

2019 Bicentennial Fund Recommendation

The Board of Outreach is submitting the following request to you for approval in awarding the 2019 Bicentennial grant. We are excited by the two applications that we have chosen. We are asking to award \$500 to each project listed below.

1. UVIP Asylum and Sanctuary Support Fund. This is a newly developed fund to address the needs of a new local family from Indonesia seeking asylum. The fund has a more general purpose that is described below:

Realizing that these are the types of needs that we want to be able to respond to, we are establishing the Asylum & Sanctuary Support Fund to provide needed support for families that come under our care, either because they are seeking asylum, or because they need sanctuary. This will be a general-purpose fund, to be used to provide whatever manner of support is needed. Mary Chin and Kathy Beckett, who are providing “close in” support to the family, will manage it. While “necessities of life” will have first priority, it may be used to provide a little joy as well – like maybe a week of summer camp for the 6-year old boy, or art supplies for the Dad, or a little relief for Mom. At the moment, this fund would support only our asylum-seeking family. If we take another family into sanctuary, or into asylum-seeking care, it could support them as well.

2. ACTS Honduras

ACTS-Honduras is a Norwich, VT based NGO that has been caring, teaching and serving a rural region of Honduras for over 30 years. Our own Dr. Bob Keene has been a moving force in that initiative, and many members of our medical community have routinely given their time and talent taking lifesaving health care to the El Rosario region of Honduras.

From heart surgeons (Dr John Sanders, Lyme UCC) to dental surgeons these teams visit often multiple times per year, at their own expense, for weeks at a time.

Supporting the medical community, Engineers Without Borders, provides direction as the community builds shelter and medical

facilities. Recent new initiatives provide basic agricultural education to promote sustainable family food sources in this very rural region of 30,000 people.

Many years ago, Bob and Jean Keene donated an air compressor for the dental clinic. At this point, that vital machine is nearly 60 years old and needs to be replaced. A Honduran dentist, Dr. Reina Lara, works at the clinic Bob assisted in setting up 4 days per month, providing educational and preventive oral care for school children and clinical dental care for adults. The air compressor is critical to her work, and the work of the dental teams going down to support her.

There is a second need, which might be more critical. While Bob Keene has made me aware of the dental clinic's need, I have learned that a generator is desperately needed to back up a very unreliable municipal power supply. Even a simple surgery can be made extremely difficult when the lights go out!

Thank you for your consideration.