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American Initiative for Health and Wellness in Africa





Pre-Mission Activities

Activities of AIHWA Integrated Mission to Nigeria began the week before the actual outreach moved to Imo State in the South Eastern part of the country. The program commenced with AIHWA's health experts from the United States arriving in Abuja, Nigeria in the middle of May 2017. At the same time, the Nigerian contingent in partnership with Holy Ghost Hospital, Mgbidi, Orlu District in Imo State. The team had earlier conducted pre-registration and orientation at the mission site, a process which helped the host community understand and appreciate the imperative of such a rare charitable intervention within their locality. The response to the offer for free medical care was tremendous, not surprising in view of the gaps in medical care coverage in the country. Available spots were taken in the first two days, and it became clear that the current mission would not be able to cope with the demand for free medical care. AIHWA registered over 2,500 people for free medical care, a number that kept increasing as people received the news of the event on national television.



A Befitting Welcome

The team from the United States was welcomed to Abuja by the CEO of AIHWA and his wife, Dr. Jim and Sandy Richard with an incredible music concert held at the NAF Conference Center on the 18th of May, 2017. The concert, which featured the renowned "Nigerian Tenors", was also aimed at celebrating the inaugural Integrated Medical Mission. In attendance were such eminent personalities as the Papal Representative in Nigeria, Monsignor Fernandez Javier; representatives of the embassies of Spain, Switzerland and Italy; immediate past Inspector General of



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Police, Solomon Arase and his wife; retired Director of Security, FCT, Abuja, Engr. Jibril Ibrahim and his wife; Executive Secretary of FCT Primary Healthcare, Dr. Rilwanu Mohammed and family; Director of Renewable Energy, Prof. Ifeabunike Joseph Dioha, and many other friends of AIHWA. Andrea Bocelli's "Con Te Partiro"; "Evita"; Julie Convington's 1979 hit, "Don't Cry for Me Argentina" and many more hits that got many in the audience animated and asking for more when the concert drew to a close.



*"The Nigerian Tenors" led by Godswill Okafor
Performing at the event*



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Former Inspector General of Police Mr. Solomon Arase and his wife also graced the event



Monsignor Fernandez Javier, from the Embassy of the Holy See and Dr. Jim Richard, CEO AIHWA at the event.

2017 AIHWA Integrated Medical Mission

COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY:

Opening prayers and remarks were given by the Provincial Superior of the Holy Ghost Fathers, South East Province of Nigeria, Very Rev. Dr. Gregory Olikenyi, C.S.Sp. He expressed gratitude to AIHWA for remembering the vulnerable people in the society, adding that the free medical program would help save many lives. He urged other public-spirited individuals and groups to emulate AIHWA for the good of the society, he further urged the organization not to relent in its efforts to touch lives not only in Nigeria but also in other African countries.

The Provincial Superior's remarks were followed by the introduction of the AIHWA team by the President of AIHWA, Rev Kenny Udumka, who also explained why the mission had become imperative, and added that the organization was mindful of the fact that the government could not provide all the needs of the citizens alone. He expressed gratitude to AIHWA donors, friends and volunteers for their support. "We are indeed appreciative of your continued support. But let us also note that the journey is just commencing, and more needs to be done in order to help turn around the lives of many people as AIHWA can reach. This is a noble cause and I urge you to avail us your support," he said. The highlight of the commencement ceremonies was the flagging off of the Integrated Medical Mission by the CEO of AIHWA, Dr. Jim Richard.



Integrated Mission Flag-off by AIHWA CEO, Dr. Jim Richard





The program was witnessed by many religious and community leaders, the entire AIHWA team from the United States and Nigeria, a huge presence of patients who were patiently waiting for the medical mission activities to begin, media representatives, especially members of the NTA news who were around until the closing hours of the day.

Mission Activities

Phase 1 of the mission which commenced on May 22, 2017, lasted for five days. Being the maiden mission, one would have expected the AIHWA team to be demoralized by the initial challenges especially considering that most of mission's activities were situated in a rural area that was over an hour's drive from Owerri, the state capital of Imo-State. But the commitment of the AIHWA health teams from the United States and Nigeria, Staff of the Holy Ghost Hospital in Mgbidi, and various volunteers ensured the outstanding success of the program in spite of the challenges.





Committed Nurses

The leadership of AIHWA has paid tribute to the term of nurses in the mission for their commitment and excellent contributions towards the success of the program. Some of the volunteer nurses, drawn from the local community joined the mission at the last minute, but they showed tremendous commitment towards the charitable cause. Their familiarity with the community also helped add value to the mission.





Prevalence of Malaria

Malaria is known to be a major public health challenge in Nigeria, with 97% of the population said to be at risk, and an estimated 100 million cases being reported annually. It was not surprising, therefore, that the most prevalent medical issue reported to the AIHWA mission was malaria. Such was the magnitude of cases reported that it became necessary for



the team to modify their schedule. Consequently, a separate malaria program was held on the 26th of May, 2017 while the full mission program continued to run as planned. The Malaria program received and cared for more than 500 malaria patients, which was quite staggering even by the standard of a malaria prone environment.



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38 Surgeries Conducted, Lives Renewed

When AIHWA health experts arrived in Mgbidi, Imo State, after the pre-mission activities in Abuja the Federal Capital Territory, there was no indication that they would be confronted with difficult cases talk more of those requiring immediate surgery. But when the team commenced consultation, some patients began to present symptoms that required deeper consideration. Fortunately, the team came prepared and was ready to do whatever was required to save lives. The theatre was ready and so were the clinicians. But from a handful of surgeries, each passing day saw the number of patients in need of surgery rise significantly, and at last count 38 surgeries had been conducted to the relief and satisfaction of the patients, their families and the AIHWA team. One of the beneficiaries of the surgery program was Mr. Damian Ibekwe, a retired factory worker, who later returned to the mission site for check-up. He expressed gratitude to AIHWA for



giving him a new lease of life. “I don’t know how I could have managed without this public-spirited team. I had resigned myself to fate as my family and I could barely talk of paying for this sort of surgery. I urge other public-spirited groups and individuals not only to emulate AIHWA in reaching the vulnerable members of the society, but also to donate to its programs so that more people across Africa could benefit from this sort of intervention,” he said.

Crowd Control

The turnout of patients was understandably huge for a community that probably had never received such an offer of free medical care. News that the AIHWA team was coming was one of tremendous excitement. But there were those who did not think that the package would be completely free until the mission activities commenced, and within a short while the entire premises was filled by an



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enthusiastic crowd. This could have presented some challenges, but AIHWA has a reputation for anticipating such moments and so it came fully prepared. Some opinion leaders from the community as well as properly briefed security personnel helped reassure the crowd that not a single patient would be left unattended. And that it was in the interest of everyone to ensure an orderly conduct to help speed up proceedings. The approach worked tremendously well and despite the huge number, the patients were very co-operative throughout the mission.



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Mental Health Counseling at the Mission

Prior to the mission, AIHWA had been informed that one of the challenges of mental health in Nigeria as in many parts of the world is social stigma, which discourages the patients from seeking help openly, but considering that AIHWA is all about Integrated Medicine, which addresses the whole person; body, mind and soul, it was necessary to devote time and resources to this aspect of wellbeing. We are grateful for the attendance of our mental health counselors from the U.S. at the medical mission.

Our mental health counselors, Rev. Kenny Udumka and Bev Sondag delivered much needed counseling on the spot.



Difficult Cases, in Depth Explanations



One-on-one interaction made the counseling a lot easier



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AIHWA Eye Clinic



It is also instructive to note that, in addition to other ailments which they complained about and for which they sought treatment from the mission, up to 70% of the patients also wanted their eyes checked for disease or corrective lenses. Such a development may seem alarming, but if considered against the background of seemingly prevalent eyes problems among the vulnerable groups in the country, it becomes easy to appreciate. Fortunately, for the patients, the AIHWA team came fully prepared. The mission's Nigerian optometrist, Uzoma Onuoha was not only in high demand but he was equally up to the task. However, while many received proper diagnosis and medication, AIHWA could not provide the corrective lenses on the mission due to financial constraints. The organization has promised to deliver the lenses to the prospective recipients as soon as \$2000 is secured from friends of AIHWA to pay for the 170 corrective lenses. Most of the patients expressed gratitude to AIHWA considering that it was the first time they received any formal examination or treatment of the eyes.

AIHWA Mission Pharmacy

One of the mission's effective strategies was to set up a comprehensive and rich pharmacy. This proved very useful in an environment where the "Out of stock" syndrome was familiar. Patients were relieved to receive all but the most uncommon prescriptions after visiting with the physicians. For those rare prescriptions that were not available at the pharmacy, AIHWA provided the cash for the patients to get the medications from other pharmacies. That gesture was applauded by the patients. But the reaction could have been otherwise if they were simply sent away to go and fetch the medicines, which many could not afford. AIHWA is planning to expand the scope of the pharmacy to stock more medications for the future missions.



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Sight of the Patient Crowd on the Last Day: A Welcome Challenge



It became clear that to see everyone, we would extend the mission. Our Nigerian team will provide primary care, pharmaceuticals, and basic surgery in the unfolding Phase Two of this particular mission at Mgbidi.

AIHWA Integrated Mission Team

Dr. James Richard, USA

Sandra Richard, USA

Vivien Ojadi, USA

Kenny Udumka USA

Chimezie Onyeoziri, USA

Bev Sondag, USA

Gerry Nugent, USA

Phyllis Nugent, USA

Dr. Charles Nzurumike, Nigeria



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A Moment to Relax



Many Moments to Remember





American Initiative for Health and Wellness in Africa

We are a 501(c) 3 organization in the United States with the common dream of making a difference in Africa. In our mission to enhance health and wellness of the people of Africa, we provide assistance for both mental and physical health through distinguished integrated health care programs. The Hope Center is the core of AIHWA's vision, a new way of delivering healthcare of body, mind, and soul in an integrated primary health care setting. The Hope Center in Africa will comprise of

- Medical Center
- Counseling Center
- Short Term Residential
- Conference Hall
- Fitness Center
- Integrated Health and Wellness Research Institute

Please visit the American Initiative for Health and Wellness in Africa website (<http://aihwa.org/>) as well as the Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/AIHWHealthcare/>), read the stories of support and significant milestones already reached.

We would love to share more detailed information about our programs and services and, possibly consider a financial gift of support to play a part in the achievement of AIHWA's significant goals of service.

Appreciation

American Initiative for Health and Wellness in Africa (AIHWA) would like to thank the guest professionals, including staff of the Holy Ghost Hospital for their hard work and dedication throughout the mission. Not forgetting the Holy Ghost Fathers, the AIHWA Board of Directors, and all the friends and donors of AIHWA, whose financial and moral support as well as prayers contributed immensely towards the success of the Integrated Medical Mission.

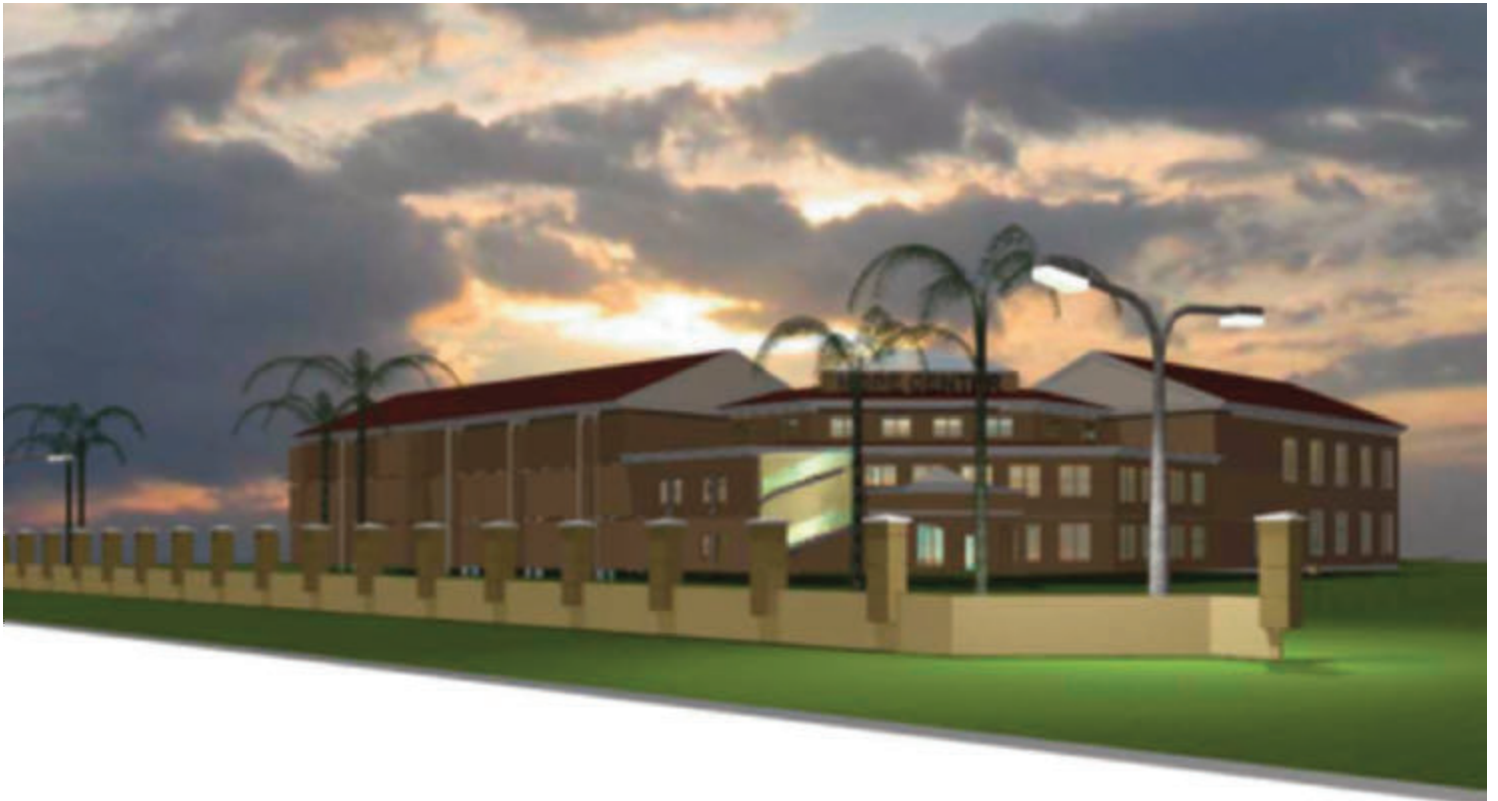
Equally. Dr. James Richard, CEO, is most grateful for all the hard work done by the Nigerian team, the endless details and logistics that came together for a successful mission. You made it happen!



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Architectural Rendering of the Proposed Hope Center



Donations to AIHWA

We will appreciate your financial contributions toward the mission and dreams of AIHWA. Donations are tax deductible and can be made through our website, gofundme.com, or mailed to AIHWA, 515 South Pagosa Blvd, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147

We also accept unused gift cards as well as well as gold, silver or precious stones.



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
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