

The Worm Project

Combating World Hunger Through Parasite Removal

Newsletter

Issue No. 28 Fall 2025

You're Invited to our Free Benefit Banquet 6:00 pm Saturday, Oct 18, 2025



**Franconia Heritage
Restaurant**
508 Harleysville Pike,
Telford Pa

Keynote speakers:
Rev. Dr. Richard Stryker,
Healthy Women, Healthy Liberia

Dr. Ana Cespedes,
CEO, Vitamin Angels



**THE MEAL IS FREE
but donations will
be accepted.**

For reservations,
contact us with your name
and number of people:

E-mail: info@wormproject.org or
Phone: 267-932-6050 Ext. 201

**RESERVATIONS REQUIRED –
no later than October 12**

Two Amazing & Inspiring Speakers for Fall Banquet

This year we are fortunate to have two extraordinary people as speakers at our Fall Banquet. This year's banquet will feature Rev. Dr. Richard Stryker, board member of Healthy Women, Healthy Liberia (HWHL), and Dr. Ana Cespedes, CEO of Vitamin Angels. These two close partners of The Worm Project have spent their lives in service to helping others around the world. You will want to hear their inspiring stories. **Make your reservations now!**

Dr. Richard Stryker, Healthy Women, Healthy Liberia

Dr. Stryker earned a Bachelor of Theology degree from Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary (1986), Master of Arts in Religion (1989) and Master of Divinity (1993) from Memphis Theological Seminary, and Doctor of Ministry (2009) from University of the South, Sewanee. Prior to his current roles as life journey coach, chaplain, author, and elder in the United Methodist church, he served as pastor in various churches in Liberia, Tennessee, and Alabama, and in executive roles in the United Methodist Church. Originally from Liberia, his direct ancestor was the first black bishop in United Methodism. He is a child of God, and a product of God's amazing grace. He enjoys serving through the ministry of Healthy Women, Healthy Liberia and their partners. (The Worm Project has provided HWHL with all their deworming medicine from their start in 2012. At that time, Liberia's health statistics were daunting with the 5th worse maternal mortality rate and 18th worst infant mortality rate in the world. Last year, HWHL treated over 63,000 people for parasitic worms.)

Dr. Ana Cespedes, Vitamin Angels

Newly appointed as CEO of Vitamin Angels, Ana is a globally recognized leader with nearly three decades of experience in the pharmaceutical and biotech sectors. She has held executive leadership roles in some of the world's most influential organizations, shaping policies and programs that have transformed access to healthcare worldwide. Ana holds a Doctorate in Pharmacy along with many other advanced degrees and certifications. Among many awards, she received the Gold Medal of Castilla-La Mancha and, in 2024, her hometown of Barrax, Spain, honored her legacy in health education by naming a public square in her name. She is dedicated to advancing Vitamin Angels' mission of improving maternal and child nutrition worldwide. In 2024, Vitamin Angels helped improve the health of 74 million women and children in over 65 countries including providing deworming medicine to over 34 million children. (The Worm Project donated deworming medicine to Vitamin Angels to treat 12 million children in 2024.)



Photo Credit © Vitamin Angels – Scott Rotzoll KH24

Bringing Health to Cambodia's Children Through Deworming

Editor's Note: The Worm Project donates millions of Albendazole Tablets (deworming medicine) to Vitamin Angels each year. With our partnership spanning over 20 years, The Worm Project appreciates Vitamin Angels focus on those most vulnerable, children under age 5 in poor communities, that are underserved by existing systems.

In Cambodia, an estimated 8.4 million people – about half of the country's population – are at risk of infection from intestinal worms.¹ The country's tropical climate and geographic conditions create an environment where intestinal worms thrive, putting millions, especially young children, at risk of malnutrition, anemia, and stunted growth.

Albendazole, a widely used deworming treatment, is a simple but powerful intervention that improves children's health. By eliminating intestinal worms, deworming helps boost immune systems and ensures children can properly absorb vital nutrients.

Four year old Pisey is one of many children who have benefited from Vitamin Angels' deworming program. Pisey and her family have endured extreme hardship, living in a seemingly unbreakable cycle of poverty. Her mother, Ra, made a living scavenging for recyclable materials in the Steung Meanchey garbage dump near Phnom Penh, Cambodia's capital. Many families, including children, work and live in the dump, enduring extreme weather conditions to collect recyclable materials like plastic and cans to sell.

For Ra, every day felt like a battle for survival. Limited resources meant that Pisey and her siblings frequently fell ill. Despite eating a lot, they remained underweight and weak. The burden of poverty made it nearly impossible to access the care they needed. That changed when Pisey and her siblings received deworming treatment from Vitamin Angels. Almost immediately, Ra noticed a difference – Pisey's skin had cleared up, her health improved, and she began to grow.

Deworming is a small intervention with life-saving results. For children like Pisey, it's not just about eliminating parasites. It's about giving kids a chance to thrive. Through partnerships like the one between The Worm Project and Vitamin Angels, more children in vulnerable communities can receive the care they need to grow, learn, and break free from the cycle of poverty.



Photo © Vitamin Angels – Scott Rotzoll KH24

¹ <https://media.odi.org/documents/8983.pdf>

Our Family Fun & Learning Fair Was a Big Success!

On May 3, The Worm Project held a Fair at Dock Mennonite Academy EC-8(th grade) campus that turned out to be a fun and educational experience for everyone who attended. It was so successful and the feedback so positive that we are planning to make it our annual Spring event. There were so many activities that everyone from small children to adults had a fun time.



Two "scary" volunteer worms that prowled the halls



Worms are only FUN when you can eat gummy ones in Dirt Dessert!



A huge velcro target for kicking "sticky" soccer balls



Fun for the whole family!

Where in the World?



Learning the countries where children need deworming medicine

Worm-Free Children Are Healthier

Worm-free children have a better nutritional status, grow faster and learn better



Photo Credit © Vitamin Angels Ì Marie Arago MX20

Treating children for worms is one of the simplest and most cost-effective interventions for improving their health.

The evidence demonstrating how intestinal worms damage a child's health is clear: These worms are associated with a significant loss of micronutrients. Roundworms are the most prevalent parasitic worm infection in preschool-age children and cause a significant decrease of vitamin A absorption, which can increase malnutrition and anemia, contributing to stunted growth. A child's physical fitness and appetite are negatively affected and his or her cognitive performance at school is compromised. The constant and life-long immune activation due to worm infections can reduce the body's ability to resist other infections. Preschool-age children are extremely vulnerable to the deficiencies induced by worm infections: they are rapidly developing, both physically and mentally, and they need the micronutrients that are lost through worm infections. By decreasing the worm burden, periodic drug treatment – deworming – reduces morbidity and rapidly improves health. An added bonus of deworming is that a dewormed child may respond better to vaccinations.

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The Worm Project: What we do:

The Worm Project buys medicine to treat children infected with parasitic worms in the poorest countries of the world.

- Over 800 million children (roughly 1/4 of the world's children) are at risk of being infected with parasitic worms
 - Parasitic worms cause physical and cognitive impairment in children due to malnutrition
- The Worm Project purchased and distributed deworming medicine to treat almost 12 million children in 2024.
- Each deworming tablet costs less than 3 cents and treats one child for parasitic worms
 - One tablet kills virtually all the worms living in children
 - Medicine is extremely effective and safe
- All-volunteer Christian organization is extremely cost effective
 - Expenses are extremely low
 - Donations are tax deductible

"... Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."
(Matthew 25:40 NIV)



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You Can Help!

Charitable donations can be made by check or on our website at wormproject.org. Just click on the **donate** button.

Please consider making a tax exempt donation from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA)

Checks should be made payable to: **The Worm Project** and sent to:

The Worm Project
Box 23,
Harleysville, PA 19438

Contact Us

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