

For Immediate Release

Operation Blessing Lending A Hand In New Hospital Opening In Haiti

Virginia Beach-Based Humanitarian Organization Drilled Wells, Facilitated Donation of Water Disinfection/Filtration System With Partner, Severn Trent Services

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA (April 25, 2013) – Global humanitarian organization Operation Blessing International (OBI) is playing a role in the opening of an important new teaching hospital in Haiti that will fill a huge void for Haitians who previously had limited access to quality health care.

The Hôpital Universitaire de Mirebalais (HUM), in Mirebalais, Haiti, created by Partners In Health, will host a Celebration of Partnership event on April 28 to recognize the generous contributions of its partner organizations to the construction of the new hospital. The 205,000-square foot, 300-bed facility will provide primary care services to about 185,000 people in Mirebalais and two nearby communities. But patients from a much wider area—all of central Haiti and areas in and around Port-au-Prince—also will be able to receive secondary and tertiary care.

In addition to providing healthcare services, HUM will also provide high-quality education for the next generation of Haitian nurses, medical students, and resident physicians.

For the hospital, Operation Blessing International, who first came to Haiti in 2009 at the request of Partners In Health, has drilled five water wells including the primary hospital well (8" x 300') and backup (6" x 200'), an off-site well for hospital staff housing (4" x 200'), and at the request of Partners In Health, two community wells (4" x 100') for public use. While the primary well was being drilled, OBI also funded construction of the hospital's cistern and delivered several truckloads of water every day for over a month.

In addition to the wells and water delivery, OBI also facilitated the donation of a water disinfection/filtration system through the charity's longtime partner, Severn Trent Services. The system is capable of producing up to six pounds of sodium hypochlorite per day, which can disinfect some 165,000 gallons of water daily for the hospital. The system also will filter the water to ensure it is free of any particulate.

OBI shipped the materials for the water system to Haiti, received them in the OBI Port-au-Prince warehouse and transported them to Mirebalais for the installation. OBI staff worked together with a Severn Trent technician to install and commission the system. OBI continues to provide technical support and maintenance for the water system, and will continue to do so to ensure the hospital has water available at every tap that meets the US standards for water quality.

“When Paul Farmer and Partners In Health asked if Operation Blessing would help to provide clean water for the new hospital, we jumped at the chance to help our longtime friend,” said Bill Horan, president of Operation Blessing International. “We are also grateful to our friends at Trent Severn Services, who graciously donated a water system that will disinfect and filter the water from the wells and supply the entire hospital.”

Operation Blessing first came to Haiti in the fall of 2009 in order to assist Partners In Health (Zanmi Lasante) in providing running potable water at their network of 12 hospitals.

When the earthquake struck in January 2010, OBI deployed its first-response disaster relief team. OBI partnered with IsraAID to run an emergency medical facility that helped thousands, OBI installed water purification equipment all around the city, and delivered hundreds of tons of relief supplies, transported to Haiti via the US Navy, for months after the disaster. The OBI team also responded to the subsequent cholera outbreak, providing life saving water purification equipment to the hard-hit areas.

Since the quake, OBI continues to work on many ongoing projects in Haiti, including operating the Zanmi Beni home for children with disabilities in partnership with Partners In Health, hosting medical teams from the Mayo Clinic regularly, installing and operating a major fish farming operation that provides jobs to Haitians and much needed protein to the children at Zanmi Beni and other children's homes, installing clean water systems at the St. Damien's Children's Hospital and helping to fund a cholera treatment center there, partnering with Greif and the Clinton Foundation to install rainwater catchment systems and to build a school in villages surrounding Lake Azuei, and many more.

For more information on Operation Blessing please visit: www.ob.org

For more information about Hôpital Universitaire de Mirebalais (HUM), please visit the Partners In Health website: www.pih.org

ABOUT OPERATION BLESSING INTERNATIONAL:

Operation Blessing International (OBI) is one of the largest charities in America, providing strategic disaster relief, medical aid, hunger relief, clean water and community development in 23 countries around the world on a daily basis. Currently, Forbes ranks OBI as one of its "100 Largest Charities" with an efficiency rating of 99%, and Consumers Digest also named OBI as one of "America's Top Charities" in 2012. Founded in 1978, Operation Blessing International has touched the lives of more than 255 million people in more than 105 countries and 50 states, providing goods and services valued at over \$3.3 billion to date.

ABOUT PARTNERS IN HEALTH:

PIH is a global health organization relentlessly committed to improving the health of the poor and marginalized. We build local capacity and work closely with impoverished communities to deliver high quality health care, address the root causes of illness, train providers, advance research and advocate for global policy change. Ninety-three percent of the funds we raise go to our programs in the ten countries where we work, including Haiti, Rwanda, Russia, Peru and the United States.

To see an electronic press kit of OBI's work please visit:

<https://vimeo.com/57154374>

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