



What is AFYA?

When translated from Swahili, Afya means “good health.” Not coincidentally, The AFYA Foundation is dedicated to “good health through giving.” Headquartered in Yonkers, NY, Afya works with hospitals, other medical facilities and individuals throughout the New York City metropolitan area to serve as a destination for unwanted medical supplies, which will ultimately be sent to medical facilities throughout Africa and Haiti. By salvaging unused and gently used medical and humanitarian supplies, Afya is able to positively impact healthcare delivery on an international scale. Danielle Butin, founder and Executive Director of Afya, has a team of dedicated volunteers (experts, interns, general population, at-risk population) collaborating on this effort; together they have shipped over 500,000 pounds of medical supplies in the past year and a half. To date, eighteen 40-foot containers have reached the African nations of Cape Verde, Malawi, Rwanda and Sierra Leone; as well as the devastated nation of Haiti.

Anyone can help at AFYA, so volunteer or donate today!

A Vision in Action

After a visit last November to Rinkwavu, Rwanda, with Partners in Health, Danielle Butin was contacted by Dr. Keeler, Executive Director of Edgewood Health Initiatives. With Dr. Keeler’s help, Afya was able to launch an extraordinary effort: a huge shipment to support their surgical team. This container included anesthesia and suction machines, operating room tables and sophisticated operating room lights, among hundreds of boxes of supplies.

Afya’s most recent shipment went to Haiti, enabled largely by Partners in Health, an NGO based in Boston. To meet the needs of the Haitian recipients, we identified and transported some specific donations from Boston down to our warehouse (anesthesia equipment, shelving units, clothing, x-ray cassettes). The container was also filled with needed surgical instruments, mattresses, stretchers and hundreds of boxes of medical supplies, all gathered from the NY healthcare market.

Upcoming shipments will be going out to Haiti, Ghana and Ethiopia.



Helping Hands

In the spring of 2009, Afya enjoyed the company of eager and exceptional individuals in the nearby area, including Vietnam Veterans and clients from Riverdale Mental Health, as they volunteered and benefited from vocational training. They were tremendously helpful in the sorting process, and at the end of their service, commented on how rewarding the experience was on a personal level. One man commented by telling staff, “I really want to come back and help you again.”



Gloria's Gathering

A donation of medical supplies from photographer Ed Bobrow inspired Afya to create a new program: Gloria's Gathering. In honor of Ed's wife, Gloria, the program provides mourning families the opportunity to donate unused medical supplies, with the firm knowledge that their supplies will save and improve quality of life abroad. "I never dreamt that when Gloria passed away I would have such an emotional attachment to the medical things that helped keep her alive. I just could not throw them away" reflected Mr. Bobrow. In Afya he found a way to give these supplies to people who really need them. Gloria's Gathering has become an outlet for recovering surplus supplies from individuals; items such as unopened sterile gloves, adult diapers, bandages, syringes, and IV's, as well as wheelchairs, walkers and canes.

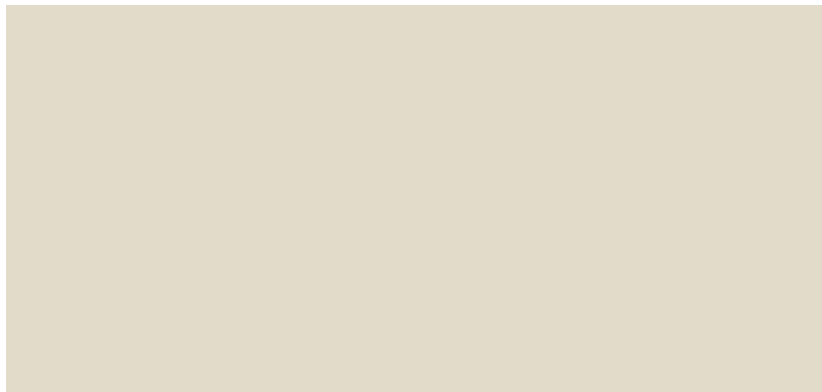
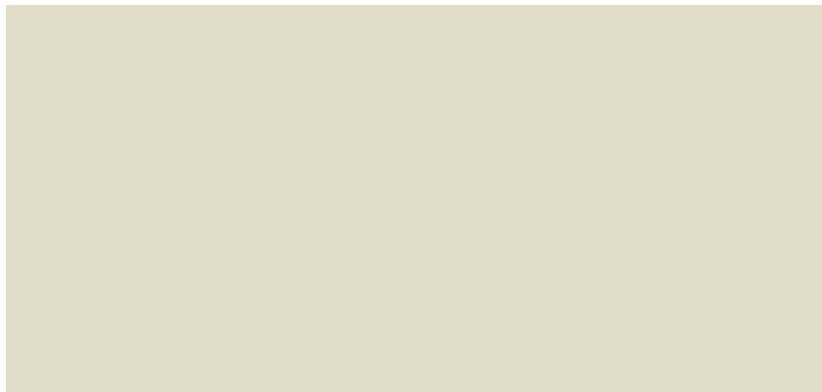
The purpose of Gloria's Gathering is to allow individuals in the NY area to donate desperately needed end-of-life supplies that will be sent to developing nations – these supplies are needed during recuperation from serious long-term illnesses, or during the last, precious days at home. "It is what I know my wife Gloria would have wanted," says Mr. Bobrow, who, incidentally, had his new pieces of photography displayed at The Works Gallery (NY, NY) in April, and donated a part of the event's profits to Afya.

Vietnam veteran, Steve, who first met Danielle Butin earlier this year when she spoke at a combat veteran meeting, has recently become an integral member of the team at Afya as the "computer guy." Like many people at Afya, Steve finds it "gratifying to do something hands on," and after coming to the warehouse, returned just a few days later to volunteer again. Having spent several years in a hospital recuperating from a tragic war-related injury, he learned a lot about medical supplies. Steve also knows a lot about software, so he is currently designing a inventory system for Afya that will enable us to more effectively sort and send out supplies. For him, Afya "reinforced the belief that there are good people out there trying to do a good thing." He thinks it's fabulous that Afya is getting young people involved, and believes that spreading the word is the way to go. To Steve, interning and volunteering at Afya provides "life learning experiences and on the job training – you practice living. The earlier you can do that, the better off you are." Afya is continuing to reach out to different people through public events and word of mouth.

To date, Afya has reached out to numerous social service organizations in the area, including The Sharing Community, Coachman Family Shelter and Different Start, to provide unique volunteer opportunities for their clients to "give back and heal through altruism." It is Danielle's extensive experience in occupational therapy, in conjunction with the social service philosophy of Afya that has created these "Helping Hands" opportunities. We invite you to investigate volunteer opportunities at Afya.

Construction Inside AFYA

Afya is in constant motion. In the background you can hear the freight elevators carrying supplies. The warehouse is perpetually brimming with cardboard boxes, wheelchairs, walkers and commodes. A group of Hastings High School seniors that came to intern at Afya for a month were put to work on the construction team. This team, led by John Kelly, is now building giant, industrial-sized, steel shelving that will serve as a more effective storage area for hundreds of inventoried boxes filled with medical supplies. This project has been evolving over the past few weeks, keeping good time with the continuous influx of supplies.



Benefit Concert

On Saturday, June 13th, at the Beczak Center in Habirshaw Park, in Yonkers, there will be a benefit concert and family fun event with a portion of the proceeds to benefit Afya. With such featured artists as Bethany & Rufus, The Mandingo Ambassadors and Hazmat Modine – each with an exotic voice and unique musical background, from American folk to Caribbean calypso – it will be a phenomenal day of music. From 2:30 to 7:30 pm, bands will be playing, food and drink will be served, and fun activities for the whole family will be presented by Afya – and all to help people in developing nations! For additional information about this concert, you can visit the website, www.commongroundsfusw.com/news/rivertownsjazzandblues/.

Call to Action

Afya believes in the potential of volunteers, and has lots of opportunities for you to donate money...supplies...or just lend a hand for the day. Every Sunday, from 12 noon – 3 pm, is a “packing day” and all are welcome to walk in and help out in the sorting process – no experience is necessary. The Afya warehouse is at 530 Nepperhan Avenue, Yonkers, on the fifth floor. Check the Afya website (www.afyafoundation.org) for updates on what supplies Afya is collecting for upcoming containers. Afya’s ability to ship supplies to developing nations overseas is dependent on the financial support of individuals and local communities; we encourage you to help us in any way you can.

This newsletter is sent out on a monthly basis. All appropriate donations are accepted, regardless of the quantity. Afya will always put these donations to good use and will provide updates via this newsletter. However, if you wish to unsubscribe from this newsletter, you can click on this link, [_____](#). If you have any questions or comments, please contact the info e-mail link located in the “contact” section of this newsletter.

The Pioneer Volunteer

Last July, Alex Straus, an extraordinary 13 year-old boy, began volunteering at Afya. Alex, a talented soccer and baseball player, heard the stories about fields of children, sitting and sadly waiting for their parent to be discharged from hospitals in Malawi. He thought about how children need physical activity and sporting equipment; and responded. Alex spearheaded a massive soccer equipment recovery/donation effort in his school and community. Soccer leagues in Neon, Malawi now exist because of Alex’s vision and action. At only thirteen, Alexander Strauss has already made a huge impact overseas. Because of his innovative work with Afya, Alex is one of 20 national winners of the Nike Gamechanger Award, and has been and praised in the New York Times article, An Inspiration in Shinguards and Cleats.

Board of Directors:

Danielle Butin, MPH, OTR, Executive

Director & Founder

Christopher Langston, Chair

David Bowen

Lloyd B. Gayle, MD

Roger O' Sullivan, J.D.

Edwidge Jourdain Thomas, DrNP,

ANP

Alex Velaj

AFYA Staff:

Danielle Butin, MPH, OTR
Executive Director & Founder

Sarah Schuyler
Manager, Domestic Resources and
International Capacity Building

Ellen Schorsch
Manager, Gloria's Gathering

The News Team:

Emy Ettinger

Alex Torke

Contact Info:

info@afyafoundation.com

www.afyafoundation.com

www.gloriasgathering.com



www.afyafoundation.com