



Public Private Cooperation

Continuing Promise 2015 Special Edition

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CP15 Demonstrates Unity of Commitment to People of Caribbean, Central, and South America

Continuing Promise is one of U.S. Southern Command's premier efforts to bring health care, humanitarian assistance, and civic support to communities in Latin America and the Caribbean on behalf of the people of the United States. The Continuing Promise 2015 (CP15) mission brought together on board the USNS Comfort hospital ship, U.S. military members and civil service mariners, international agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Partner Nations, and civilian medical



providers, to provide medical, dental, veterinary, and engineering support to people throughout the region. The seventh CP mission in support of U.S. Southern Command, and the fourth in which Comfort served as the hospital ship, the 2015 CP mission involved the highest number of NGOs and private sector partners in the mission's history. In total, 387 volunteers from seven NGOs were embarked aboard Comfort at some point during the mission. SOUTHCOM's J9 Partnering Directorate integrated those efforts, the volunteer efforts from among over 60 additional NGOs and private sector organizations both embarked and ashore, and our U.S. interagency partners throughout the region, in providing and distributing generous gifts-in-kind to 11 countries in the region during this 6-month trip. This collaboration resulted in millions of dollars in donations being provided to local populations, and the direct care and treatment of 122,268 patients - with an incredible 11% of those being seen by NGO providers! Some of the great support provided by CP15 NGO volunteers and organizations is highlighted on the following pages. Enjoy!





Belize

In Belize, the USNS Comfort treated over 6,500 patients at two medical sites, performed 101 surgeries onboard the ship, and provided 67 subject matter expert exchanges with Belizean medical practitioners and first responders. The Message Program, Latter-Day Saints Charities, Loving Hugs, and other NGOs donated 36 pallets of items to local schools and hospitals. Nurses, doctors, and dentists from such organizations as the RN Response Network and UCSD Pre-Dental Society helped take care of patients both on-board Comfort and at the medical sites.



A volunteer from the University of California–San Diego Pre-Dental Society teaches children the importance of hand washing in Belize.



In Guatemala, a child enjoys a coloring book donated by JAMSBooks, which raises awareness about personal hygiene and public health.

Guatemala

The Comfort's second stop in Guatemala saw support from NGOs and businesses alike. Cerveceria Centro Americana, which bottles Gallo and Agua Pura Salavidas, donated refreshments to the mission and ceremonies. NGOs like The Message Program and Latter-Day Saints Charities provided support to hospitals and medical sites through donated items and volunteers. Operation Blessing International volunteered their time and expertise to instruct

a course on women's health aboard the Comfort. JAMSBooks, an NGO that creates educational coloring books on topics of public health and hygiene, donated 1,000 coloring books per country. All of these contributions complemented the overall mission, which saw 105 surgeries aboard the ship and over 10,000 patients treated at the medical sites.



Above: Volunteers from World Vets conduct a SMEE in Jamaica. **Below:** Navy engineers construct a chicken coop at a Jamaica grade school, to which Food For The Poor donated chickens, feeding pans, water pans, and other supplies.

Jamaica

The Comfort's stop in Jamaica was supported by over 20 Jamaican and American organizations, to include NGOs, businesses and universities. Partners like Food for the Poor made the Navy's chicken coop construction project functional and sustainable. Other organizations like the Kiwanis Club of North Saint Andrew, Wisynco, LASCO, and others donated thousands of bottles of water to support

volunteers and patients throughout the mission. Support from the Jamaican Red Cross was integral to the mission's success, which included volunteers as well as free HIV testing and education. The mission also could not have gone so smoothly without volunteers from Latter-Day Saints Charities, who donated time and supplies to medical sites and community relations events. Finally, the engagements with schoolchildren would have been

impossible without the donations from Midwest Mission Distribution Center (MMDC), which included school bags, supplies and hygiene kits.

[Read CNN's coverage on the COMFORT in Jamaica.](#)



Nicaragua

The Comfort stopped in Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua, where U.S. and Nicaraguan organizations like Partners in Health Maine (Dr. Robert Bach), FADCANIC, Vicariato Apostolico, Lions Club, Fabretto Children's Foundation, and the American Chamber of Commerce, were vital to success of the mission. NGO volunteers from Operation Smile, who embarked the ship during the mission stop, performed 63 additional surgeries to include cleft palate and cleft lip procedures.

A nurse from RN Response Network plays with a child before surgery.



Child with a cleft palate waits to be seen by Operation Smile in Nicaragua.

Panama

On May 28, the USNS Comfort arrived in Colon, Panama, the fourth scheduled stop as part of the Continuing Promise 2015 (CP-15) mission. The non-profit organization Operation Smile conducted nearly 100 cleft pallet surgeries in Panama.

Panamanian organizations also provided vast support to the success of the hospital ship mission in Panama. This included the Panamanian Red Cross providing public health seminars and bottles of water, over 80 translators provided by the Lions Club, Shriners, American Society, local universities

and high schools, U.S. and British Embassy, Colombian Consulate, and the American Chamber of Commerce, which donated bottled water for patients waiting to be treated.

Additionally, a total of 18 pallets of gifts-in-kind from U.S. based organizations were donated, to include three pallets of medical supplies and glasses from Latter-Day Saints Charities, one pallet of soccer equipment/uniforms from Operation Blessing, and 14 pallets of school and medical supplies from Midwest Mission Distribution Center. The mission stop in Panama is a remarkable example of whole of society collaboration with services, medical treatment, surgeries, and gifts-in-kind both enhancing local capacity and emphasizing relationships.



A registered nurse volunteer with Latter-Day Saints Charities takes a patient's temperature at a medical site in Panama.



Dentists from the U.S. Navy and UCSD Pre-Dental Society perform dental exams in Panama.



Dental assistants from the University of California San Diego Pre-Dental Society perform a cleaning in Panama.





El Salvador

A volunteer from Latter-Day Saints Charities (center) assists a patient in El Salvador.



Continuing Promise 2015 saw overwhelming engagement from NGOs, businesses, and academic partners in El Salvador. Aside from the tremendous gifts-in-kind (GIK) from organizations like The Message Program and Latter-Day Saints Charities, NGO support was crucial with deworming medication. Operation Blessing-El Salvador donated 30,000 tablets of albendazole, used to treat certain infections caused by worms such as pork tapeworm and dog tapeworm. The donation was more than enough for the duration of the mission. Local support was further critical to success of the mission. In total, over 30 volunteers from 6 local NGOs provided in-line entertainment such as face painting, popcorn, and sno-cones to waiting patients. The American Chamber of Commerce invited local vendors to donate food and water; and 4 local universities provided 500 student translators (130 students/day) for the two medical sites.



A volunteer from World Vets (left), and a member of the Colombian military administer medication to a dog at a vet site in Colombia.

Colombia

The seventh Continuing Promise mission stop surpassed expectations. The Comfort Team provided family-centered acute care, patient education, and discharge planning for 126 Host Nation surgery patients and their escorts demonstrating a tangible and positive medical commitment and fostering continued goodwill. At the med sites, close to

9,400 patients received additional medical care. The NGOs Loving Hugs, Operation Handclasp, JAMSBooks, Midwest Mission Distribution Centers, Latter-Day Saints provided significant medical & school supplies, backpacks, stuffed animals and school furniture donations to the people of Colombia.

Dominica

The Comfort Team conducted its eighth mission stop in Dominica. In this country of just over 70,000 people, the team saw over 11,000 patients and completed 127 surgeries. At the medical sites, the ship-board volunteer organizations were joined by A Ganar, a local youth workforce development program, Peace Corps volunteers, and a large number of Ross University medi-

cal students. Ross students also worked on-board Comfort to assist in the wards, intensive care unit, and patient after-care unit. Eight pallets of shoes, books, school supplies, medical supplies, and sports equipment were donated to local schools through the generous donation of NGO partners like Latter-Day Saints Charities and JAMBOOKS.



A volunteer from University of California San Diego Pre-Dental Society explains prescription dosage instructions to a patient in Dominica.

Dominican Republic



Operation Smile NGO volunteers conduct palate repair surgery aboard the USNS Comfort in the Dominican Republic.

Our NGO partner, Operation Smile once again utilized the Comfort's operating rooms while in Santo Domingo, performing 93 cleft palate, cleft lip, fistula repairs and lip revisions for local citizens. This stop also saw the San Diego Padres Major League Baseball Team collaborate with the Continuing Promise mission, helping the Comfort team host a baseball clinic, conduct beautification efforts, and donate school supplies to the area. Altogether, 10 pallets of clothes, school bags, recreation equipment and shoes, and medical equipment were donated by partner NGOs to local children and clinics. Over 10,000 patients were seen and another 109 surgeries performed with the assistance of our NGO providers.

Honduras

On the next to the last port visit, the USNS Comfort mission made a lasting impact in the expansion of partnerships and increasing health care capacity in Honduras. Incorporating 11 NGO nurses from Project Hope, RN Response Network and Latter-Day Saints Charities in the Nursing Directorate team strengthened interoperability for future humanitarian and disaster relief missions. U.S. Army veterinarians and veterinary technicians worked with volunteers from World Vets to conduct veterinary civil affairs programs in several communities, providing services to more than 800 animals, including vitamin treatments, rabies vaccinations and spay and neuter surgeries. Our NGO partners were essential in the Comfort Team treating over 14,000 Honduran patients and conducting 122 surgeries onboard Comfort.



Capt. Sam Hancock, Continuing Promise 2015 mission commander, gives a Honduran child new shoes during the opening ceremonies in Honduras.

Below: A volunteer from Project Hope examines a patient in Haiti.

Right: A volunteer from RN Response Network shares a moment of levity with a young girl in Port-au-Prince.

Haiti

The approximately 1,200 members of the Continuing Promise Team conducted their final mission stop in Port-Au-Prince, Haiti, providing medical care to more than 14,000 patients at Admiral Killick Coast Guard Station and St. Luc hospital, and 119 surgical patients aboard USNS Comfort. Comfort medical professionals and volunteers with the NGO Latter-Day Saints Charities presented the eighth woman's health seminar of the trip, a series largely facilitated by CP15 volunteer networks throughout the region. Veterans Without Orders provided sustainable water filtration systems and training to community women to be the clean water stewards for the Leogane community. Overall, an amazing 118 pallets of donations from partner NGOs were delivered to organizations like Operation Love the Children of Haiti, an orphanage in the region, and similar organizations.





Participating NGOs, Businesses, and Academia*

A Ganar
American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) (various nations)
American Society of Panama
Americas Relief Team
BAHA Central Laboratory
Belize Emergency Response Team
Belize Zoo
Bella Vista Health Center
Bernard Mevs Hospital -Project Medishare
Brasserie Nationale d'Haiti (Brana)
Caris Foundation
Catholic Medical Mission Board
Cerveceria Centro Americana
CES Solutions
CitiHope International
City of Coral Gables International Affairs Foundation
Club Rotario Panama
Club Rotario Tegucigalpa
Colombo American Foundation
Cruz Roja Panama
Eau et Jeunesse Haiti
Episcopal-Presbyterian Nursing School
Fabretto Children's Foundation
FADCANIC
Food For The Poor
Foundation to Change the Image of Haiti (FOCIH)
Fundación Saldarriaga
Gallo/Cerveceria Centroamericana
Haiti Children's Hope (HCH)
Haiti Fit
Hattieville Government School
Hattieville Seven-Day Adventist
Helpage International Jamaica
Independence High School
Independence Polyclinic
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
J/P Haitian Relief Organization
Jamaican Red Cross
JAMPRO
JAMSBooks
Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital (KMHM)
Kiwans Club of North Saint Andrew
Ladyville Health Center
LASCO Manufacturing
Latter-Day Saint Charities (LDSC) (HQ and various nations)
Lions Club (various nations)
Loving Hugs
Mercy & Sharing
Midwest Mission Distribution Center (MMDC)
Mission Outreach of the Cite Soleil Christian Church (MICECC)
Mustard Seed Communities
Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos
Operation Blessing International
Operation Love the Children of Haiti
Operation Smile
Orphan Helpers
Panamanian Red Cross
Partners in Health/Zanmi Lasante
Peace Corps
Project Handclasp
Project Hope
Project Medishare
Registered Nurse (RN) Response Network
Ross University
Rotary Club of Kingston
Rotary International
Samaritan's Feet
Samaritan's Purse
San Diego Padres (U.S. Major League Baseball)
Shriners International
SHUZZ
Sus Hijos
The Animal House
The Message Program (TMP)
UCSD Pre-Dental Society
UES - Universidad de El Salvador
UNAH - Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras
UNASA - Universidad Autónoma de Santa Ana
UNICAES - Universidad Católica de El Salvador
USB - Universidad de San Buenaventura
UV- Universidad del Valle
University of Belize/Central Farm
University of Haiti, Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy
University of Miami
University of Santo Domingo
University of Unibe
University of West Indies
UTEC - Universidad Tecnológica de El Salvador
Veterans Without Orders (VVO)
Vicariato Apostólico
World Vets
Wisynco

USSOUTHCOM J9 Partnering Directorate thanks you for your support! Your incredible efforts helped anged lives across the region!

*If your organization supported CP15 and isn't on this list, let us know!