



January - March 2017

Philippians 4:19 reminds us, "My God will meet all your needs according to the riches of His Glory in Christ Jesus." And we continue to see God's Glory through the richness of His provision for Altagracia and the Giving Hands programs in this new year! We praise God for support that has continued from the U.S. and Puerto Rico, as well as for the team of volunteers who continue to serve their own community even as Dr. Jacob and Felicia are away in the U.S. God not only provides the resources, but He has provided the faithful laborers to put them to effective use in continually meeting ongoing needs.

In January, the Giving Hands volunteer staff adapted to running the clinic without Dr. Jacob. They maintained contact with Dr. Jacob, following his guidance and bringing their patient care questions or medication needs to his attention, and our neighbors' health needs were continually met. Our lead Sunday school teacher, Anyelina, carried on the weekly program by designing and implementing her own lessons and shared photos and video every week. Anyelina and Eva, our lead school attendance competition record keeper, also continued awarding stickers each day and prizes each 10 days while sharing photos of our kids who maintained their newly increased attendance streaks. The Ramirez house also became a regular gathering place for dinners cooked by family volunteers for the local children whose parents are unable to afford a second meal each day. Finally, the Segura home reconstruction (since the mid-December fire that destroyed this family's previous home) continued and found additional support in a local Catholic church.

In February, as the clinic's regular medical services and the Sunday school and academic support programs continued, Dr. Jacob and Felicia made their visit back to the DR in the form of a multi-focal mission trip. We extend our many thanks and deep appreciation to all who supported this trip and who worked with us on the ground in various ways.

We began by taking inventory of the clinic and medical services. We then collaborated with our Puerto Rican church family, Iglesia Plenitud del Reino, to host a large group of dental professionals in Altagracia who provided free treatments and preventative care to a huge portion of our own community and neighbors from two other local towns. In a single day, over 300 individuals of all ages received dental care that they had never experienced before in their lifetimes! Dental patients received cleanings, fillings, and extractions that they never could have accessed otherwise. Dr. Jacob and our friend Dr. Molina also saw many medical patients throughout the day. In addition, the church team brought donations of clothing, Sunday school materials, and TONS of candy for the kids' school attendance rewards! Praise God, and muchas gracias, familia de la Iglesia Plenitud del Reino!

The following week, Dr. Jacob and Felicia traveled to the province of Samana on a northern peninsula of the DR where they participated in a multi-faceted, large-scale mission trip conducted by Steel City Mission Group. We met and became instant family with new brothers and sisters in Christ from the Pennsylvania/Ohio border areas and served together in medical, construction, and children's programs throughout several communities and the local prison. This was both of our first visit to Samana and first experience in prison ministry, both of which we look forward to revisiting with additional Giving Hands resources in the future! Dr. Jacob saw 20-30 patients at each community clinic and assisted in some construction work, and Felicia assisted with various clinic tasks and took valuable insight from the team's outstanding Bible story programs. Steel City also provided at least 50 household water filters in each community. And in the end, Steel City donated a large quantity of extra medical supplies and medications to help stock our clinic back in Altagracia. We thank our Steel City family for welcoming us to their programs and continuing to provide for our own!

By the end of the February visit, the Giving Hands clinic inventory had grown substantially, the children's dinner program was better organized and supplied, and a women's health and exercise program was kick-started with a weigh-in and first aerobics meeting. Upon returning to the US at the end of the month, Felicia shared updates and ongoing program needs with attenders of the New Life Baptist Church DR mission team's movie night fundraiser. This single evening raised awareness and funds for Giving Hands Foundation in addition to substantial funds for the New Life mission team's trip activities and ministries. We extend another big thanks to everyone who hosted and attended the movie night!

In March, regular programs continued in Altagracia, and support from New Life Baptist Church provided for restocking of medications and leaps in construction progress on the Segura home. It now finally has a finished, cement floor! We have also seen dramatic increases in the women's health and exercise program participation, as well as response from supportive local American women. The New Life mission team conducted a second fundraiser by selling That's A Wrap pepperoni rolls and raised over \$1,500 toward participating individuals' trip expenses. The New Life team is working hard to raise support, including much-needed construction funds, and will travel with us to the DR this May 3-10. The team will serve with us in Altagracia and our neighboring communities, Algodon and Fundacion. We appreciate the team's dedication and the support for them that we witness!

In our next update, we look forward to reporting on all that God does in May through these willing vessels! Please keep our ongoing trip and this mission team in your prayers, and consider your own participation in God's blessings by supporting this team and the associated upcoming and ongoing ministries. Your support and God's blessings continue to amaze us! ... Muchas gracias, familia! Dios les bendiga!

facebook.com/givinghandsfoundation
mrsramirez126@gmail.com
823 Allegheny Ave, New Castle, PA 16101

PHOTOS!



Top Left: Kids in Altagracia make Valentines;
Top Center: 50+ kids from Altagracia enjoy a beach day;
Top Right: Dr. Jacob in the Giving Hands clinic;

Row2 Left: Dental procedures; Row2 Center: Medical service on dental day; Row2 Right: Dr. Molina's service on dental day;
Row3 Left: Dental cleaning; Row 3 Center: Children's Noah story in Samana; Row3 Right: Medical clinic in Samana; Bottom Left: Glasses distribution in Samana; Bottom Center: Segura house current status