healthcare supplies. This 2-day tour, guided by OOM employees, consisted of visits to various clinics, hospitals, and patients' homes. It was a lot to take in in a 2-day span, but there was much to cover in order to grasp the impact our donations have in different areas of the country.



Emily Umble, left, with staff from Association for a Better Life in Villa Canales, Guatemala.

DAY 1: MIXCO AND VILLA CANALES

We began in Mixco where I was able to meet with several of the Order of Malta staff and to meet the many organizations and emergency and healthcare workers that had either arrived to pick up their donations orders or simply to show their appreciation to BBF and Food for the Poor for our support of their healthcare system. Representatives from hospitals and non-profits, firefighters, and emergency medical technicians were all there as recipients of BBF donations. I witnessed so many BBF donated medicines, durable medical equipment and medical supplies being loaded from the OOM docks on to the vehicles of community associations. From OOM, I was driven to a healthcare clinic in Villa Canales where we met the clinic director and a few patients who were there to receive their medicine and wheelchair donated by BBF. As I watched the wheelchair being given to an elderly stroke patient, it hit me how something as simple as a wheelchair could be life changing. It wasn't just about the physical aid—it was about giving patients a sense of dignity and hope that they might have lost otherwise.

DAY 2: TEJAR, ANTIGUA, SAN JOSE

The second day of my trip started with a visit to the Tejar Health Center. I spoke with their director, physician, and pharmacist and was given a tour of the pharmacy and learned of the ways in which our donated medicines serve as a supplement to their various inventory challenges. We went from Tejar to Antigua to observe the various departments of Hospital Pedro De Bethancourt and understand the needs of a Tier B hospital and the ways in which our donations, such as gowns, catheters, hospital beds, and wheelchairs have allowed them to provide even the most basic types of treatments.

Our last stop was in San Jose to visit OOM's free healthcare clinic. We accompanied their

pharmacist on home visits in some of the most remote areas where patients rely on deliveries of medications for treating conditions such as high cholesterol, diabetes, infections, and high blood pressure. These patients expressed immense gratitude to BBF for enabling them to continue their treatments, focus on caring for their loved ones, and maintain their ability to work and support their families. One of the most moving moments of my trip was meeting a 72-year-old widow in her home who is the primary caretaker for her grandson. She relies on the diabetes and cholesterol lowering medicines BBF provides. She shared how our donations allowed her to continue caring for her grandson and to continue her work of selling her homemade cheese that she carries in baskets on her head to town. Stories like hers are what keep the mission of BBF alive.



BBF's donation provided several medications.

My trip to Guatemala opened my eyes to the challenges faced by so many people, but it also reminded me of the incredible power of community and global collaboration. More than half of the population in Guatemala struggles to afford food, forcing them to neglect doctor appointments, treatments, and urgent care. I was moved by the incredible impact of BBF's aid (a total of 31 healthcare containers shipped to Guatemala in 2024) helping to navigate a complex and overwhelmed healthcare system. I'm more inspired than ever to continue my work through BBF, and I encourage you to explore how you too can make a difference in the lives of those who need it most.



Hurricane Milton: Guatemalan Maya Center

By Julia van den Bergh
Director of Strategic Initiatives

When Milton hit in early October 2024, BBF’s partner network led us to the Guatemalan Maya Center, a community-based nonprofit serving uprooted children and families in Florida’s Palm Beach County and other areas. The nonprofit was launched to serve the Guatemalan population fleeing the Silent Genocide in the 1980s, and through the community they have built, they are able to serve a population relatively detached from the local safety net.

During the Guatemalan genocide (also known as the Silent Holocaust), the Guatemalan military government massacred the Maya Indigenous civilian population during the Guatemalan Civil War (1960-1996). After fleeing to the United States, many Maya refugees struggled to establish themselves in their new home. Father Frank O’Loughlin founded The Guatemalan-Maya Center to lobby and advocate for the migrant community. The nonprofit now runs multiple programs

including community outreach, a food bank, early literacy centers, and a medical clinic.

Mariana Blanco, Director of Operations shared that, “A large part of the community we serve are Indigenous Maya folks from Guatemala, though we will assist anyone who walks through our door... Our community is primarily made up of farm workers and day-laborers and the services we provide are bridges to the language and cultural barriers that exist within our communities. Annually we serve over 16,000 families.”

Milton’s tornadoes devastated farming communities between West Palm Beach and the Glades, such as Loxahatchee. The housing destruction has an outsized impact on the Maya population, as it is common for multiple families to live in a single-family home. Across the board, members of the Maya community were physically injured, lost power, and faced food insecurity and unemployment.

Mariana and her team used BBF’s grant to provide assistance to those directly impacted by the tornadoes. This initiative helped people find new homes, buy food, cover medical expenses, and address the needs of children and babies.

“We pride ourselves on listening to the needs of our community and meeting very individual needs, knowing that one-size does not fit all.... We recognize that because of the history our community has, trust is lacking between our communities and services in place to support them, and oftentimes our folks won’t seek help due to that same mistrust. We are here to help bridge those gaps and ensure that the assistance that is available for our community is going directly to meet those needs.” - Mariana Blanco, Director of Operations, Guatemalan Maya Center

STAFF

OZZY SAMAD, President

ERIK RYAN , Chief Operating Officer/ Chief Financial Officer

LAURA KELLY, Vice President of Communications and Development

LIAM CARSTENS, Vice President of Programs

TANNER ROWE, Director of Operations

JULIA VAN DEN BERGH, Director of Strategic Initiatives

KASEY HELTON, Assistant Director of Communications and Development

BOARD

Chair
Eric Saks, Covestro

Vice Chair
Svetlana Faktorovich, M.D.
Boca Raton Regional Hospital

Treasurer
Bryant Mitchell, F.N.B. Corporation

Secretary
Michael Maselli
Allstate Insurance Company

Medical Director
Deborah K. McMahon, M.D.
University of Pittsburgh

President, Ex-Officio Trustee
Ozzy Samad
Brother’s Brother Foundation

Divya Annamraju
Bayer

Christina Briscoe Abath, M.D.
Boston Children’s Hospital

Douglas Holmes
Holmes, Hollister & Company

Rebekah Hughey, M.D.
Highmark Wholecare

Graham F. Johnstone, M.D.
Greater Pittsburgh Orthopedic Associates (retired)

EMILY UMBLE, Assistant Director of Programs

ANTONELLA FERRARO, Accounting and Bookkeeper

SARAH BECHEK, Development Coordinator

MICHELLE LITTLE, Volunteer Coordinator

ROB MILLER, Warehouse Manager

PAUL BABINSACK, Assistant Warehouse Manager

WILLIAM NEVERDON, Driver, NCA

Phillip D. Jones
International Financial Management Consultant (retired)

Agnes Kielian, M.D.
Boston Children’s Hospital

Robert Mangino
Independent Radio Personality

Chronis Manolis
UPMC Health Plan

Terrence H. Murphy, Esq.
Littler Mendelson, P.C.

Santiago Pujadas
Imagine Pharma

Imran Qadeer, M.D.
Allegheny General Hospital

Aref Rahman, M.D.
Veterans Healthcare Association
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System

William Simmons, M.D.
University of Pittsburgh

William Simpson
Simpson & McCrady, LLC

Ngoc Thai, M.D., Ph.D.
Holy Name Medical Center

1200 Galveston Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15233
412-321-3160
info@brothersbrother.org

Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage Paid
Pittsburgh, PA
Permit No. 797



CONTRIBUTE & MAKE
MEANINGFUL CHANGE

JOIN OUR CAUSE

Brother's Brother Foundation relies upon the generosity of our donors who want to make a difference. Monetary donations make it possible to continue our health, infrastructure, disaster response, and educational programs around the globe.

To make a donation, please visit our website, at www.brothersbrother.org

THANK YOU!



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