

The Worm Project

Combating World Hunger Through Parasite Removal

Newsletter

Issue No 7 Summer 2014

It's Working.

This blog was written by Jenna Wolff, Vitamin Angels' Foreign Travel Coordinator, following a recent trip to observe our project in the Dominican Republic. Vitamin Angels is a trusted partner of The Worm Project and we are donating deworming tablets to be used to treat millions of children in many countries.



As we drove down the road through a remote part of the Dominican Republic, everyone wondered where this day would take us. We were far from the tropical beaches and extravagant resorts for which the Dominican Republic is famous. We passed fields of sugar cane, skinny cows grazing alongside the road, and every so often, a small cluster of houses, usually made of wood and tin. The beauty of the interior of the country was undeniable, as was the poverty.

As we arrived at the first batey we visited, Cinco Casas, everyone got out of the van and anxiously looked around. Our gazes were met by those of dozens of women and children, shyly peering back. Many of the children hid behind their mothers, unsure of this large group of foreigners. However, their curiosity got the better of them,

and in a matter of moments, the kids had every person in our group laughing and playing. After witnessing the distribution of prenatal and children's multivitamins, our group of travelers split up to interview different families. My group was introduced to Claribel, a 22 year old mother of three- Maria Altagracia, age 6, Wardin, age 3, and Nismael, age 2. As we walked to her mother's house, we chatted about light topics like the weather and the kids playing nearby. As we sat down, though, she became more serious. She leaned forward, anxious to share her thoughts with us.

Her openness and willingness to share the story of her life came as a surprise to me. She was confident and well-spoken, and clearly dedicated to her family. She told us that in her batey, finding steady work is difficult. Neither she nor her husband has a steady job, so they rely on



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family members and odd jobs to make enough money to buy food. She said they mostly eat arroz con habichuelas (rice and beans), with salad or a little meat on occasion if they can get it.

Claribel told us that she is grateful for the vitamins. She took prenatal vitamins during all three of her pregnancies, and feels that they allowed her to remain healthy throughout. She believes the multivitamins that Wardin and Nisamel take daily are keeping them healthy and strong. The albendazole, a deworming treatment (donated by The Worm Project), is also a very welcome intervention. Maria Altagracia and Wardin had suffered from intestinal parasites,

which were very painful. After they were given albendazole, Claribel noticed that both children were more energetic, didn't cry as much, and had much better appetites.

When I asked what she likes to do in her free time, Claribel told me that she was taking classes in order to complete her high school diploma. Her main reason for doing this is that she wants to be able to help her children with their schoolwork. Her dream for her children is for them to find a good job doing something that makes them happy.

By the end of the conversation, we were laughing and joking like old friends. Over the course of the next few days, most of the women I encountered were similarly welcoming, vibrant, and completely dedicated to making a better life for their children. Their zest for life was contagious; we couldn't help but smile whenever we were around them. The opportunity to meet these women and their beautiful, healthy children was truly inspiring. For me, it really highlighted the incredible benefit of the work that Vitamin Angels is doing in the Dominican Republic and around the world.

Reserve your seat today!

Our 7th annual banquet will be held on **Friday October 3rd, 6:00pm** at the Franconia Heritage Family Banquet and Conference Center in Telford, PA. Come hear the inspiring first-hand stories from our partners working all around the world and find out how your donations can transform the lives of malnourished children.

There is no cost for the meal although donations will be accepted.

Reservations can be made:

e-mail Carla Ferrier at cferrier@franconiaconference.org

or by phone at 267-932-6050 ext. 110

Just leave your name and number of guests attending including yourself.

A Dream Realized in Honduras

-- Gary Delp, (Board President, The Worm Project)



Children waiting in line for medical checkup and de-worming medicine

Since I began volunteering to help raise money for The Worm Project over the past decade, I have been dreaming of travelling to one of the countries where The Worm Project donates de-worming medicine and personally treating children for parasitic worms. My dream finally came true as I travelled with my oldest son, Joshua, to Honduras along with 25 people of all ages from Blooming Glen Mennonite Church led by pediatrician Dr. Rick Kratz to provide medical treatment including de-worming medicine to remote villages. Our host was the MAMA Project, a non-profit started by Dr. Priscilla Benner in 1987 to help the people of Honduras and a close partner of The Worm Project.

Soon after we arrived, we walked to MAMA's nearby Nutrition Center where children suffering from malnutrition can stay along with their mothers until they are healthy enough to return to their village. The next four days were spent going to remote villages in the mountains where we would set up a clinic at the local grade school and treat mostly women and children who walked for miles from the surrounding countryside. Below are a few notes I jotted down.

We just finished our first day deep in the mountains of Honduras where we set up a clinic and spent the day treating many different types of illness and disease. It was a wonderful day! I was able to hand out Albendazole and vitamin A to the children, sometimes crushing the chewable Albendazole or puncturing the vitamin A and squeezing it into their mouths if they were too little to swallow the gel capsule. It was so rewarding to share God's love for them with a smile and seeing them return it with their own shy smile. Three more days to go and I can't wait to wake up each day and do it again. The MAMA staff and the work they do here is even more amazing than I had expected.

But my biggest dream is that all the children in the world will be given medicine that rid their bodies of parasitic worms. Your donations can go a long way to help achieve that goal. Please continue to support our efforts to treat millions of children around the world for parasitic worms. I hope each of you have the chance to have an experience like this one. It's guaranteed to change the way you view the world and maybe even change your priorities in life.



Joshua Delp handing out de-worming tablets and vitamin A

You can help!

Tax-deductible donations can be made by check or through our website. PayPal option is available at

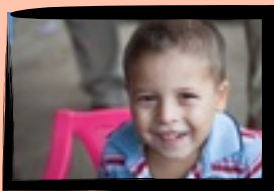
www.wormproject.org

(click on the "Donate" button)

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

The Worm Project

Franconia Mennonite Conference Center
569 Yoder Rd.
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E-mail: info@wormproject.org

Phone: (267) 932-6050 Ext. 136



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