



HILLSIDE HEALTH CARE INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

January 2006—Volume 2, Issue 3

Abigail Drake Brinkman

In Loving
Memory
of
"Abby"



Words can not describe the sorrow each of us at Hillside feels at the loss of Abigail Drake Brinkman, a fourth year medical student from Indiana University who died during a weekend break from a medical rotation at Hillside Clinic. Our hearts and prayers are with her family and friends.

Those who worked with her at Hillside in the month of October recall her giving and caring spirit, her willingness to serve those in need of medical services in a remote and rugged jungle setting, her delightful disposition and attitude, her clinical and diagnostic skills, her special love of children, and her sense of teamwork. Abby was only months from achieving her dream of becoming a pediatrician. Her family has established a Hillside memorial fund in her honor. The Hillside Board and Abby's parents are determining an appropriate memorial in her honor.

Abby was exemplary! The Hillside staff and board want to carry on her memory so that other students serving through Hillside can benefit from Abby's beautiful example.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Staff to Visit US 2
- Safety Info 2
- Meet Evert! 2
- Medical Volunteer Reflections 3
- Staff Open House 3
- Non-medical Mission Trip 3
- Belizean Event 4
- KOM Grant 4
- About CMMB 4
- How to Make a Difference! 4

*To keep a lamp
burning, we have to
keep putting oil in it.*

Mother Teresa

Hillside Supporter Phil Hesselbein Talks About His Hillside Visit

Phil Hesselbein, board member and longtime HHCI supporter, recently returned from a Hillside visit. After several days working with executive director Joyce Lopez and her staff, he reported to the board: *Joyce is an excellent manager. Though extremely busy, she loves what she's doing. Our medical director team, Drs. David and Elizabeth Fitzgerald, are marvelous. They are both passionate and compassionate in regard to their work. I accompanied Nurse Fran and our volunteers on home visits. The people in the community love her and appreciate Hillside's efforts! The February medical team was energetic and obviously getting the most from this experience. The Hillside staff is well-trained, polite and courteous, and the facility and grounds are kept clean and well-groomed. They're all working hard to carry out the Hillside mission of providing healthcare to the thousands in this region who need it.*

After seeing all that is done each day at Hillside, I feel very good about giving my support. I only wish all our contributors could witness firsthand how well their donations are being used for this wonderful cause!

Three Members of Hillside Staff to Visit Wisconsin for training

Three members of Hillside's Belize staff will be visiting the States for training. Executive Director, Joyce Lopez, Nurse Administrator, Fran Tsalam, and Facility and Grounds Manager, Evert Mangar will be in Wisconsin from June 28 through July 1st.

Board member, Patricia Lutes, who worked at Hillside as a nurse for three years, is coordinating their training. "This is a great opportunity for three key people on our staff to get some additional training in cooperation with our educational partners and to learn more about how the Stateside component of the Hillside project works. Our board and volunteers are eager to host these members of our Hillside family who are critical to the day-to-day operation of our project in Belize. This is the first time several staff members have visited as a group. We are very blessed to have all three onboard!"

Hillside Board reports work of Safety Committee

HHCI's safety committee recently completed Hillside's updated safety plan. Anne Nohl, committee chair, says, "Safety has always been a priority at Hillside. It was great that so many worked on this committee to assure the safety of our staff and our volunteers. We had input from many who have a broad understanding of the region and the project, because they have either worked or volunteered there. Our executive director, Joyce Lopez, and her staff are currently implementing the updated policies." The areas reviewed covered personal, housing, travel, and health concerns.



Keeping the facility in tiptop shape!

Facility and Grounds Manager, Evert Mangar

Evert and his seven brothers and sisters put a high value on FAMILY. "We live a stone's throw from one another and get together everyday for lunch in our thatch shelter. Our parents taught us about unity. Mom said that she wanted our family to stay together and let nothing separate us—even after she was gone. We honor her memory with our unity!"

Evert follows a daily schedule in his job: picking up and dropping off patients, volunteers, and medical students; maintaining the buildings and grounds; overseeing vehicle service and registrations; and dealing with unexpected repairs. Evert is especially excited about joining two other members of the Hillside staff for an educational visit to the States in June. "I'm always excited to learn more, so I can do my job better."

Note: Hillside extends heartfelt sympathy to the Mangar family in the recent loss of their wonderful mother, Wilma. She was a dedicated community leader and friend of Hillside! She often prepared meals for staff luncheons, and many volunteers enjoyed visiting her in the family thatch shelter and participating in her tortilla-making lessons.

The Volunteers—From The Journals of Hillside Medical Volunteers

The medical volunteers and students are the backbone of the Hillside project. They bring medical manpower and caring hearts to every person they encounter during their service with us. Jennifer McKeand, a 3rd year PA student from Marquette University, is described by Hillside staff as friendly, compassionate, and willing to dive into the task at hand. Her medical focus is transplant surgery. Following are a few of her reflections.



I will miss the tropical flowers, fruit trees, and brightly-colored butterflies. I will miss the sound of the birds in the morning and the waves on the beach. My favorite scent was anything Ms. Janice cooked! [She is our clinic neighbor who prepares educational meals.] I have many wonderful memories, but my favorites are of the people. From the moment Evert picked us up at the airport, I knew it was going to be an incredible month.

I was nervous about meeting the staff of Hillside and the patients. I wasn't sure how a young woman from Wisconsin would fit in, but after meeting everyone, I felt silly for being worried. I instantly felt like I was part of a big family. Everyone was carefree and extremely funny. I remember one day while I was relaxing in a hammock. Some distance away, I heard lots of laughter coming from the yard and the office. Simply hearing them laugh, made me laugh.

Dr. Elizabeth and Dr. Dave taught me about physical exam skills, diagnosing illnesses, and prescribing medications. Most importantly, they reminded me of why I chose to become a physician assistant. These people are amazing. I hope that when I am working as a physician assistant, I will be as passionate about providing the best possible care.

I will never forget my first patient, an elderly Mayan woman. She was accompanied by her granddaughter who helped with translation from Mayan to English. Before they left, the woman threw her arms around me, gave me a huge hug, and said, "thank you." I thought to myself, "No, I thank you for allowing me to have this opportunity."

I will never forget my time at Hillside, and hope to return again. I still have lots to learn!

Hillside's Christmas Open House



Twenty-five guests, including most HHCI board members, enjoyed Christmas festivities at the home of Dan and Anne Nohl.

A Mission Trip to Belize for Non-Medical Volunteers

"We've got two lives; one we're given and the other one we make."

Mary Chapin Carpenter: 'The Hard Way'

Jackie Schmidt, Hillside's Stateside CEO, lived in Belize managing the Hillside project for nearly three years. She has a broad understanding of the region and its cultures.

She will lead a mission team to Belize in fall of 2006. Participants will have an opportunity to serve, to play, and to see much of this diverse and extraordinary country. The eight-day trip will cost about \$850 (includes all expenses *except* airfare). The trip will suit new or seasoned volunteers.

For more information email Jackie Schmidt at: jericho142@hotmail.com

Experience Belize's Rich Culture Without the Expense of Airfare!

Mark your calendars NOW to reserve the evening of Thursday, September 7th!

This exciting fun-filled event is being planned in the Milwaukee area. It will give guests the opportunity to taste the food, enjoy the music, and learn about the celebrations of the Belizean culture. Watch for more information in this newsletter.

NOTE: If you would like to serve on the planning committee or want to donate an item to the silent auction, email Jackie at jericho142@hotmail.com. If you don't live in the Milwaukee area, you can join our planning meetings by phone.



Catholic Medical Missions Board—Connecting Medical Volunteers to Faith-based Organizations

With the support of the Catholic Medical Missions Board, Hillside has been able to broaden its scope of medical provisions to those we serve. One of CMMB's goals is to assist medical volunteers with placement in under-served regions of the world. These volunteers are then able to use their professional skills for defined periods of time to alleviate sickness and suffering in areas of the world where the needs far exceed the resources.

Most of Hillside's long-term medical volunteers—physicians, nurses and occupational and physical therapists—come to Hillside through CMMB. Currently, a husband and wife physician team and an occupational therapist are at Hillside for a year or longer, as well as a nurse and nurse practitioner.

CMMB's Mission: *Founded in 1928 and rooted in the healing ministry of Jesus, Catholic Medical Mission Board works collaboratively to provide quality healthcare programs and services, without discrimination, to people in need around the world.*

Knights of Malta grants \$7,000 for a much-needed Communication System

HHCI Chairman, Dr. Russ Robertson, recently announced that the Knights of Malta has provided a much needed communication system for Hillside's Belize project.

Hillside requested the grant because such a system is essential for improving the level of care delivered to the villages as well as for ensuring the safety of the Hillside medical team.

This system will allow mobile teams in the villages to consult with those back at Hillside Clinic regarding particular cases. The clinic staff has the means to link via satellite to the internet to research the case, and with this technology, now can quickly relay answers back to the mobile team.

In the past, teams have encountered uncertain situations-- vehicle break downs, roads that are impassable due to flooding, or the need for ambulance assistance to transport a patient. Our teams will now be able to deal more efficiently with emergency situations with easy communication to Hillside Clinic, the Punta Gorda Hospital, and other locales in case assistance is needed in the care or transport of patients.

Hillside is grateful to the Knights of Malta for improving the safety of our staff and volunteers.

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.net

**One person really can make a difference...
and it might be you!**