

# Jamaica Outreach Program

## OUR MISSION:

*"Jamaica Outreach Program (JOP) is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) public charity whose mission is to help the poor in Jamaica. JOP provides love, respect, funds, goods and services for health care, education and basic support to improve the lives of the poor in Jamaica without regard to religious affiliation, personal history, gender, age or race."*

Fall – 2020 Newsletter

Since 1997

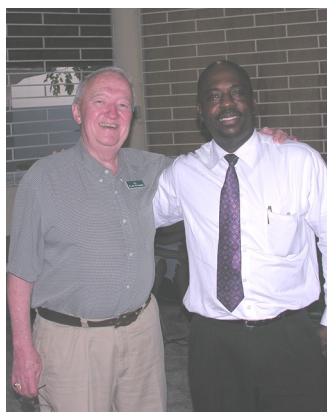
## In Memoriam.... Albert L. Kerns, MD



Dr. Al Kerns left this world to claim his special place in heaven on September 23, 2020. He and his wife Ann were the founders of our medical program 22 years ago and they led innumerable mission trips to Kingston over the years. Al and Ann served on the JOP Board for many years; they recruited volunteers and were always present whenever there was a need for helping hands at our food drives, fundraisers, mailings etc. We grieve the loss of our dear friend but we rejoice in the fact that he now rests in the good hands of his Shepherd.



Dr. Al Kerns, "Boxer" & Ann Kerns



St Pius Clinic: Al & Dr Lee Martin



JOP Board Retirement 2019

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## Oct.1, 2019 - Sept.30, 2020 Highlights

- ☺ 252 Eye exams and 211 eyeglasses delivered
  - ☺ 77 boxes of clothing, books, toys and dental supplies delivered
  - ☺ 227 Medical Patients treated in two mission trips
  - ☺ 1,068 dental patients were treated
  - ☺ 852 students received aid for tuition, supplies, backpacks, books, or uniforms
  - ☺ 10 housing units were built for the poor
  - ☺ over 100 people volunteered (34 went on mission trips)
- AND MORE...** see inside for details.

## Volunteers are Essential in Our Service to Jamaica

The need for volunteers is always ongoing. In Naples, we need and depend on host families willing to welcome Jamaicans who visit Naples for medical treatment or JOP events. Our greatest needs are people in leadership roles who can chair fundraising events, mission trips, bookkeeping and administrative tasks.

To staff mission trips, we need optometrists, opticians, dentists, dental hygienists/ assistants, doctors, and nurses from any part of the USA!

New volunteers are always welcomed. Anyone interested in becoming an active volunteer is invited to contact any Board member (see box below for contact info).



### Letter from a volunteer nurse:

Dear Joe,

*I would like to express my sincere thanks for the opportunity provided this past year by Jamaica Outreach Program. After completion of the initial paperwork, each of the three trips was a joy for me to experience. My initial trip was in June 2019 to Kingston followed by two trips in September and November to Montego Bay.*

*Those we met in each of the sites visited were warm, welcoming and most helpful in all aspects of the mission in Jamaica. After the initial day of setting up the equipment and facilities needed, we focused subsequent days on providing much needed healthcare to those we had come to serve. The school children, as was the staff, in Kingston were a delight. Those in Seaford Town, especially the Sisters, worked tirelessly along the providers. There is much need in these community for healthcare as well as for health education. If I may add after the initial visits, we were able to ascertain what areas we needed to focus on for subsequent visits e.g., appropriate medications, specific equipment, testing, etc.*

*I embarked on this journey to help others but found that I was helped in achieving a sense of accomplishment and well-being. I was so looking forward to our trip in April/May. Unfortunately, Covid 19 had different plans. I look forward to the day when we can safely visit Jamaica again.*

Sincerely,  
Ann Marie

**Interested in learning more? Gen. Info:** Ray Shawcross, President 401-862-0590 **Medical:** Dr. Joseph Vento 917-561-5499 **Vision Care:** Dr. Jeff Zimm 592-5511

**Dental:** Roger Plante: 239-948-2145 **Education & Housing:** Ray Shawcross 401-862-0590 **Donations & Events:** Jeanne Pittman 239-248-3248

**Optical Equipment :** Paul Connor 330-784-6623 **Food and Goods :** Jeff Meyerson 239-592-5781 **Website & Publications:** Jeff Meyerson 239-592-5781



## Financial Report for the Fiscal Year Ended 9-30-20 — Jamaica Outreach Program

### Statement of Activities

<b>Support and revenues</b>	
Contributions & Grants	\$ 284,991
Special events, net	\$ 3,112
Donated food, goods & services	\$ 158,195
Investments & Other Income*	\$ 2,642
Total Revenues	\$ 448,940
<b>Expenses</b>	
Program services (96%)	\$ 426,884
General & administrative (2%)**	\$ 7,938
Fundraising (2%)	\$ 9,661
Total expenses	\$ 444,483
<b>Increase (decr) in net assets</b>	<b>\$ 4,458</b>
<b>Net assets - beginning of year</b>	<b>\$ 216,853</b>
<b>Net assets - end of year</b>	<b>\$ 221,311</b>
Unrestricted net assets	\$ 189,567
Temporarily restricted net assets***	\$ 31,744

### 96 % Spent on Programs for the Poor

Fortunately, our fixed expenses are minimal because we have no rent and no paid staff. Periodic audits of the records of our grantees help to confirm that grants were used as intended. We also have an annual internal audit to verify that JOP's policies on checks and balances have been followed. Our books are open to anyone who wants a more detailed view of our finances.

**THANK YOU for your faithful support of our mission.**

\* Other Income and Other Program Services include mission trip expenses contributed by trip volunteers.

\*\* General/admin expenses are largely CPA financial services & insurance.

\*\*\* Temporarily Restricted Net Assets include donations restricted for distribution after the close of our fiscal year: \$26,744 Eye Surgery and \$5,000 medical equipment.

Sean Nolan, CPA, of RWHSB prepares JOP's reviewed financial statements, but the final product was not available at press time. A copy of their complete report will be available on our website or by calling Jeanne Pittman 239-248-3248

## Vision Care Report

During the last year, two vision care trips were staged by JOP teams. **Ten volunteers** from OH, KY, MA and FL donated their time, talent, medicines and glasses to the eye care clinic at St Pius X and Sacred Heart in Montego Bay region.

In November 2019, **Dr. Tom Kelly (OH)** with **Paul Connor, Richard VanBuskirk and Peggy Johnson** travelled to Bishop Burchell's rural territory in Seaford Town where they saw 126 patients.

The November 2019 trip to St. Pius X included **Dr Yan Jiang (MA)**, and 5 others from OH, KY, and FL. The team completed 126 eye exams.



Nov. 2019 Kingston Eye Mission Team



Seaford Town eye mission Nov. 2019.  
Peggy and Sister Monica test a patient.

There were no other Optical or Cataract Surgery mission trips due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Paul Connor**, JOP Board member and optical equipment professional, has been a Godsend in the production of all the prescription eyeglasses resulting from our mission trips over the years. In the past fiscal year, **211 pairs of eyeglasses** were delivered to Jamaica by Paul at incredible savings to JOP. Paul also repairs and maintains the equipment in our eye clinics and has solicited hundreds of new eyeglass frames from his contacts in the optical profession.

**Dr. Jeffrey Zimm** is JOP's Eye Care Coordinator, he has been going to Jamaica for 16 years and is part of the JOP Advisory Board. There are many patients still waiting for eye surgery and vision care.

For more information contact: **Dr. Jeffrey Zimm 239-592-5511**

## Education Report

This year with the Covid -19 the JOP Education program experienced many challenges. The education sector has been particularly hit by the COVID-19 pandemic with island-wide school closures ultimately impacting all enrolled students. Not only does school provide safety and protection, it also instills hope for a brighter future.

In addition, with the tourist and travel industry completely shut down, thousands of Jamaicans experienced a loss of employment. As a result, families and students were left without the needed financial resources to attend school. Jamaican schools were closed to in- person learning from mid-March to early October. For Jamaican children, education is not only necessary but lifesaving.

JOP funded the purchase of tablets and internet data service for 50 economically deprived students at St Mary, St Theresa, and King Weston Primary Schools in the Devon Pen area. Without this assistance these students would have been deprived of online education classes.



This year we continued to provide funding for Marcus Garvey, St Mary, and African Martyrs Basic Schools. These schools serve children from ages 3 to 6. They educate the whole child through a strong academic and spiritual program. Through prayer, example and instruction, these schools strive to provide a quality education that will teach students at an early age to know, love and serve God and their neighbor.

Acknowledging that education after primary school is a key to success, we provided assistance for tuition, books, and other fees for 140 students from St Benedict, St Pius X, St Peter Claver, and Immaculate Conception parishes in Kingston. The students are selected by their local parishes for their commitment to education and their church. In the diocese of Montego Bay, under the direction of Bishop Burchell McPherson, a similar scholarship program exists and is funded by JOP. Scholarships were awarded to 352 students for the current year.

In Cambridge, Jamaica, JOP provides funding for St Mary Basic School. This school, founded by Bishop Burchell 5 years ago, serves preschool age children. Along with academic instruction, Christian character formation is paramount. Through prayers, example, and instruction, children are taught about Jesus daily.

At the DuPont School on the grounds of St Pius X Church in Kingston, JOP once again provided significant financial support. Due to the pandemic and with the goal of stopping the spread of the virus, 230 younger students were provided face shields. These are protective gear designed especially for 3 to 6 year old students. In addition, infrared thermometers were provided with JOP funds for the classroom.

Also, at the DuPont School money was awarded for the purchase of shoes and uniforms for 80 needy students. While the government mandates that students must wear uniforms and a specific type of shoe to attend school, it is the responsibility of the family to purchase them. Several years ago, in a truancy study, it was found that some children were not attending school because they didn't have shoes or money for uniforms. For the last 4 years, JOP funding has been allocated for shoes and uniforms.

*For more information on JOP education programs contact Ray Shawcross at 401-862-0590 or [reshaw1@verizon.net](mailto:reshaw1@verizon.net)*



## Medical Report

Our medical director, Dr. Joseph Vento, has led two missions to Seaford Town since our last report. The October 2019 mission included a Medical Team and a Dental Team assisted by the Sisters of Sacred Heart Parish and their pastor Father Morris. Ailments seen were hypertension, asthma, STDs, skin rashes, ring worm, scabies, arthritis, ADHD, depression. Despite challenges - loss of power, and overcrowded waiting room - the mission provided care to over 180 patients in 3 days.



The next medical mission began on January 29 the day after an earthquake hit off the coast of Jamaica. The team was delighted to find the earthquake had minimal impact. Students in Montego Bay were practicing an earthquake evacuation drill in preparation for future tremors or quakes. After visiting the Good Hope Mission in Montego Bay to assess ways JOP could assist in their development, the team returned to Seaford Town and were welcomed by the people and treated to smiles, hugs and songs from the children. The medical team saw patients for 2 days and Dr. Vento was able to make a house call with Father Morris.



On the third day of the mission, the team went to a new clinic set up by St. Mary's Revival Church in Negril about 2 hours from Seaford Town. It was a different setting from Seaford Town in many ways, but the medical issues were similar.

That night the team stayed at the Good Hope Clinic in Montego Bay and the next morning had the honor and privilege of attending The Feast of Christ the King at the Cathedral in Montego Bay before heading back to Florida. The medical missions that were planned for later in 2020 were postponed due to the outbreak of COVID-19. The team is anxiously awaiting the moment when they can head out on their next mission.

*For more information contact: Dr. Joseph Vento 917-561-5499 / jtvmd@yahoo.com.*



## Dental Clinic Report

A small dental team consisting of four persons accompanied Dr. Joseph Vento on his medical mission to Sacred Heart in Seaford Town on October 30-31 and Nov. 1. Together, the dental team saw nearly 100 patients of which 66 were dental hygiene and most of the remainder of the patients who were seen by the dentist required extractions. It was a wonderful mission and I am happy to share with you two comments: The first from Sister Tele-sia a resident nurse at Sacred Heart wrote:

*"I did feel the working of the Holy Spirit through each of you and especially you, Dr. Joe and Loretta. Your hearts reached out to everyone that turned up to you for help... you are an angel to us."*

Additionally, one of the missionaries wrote: *"We were so well received by all involved with the clinic. It was humbling to see the need in the community. Yet, they remained warm and welcoming. I feel that I got more than I gave...I look forward to the next mission."*



On December 1,2,3 and 4 we were blessed to have at our St. Pius X mission in Kingston, a great team consisting of twelve dental professionals from all parts of the country joining together for our first staggered four day mission. This team included Dr. Vera from NC a Pediatric dentist who dedicated the entire four days of the mission taking care of the students from the DuPont School. Our hygienists saw 639 students giving them oral education, performing a full mouth screening and applying fluoride varnish for each of them. Fifty seven requiring treatment were given appointments with the pediatric dentist and were treated accordingly. The team was further blessed with an oral surgeon, Dr. Ravindran from NC and a family dentist Dr. Watson from KY.

The clinic was not without its hiccups in that road construction on Olympic Way hampered water supply and additionally there were many power outages and brownouts during the four-day period, but the team worked like troopers getting through each ordeal. In total, this team saw over three hundred patients despite the difficulties.

The Covid-19 virus put a huge damper on the planned missions for the remainder of the year. There was a full team of 11 persons ready for a March 2020 mission, organized by Maryland Drs. Bryan and Lisa Crafton . Flights had been booked and all ministry of health paperwork had been processed, but one month prior to the mission, we had to cancel. Worthy of mentioning, this group had obtained dental supplies donations and they had even collected used clothing and other items to be distributed to the poor. Fortunately, all of it was shipped to us in Naples and we managed to ship it on to Jamaica.

Other missions planned for May, July and September also had to be cancelled.

Jamaica Outreach is optimistic that there will be a resolution to this pandemic and that we will be able to resume our dental mission program soon. In the meantime we are maintaining a list of volunteers consisting of lay persons, dentists, hygienists and dental assistants. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we are able to provide some financial reimbursement for our missionaries although they do bear some of the cost in addition to the generous donation of their lost wages at home plus their valuable time and energy.

We are annually in need of some 2,000 tooth brushes, (sample size) paste and floss and about the same amount of fluoride varnish applications.... donations of which are always appreciated.

*For more information please contact Roger Plante at [rogerplante10@gmail.com](mailto:rogerplante10@gmail.com)*

## Message from Archbishop Richards and Bishop McPherson

Dear Board Members of JOP,

On behalf of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Kingston and the Bishop of Montego-Bay, we would like to express our sincere appreciation and joy for your donations over the years towards the following churches, St. Pius X Church, St. Benedict, African Martyrs of Uganda Early Childhood Institute, Holy Trinity Cathedral Summer Art Literacy School and Immaculate Conception Church and Missions.

Yearly we write to you and seek your contributions and we are grateful. Your continued help over the years have provided much needed assistance to the needy in our community. These include, educational fund, school supplies and to pay salaries for teachers. In addition we are appreciative and thankful for the ongoing dental, optical and medical missions, which continue to provide wholesome health care for those in our communities who are in most need.

The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Kingston and the Bishop of Montego-Bay appreciates your continuous support, generosity and kindness.

We need, always, to be giving some of our possessions away in order to be healthy. The poor do need us, but we also need them. They are, as Jesus puts it so clearly when he tells us we will be judged by how we gave to the poor, our passports to heaven. And they are also our passports to health. Our health depends upon sharing our riches - Fr. Ron Rolheiser

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Rev. Kenneth D. Richards, DD, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Kingston

Bishop Burchell McPherson, DD, Bishop of Montego Bay

## Housing Report - 10 NEW HOMES FOR NEEDY JAMAICAN FAMILIES



Since its inception, the JOP Housing program has constructed 535 homes for poor families. This year we are proud to announce that we financed the building of 10 houses. Due to the generosity of JOP donors, formerly homeless families are safe and protected.

Tarps and metal sheeting have been replaced with decent housing. The homes contain two bedrooms, a kitchen, and a living area. They have running water, sanitary facilities and solar lighting. The families now have a home with sturdy walls and a waterproof roof able to withstand bad weather and a real floor instead of one that turns to mud when it rains.

Children can go to school knowing that they can return to a permanent home. Since each home has doors that lock, these homeowners now have a sense of security and safety in their new environment. More importantly a sense of dignity has been returned to them. The kindness and compassion of JOP donors has allowed a family to experience something they have not felt in a long time - hope.

The good we can accomplish together when God's people work to create miracles is amazing. Through collective Christian charity, we can continue to build miracles, one family at a time.

Each house cost \$7,200. If this price point is more than one donor can provide, we are able to match two donors with each providing \$3,600.

*For more information on how to donate a house please contact Ray Shawcross at 401-862-0590 or [reshaw1@verizon.net](mailto:reshaw1@verizon.net)*



## Food & Goods

Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, we were unable to have a food drive this year. But, with the assistance of church members, missionaries and other volunteers, we were able to collect 77 boxes of clothing, toys, books and dental supplies. These were shipped to Jamaica through Food For the Poor.

We also continued our financial support for the “**Love in Action**” soup kitchen” in Montego Bay. The “**Love In Action**” soup kitchen is run by Korean sisters and volunteers; it serves hot meals 5 days a week to the poorest of the poor.



## Events

At press time, in the fall of 2020, no concerts or other fundraising events are planned by JOP due to Covid-19 uncertainties. Watch our website or the St John the Evangelist church bulletin for any updates

**Jamaican Choir 2020. Choir is tentatively scheduled to sing at St John's masses Feb. 6-7, 2021, depending on the Covid environment.**



### Jamaica Outreach Program

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Naples, FL 34108-1929

[www.JamaicaOutreach.org](http://www.JamaicaOutreach.org) 239-325-2103

Email: [info@jamaicaoutreach.org](mailto:info@jamaicaoutreach.org)

### To make a donation or bequest:

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