



# HILLSIDE HEALTH CARE INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

March 2010

## A Decade Behind Us; A Future Ahead!

Hillside just completed its first decade in Belize, and we enter the second with renewed optimism. Yes, it has been a roller coaster experience at times, but we are thrilled today to be in the best position of our history. The past few months have been a whirlwind of activity, but now the dust is settling and the future is looking clear and bright.

God continues to bless us with amazing long term volunteers. This past September, we bid farewell to the wonderful Polson family who served through Hillside for one year, and we welcomed the Thibaults—Dan, Maria, and their high school daughter, Niki. Dan and Maria are seasoned nurse practitioners who have worked internationally for years: in the Dominican Republic for two years, the Philippines for 5 years, and Belize for 5 years. During their time in Belize, they adopted Niki when she was just two days old. She is the youngest of their five children. They are excited to bring her back to Belize to finish school, and they look forward to settling in Punta Gorda long term. They bring very strong leadership to Hillside as co-medical directors. Dan grew up on a farm in Kansas, and Maria is from the Philippines, growing up in a coastal village. They met there when Dan was doing community organizing and Maria was finishing nurse training.

Recently, the Thibaults and former executive director, Joyce Lopez, hired two key staff members—Penny Leonard, an American/Belizean RN, and Cali Zimmerman, a Peace Corps volunteer with a BS in public Health and minor in Business. Ms. Penny, in addition to her nursing experience, brings a wealth of business and administrative skills as our new executive director. And Cali will coordinate the educational segment of our program, arranging presentations in schools and for other groups and facilitating the educational components for incoming students.



Hillside Clinic Staff

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Dan, Maria, and Nichte (Niki)

Cali has a comprehensive understanding of Belize through the Peace Corps.

But the blessings continue! Betty Conley, a retired nurse, has felt called to mission work for many years and is delighted—as we are—to finally be in a position to volunteer for a full year at Hillside. Her excitement is contagious as she joins our team to help lighten the load by overseeing the Clinic's extensive Home Visit program and facilitating the Concordia Nursing partnership with Hillside.

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### The Many Colors of Hillside—A Muralist Brings an Extraordinary Gift

Janet Eassley began her professional work in art as a commitment to contribute her energy for positive change in the world. She has worked as an art instructor and facilitator for the creation of community murals as well as creating personal paintings and commissions for private and public organizations. She recently came to Hillside to bring a one-of-a-kind gift...a mural that depicts healthy people living healthy lives. She worked with local youth to complete the project. On her website she explains the joy of creating murals:

*While painting outdoor murals, I have watched the sun rise descend on the peaks of the Sierras, been scolded by Osprey, serenaded with Mexican ballads, and honored by the stories evoked by passersby.*

*Janet’s letter to Hillside:*

*I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to paint the mural at Hillside Clinic. My husband and I learned much about people of the Toledo District while working with the students from Toledo Community College and the maintenance staff at Hillside. We learned even more while discussing with staff what to include in the mural.*

*The staff was great! Working safely on the scaffolding, and having protection from sun and rain were very important to us. Under Evert’s direction, they were always helpful, good-humored, and patient. We realize that the presence of the scaffolding and the necessity of blocking one stairway added extra work for everyone. Acquiring supplies is invariably time consuming, and I thank the Thibault family for making all the arrangements for paint and scaffolding. What might appear to be a small contribution to a project can make a large difference towards its success.*

*The process of creating murals involves many more people than just the painters. We worked with many in considering potential designs that would ultimately make important statements about the Clinic. The encouragement and friendly comments and support from the office and security staff, patients, and medical and pharmacy students made the work go smoothly and enjoyably.*

*The design of the mural shows healthy families in healthy environments celebrating the cultural diversity that makes up the area. This is our wish for Hillside, and we hope the mural will be a stimulating addition for years to come. Janet*



**Color us happy  
Color us bright  
Color us thankful  
Color us blessed**



## Facility Manager and Staff Spruce Up for Spring

Evert Mangar and his assistant, James Bahadur, are hard at work on several important Clinic projects. They recently completed a termite treatment on all of our buildings involving digging trenches and filling them with treated sand. And what dedication! These guys worked right through the weekend to get the project finished as quickly as possible so that it wouldn't interfere with the Clinic operation. Dan Thibault applauds them: "Evert Mangar, our Facility Manager who is handling all the projects, works with competence and professionalism. We are so proud of him. Additionally, they have completed pressure-washing of the buildings, and paint is going on to make them look their best! The whole compound looks fresh with the new paint job, which is still in progress."

**Termite trenches and vehicle maintenance keeps Facility Manager and staff busy, even on weekends.**



Evert explains: "We had the honor of having a mural painted on our upper front this last week by two visiting artists. It depicts sun in the form of people, sea in the form of fish, jungle in the form of animals, and sky in the form of birds. It is lovely, and we all love it!"

## Community Open House at Hillside Clinic

March 20<sup>th</sup> will mark Hillside's very first community open house for the people of our own village, Edridgeville, and the surrounding areas. The staff will offer tours of our facilities, health information, and blood pressure and blood sugar screenings. There will be refreshments too. Everyone is hard at work planning to make this a successful educational and fun-filled event. The staff will have a rousing report and photos in our next newsletter!

## Clinic Mobiles

Hillside's new mobile schedule started January 1, 2010. While our Clinic in Eldridge is open Monday through Friday mornings, our mobile clinics into the surrounding villages occur Monday through Thursday. On a regular monthly schedule, our mobile units serve the villagers of Aguacate, Blue Creek, San Jose, Big Falls, Laguna, San Marcos, and Barranco. The medical teams are split up according to the anticipated patient numbers. Preceptors are always available to supervise the patient care in the Clinic and the pharmacy. School physical exams and health educational programs take place in the afternoons and on days when no mobiles are scheduled.

More than 400 physical exams were accomplished in January, with many referrals for dental caries, corrective lenses, and pediatric evaluations.



**A mobile medical team heads to a remote village in the 4-wheel drive vehicle and soon finds the roads are washed out! They finally made it and prepare to see the many village families that will soon arrive.**

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And still, there is more! Dr. Sue Lieb and her husband, Lenny, will be joining us for a one year commitment beginning this August. The couple volunteered several times at Hillside, attended the 2008 dedication of our new dorm, and now can hardly wait to become part of the Hillside family. Jeff Hartman, Hillside's Operation Director says: "We have a fabulous team, but we are now working to identify Belizeans that we can bring onboard as key leaders in our program."

There are also changes in our Clinic schedule and organizational structure. [See article on page 2.] This new structure will allow Hillside to utilize our full slate of students and volunteers more productively and enable more community education, public health activities, and specialized services in the near future. The Thibaults are also collaborating with Dr. Dick Anstett from Wisconsin and other academic partners to re-construct our student program to include a more comprehensive agenda during their month-long International Medical Rotation at Hillside. The ultimate goal is to advance the curriculum to a higher-level interdisciplinary global health curriculum this coming year.

So as you can see, our Board, staff, and volunteers look to 2010 with optimism and purpose, giving thanks to God for His many blessings. One staff member recently told us, "The morale has never been higher. When we gathered together to celebrate Thanksgiving and Christmas, we all really felt like a family." Hillside is changing lives by providing quality healthcare to those in our district, a rich educational experience for our medical students and volunteers, and careers for our staff. Our Board wants to thank our many supporters who have assisted us in myriad ways. Without you, it simply would never have happened.

**Betty Conley, Long Term Nurse Volunteer:** *"I have felt called to mission work for years and am excited to be working with Hillside. I handle the Home Visit program with the students in tow. They all really love the visiting nurse experience as a cultural involvement and a real one-on-one with the patients. When we have the nurses from Concordia come down, I oversee their time and provide guidance during their experience in Belize."*

**The Thibaults, Co-Medical Directors:** *"We have many hopes and dreams for Hillside as the needs of healthcare in Toledo change. We hope to put our former international and Belize experiences, along with our primary care experience to good work here. We believe that health is a community endeavor, and it takes the whole community to achieve it. Therefore integrating Hillside into the community and what the Ministry of Health and other NGOs are trying to accomplish is very important to us."*

**Nurse Penny Leonard, Executive Director:** *"I was here when Miss Jackie first came down to build the Clinic and when she turned the first spade of earth. And I was there for the dedication of the clinic too. So I have actually been a supporter from before day one. It's great to finally be a real part of the facility."*

*I like working with the students and staff, and enjoy keeping the bills paid, the i's dotted, and t's crossed."*

Staff Quotes

### Hillside's Current Needs List

The operational costs of the clinic exceed \$150,000 per year. 50% comes from student fees, leaving \$75,000 to be raised through other sources. We would greatly appreciate one time gifts as well as monthly contributions. Your donation will enrich the lives of the people for whom we care and transform the attitudes of the many students who pass through our doors.

**SPECIFIC NEEDS:** Small refrigerator for medications; sm. cast remover; battery for Welch Allen otoscope; magnifying goggles for eye exams; 3 bulletin boards; an 8' step ladder; a shop vac.; a heavy duty weed eater; 20 bath towels; 6 new dormitory dressers; bed sheets and mattress covers/pads (18 twin/2 dbl); pillows and pillow cases; portable procedure table with drawers; and procedure table tray.

### Considering A Donation to Hillside?

Hillside Health Care can't accomplish its mission of serving those in need of medical care without the support of people like you. If you want to offer financial support, donations can be sent to: **Hillside Health Care International, P.O. Box 151, Brookfield, Wisconsin 53008-0151.**

### Thinking Of Volunteering?

If you are a medical professional with a desire to volunteer, Hillside may be the perfect match for you. Opportunities can be short-term (a week to one month) or long-term (several months to a year).

Imagine an environment off the beaten path—jungles and rainforests dotted with small villages along a remote river or at the ocean's edge.

Visit our website: [www.hillsidebelize.org](http://www.hillsidebelize.org)