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World Medical Relief honors Angels of Mercy, WSU Applebaum student orgs and community volunteers

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By Joseph Paul Javier

For PharmD candidates at Wayne State University's Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, World Medical Relief has been a philanthropic organization that student volunteers regularly visit. They've helped sort medications as part of WMR's Affordable Prescription Program.



World Medical Relief CEO Dr. George Samson with Kappa Psi brothers Johnnie L. Bailey, Evan Johnson, Noah Trotter, Daniel Frederick, Fadi Manuel and Hussein Safaoui.

WSU students assist in processing and packaging donated medical supplies and liquid nutrition which are sent to medically underserved populations locally and abroad. WSU Applebaum students are just some of the many volunteers representing metro Detroit schools and community organizations that help WMR serve the sick and poor.

“We are grateful for all of our volunteers,” said Dr. George Samson, CEO of World Medical Relief. “You are all truly Angels of Mercy.”

In recognition of the generous contributions made by their volunteers, WMR held an event to thank their “Angels of Mercy.” Among the organizations honored were Wayne State University’s very own Mu Omicron Pi chapter of Kappa Psi Pharmaceutical Fraternity and FAWN: Fighting AIDS with Nutrition.

“Our fraternity is proud to work so closely with World Medical Relief. We believe in the good work that they do here in Detroit as well as all around the globe,” said Kappa Psi President Noah Trotter. “As future pharmacists, ensuring that patients get access to life-saving medications is important to us and we are more than willing to volunteer our time and talents with World Medical Relief to make this happen.”

[FAWN: Fighting AIDS with Nutrition](#) enjoys a special partnership with WMR. FAWN’s founder, Pastor Frank Julian, also serves as WMR’s chaplain and it is through the global connections of WMR that FAWN is able to ship liquid nutrition to patients living with HIV/AIDS in Africa.



FAWN President Ali Khafer and FAWN Community Outreach Chair Lucas Crum

“FAWN is an organization that raises funds to buy liquid nutrition for people affected with HIV/AIDS and to raise awareness about this disease. In order for antiretroviral therapy to be the most effective, patients need to be well-nourished,” said WSU FAWN President Ali Khafer. “I plan to expand our chapter and have more students raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and volunteer at World Medical Relief to pack and ship more palettes of liquid nutrition this year.”

The ceremony recognizing WMR's special volunteers took place in the Angels of Mercy Orientation Area of World Medical Relief, which was recently named for Dr. Ernestina "Ernie" de los Santos-Mac. This space, which provides an overview of the organization, its mission and the building that houses the vital work of WMR, is often the first real-life contact point for WMR volunteers.



Clockwise from the top left: FAWN Founder Pastor Frank Julian and his wife Peggy, Greg Baise from FAWN's Board of Trustees with WSU FAWN Vice President Joseph Paul Javier, "Angel of Mercy" Dr. Ernestina de los Santos-Mac, World Medical Relief's Director of Development and Community Affairs Josephine Jabara with former WSU instructor Bernie Beutel, WMR Board Chair Mike Baydoun, and Rebecca Tungol WMR Board Chair and President of the Philippine American Cultural Center of Michigan.

"It's fitting that this area bears Dr. Mac's name, so committed is she to helping others," said Josephine Jabara, WMR director of development and community affairs. "Whether through her 50-year medical career, her generous financial donations or her philanthropic work in her home county, the Philippines, giving of herself has always come naturally to Dr. Mac. This generosity is what makes Dr. Mac a true Angel of Mercy."

Surrounded by family, friends and colleagues, the naming ceremony featured several speakers, all of whom recounted stories of Dr. Mac's focus on giving care and providing assistance to those in need. President of Grosse Pointe and Troy Acute Care Campuses of Beaumont Health Dr. James Lynch, a former colleague of Dr. Mac's, spoke of her 20-plus year career with the health system. Becky Tungol, president of the Philippine American Cultural Center of Michigan (PACCM), embraced her role as Dr. Mac's BFF, with emphasis on the retired pediatrician's "sincerity, loyalty and love for our Filipino community and others through her constant selfless sacrifice to help the needy, poor, and sick here and in other countries abroad." Tungol noted that she would erect a statute in Dr. Mac's honor as a symbol of all her friend has done for those less fortunate, ending her remarks by saying, "Because of you, the world is a better place to live!" Dr. Robert

Barretto and Dr. Efren Platon shared similar sentiments, weaving warm humor into their remarks of praise and admiration.

Before revealing the engraved plaque that bears Dr. Mac's name, WMR President and CEO George Samson recalled the numerous accomplishments and awards of this incredible woman, which include Who's Who Among Detroit Professional Women; Commissioner, Asian Pacific Affairs Commission; 100 Most Influential Filipino Women in the World; Beaumont Health System Outstanding Physician for Community and Humanitarian Service; Province of Albay (Philippines) Woman of Substance Award; Corp! Magazine Diversity Award, and the Irene M. Auberlin Award for service above self.

The plaque offers not only the date of the naming ceremony but also an insightful and inspirational quote from Dr. Mac, which explains her reasons for supporting WMR and other causes she helps sustain.

“One of the reasons I chose to keep working was to be able to support the community activities near and dear to my heart, World Medical Relief among these. When my husband passed away, volunteering with the organization allowed me to help people as I mourned,” Dr. Mac said in the latest *Good Samaritan* newsletter. “World Medical Relief has given me the opportunity to grow and truly learn the needs of the people, not only in my country, the Philippines, but throughout metro Detroit.”

World Medical Relief and its many volunteers congratulate Dr. Ernestina de los Santos-Mac on the naming of the Angels of Mercy Orientation Area in honor and thanks for her for tireless years of service to so many people in so many places across the globe.