

2022 NEWSLETTER

MEDWISH INTERNATIONAL

OUR YEAR IN REVIEW



REPURPOSE. SAVE LIVES.

Founded in 1993, MedWish International is a nonprofit organization that saves lives and the environment by repurposing surplus medical supplies and equipment to provide humanitarian aid to people in need.

OUR IMPACT IN 2022

592K+

POUNDS DIVERTED FROM LANDFILLS

453K+

TOTAL POUNDS DISTRIBUTED

21

CONTAINERS SHIPPED

696+

ORDERS FULFILLED WORLDWIDE

30

COUNTRIES SERVED

109

DOMESTIC ORGANIZATIONS SERVED

**as of 12.1.2022.*

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE:

OUR IMPACT IN 2022

A LETTER FROM OUR
FOUNDER AND
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CRISIS RELIEF
EFFORTS IN UKRAINE

2022 EVENT RECAP

VOLUNTEER
OF THE YEAR

AND MORE!





MedWish International's Executive Director, Britta Latz, and Founder, Lee Ponsky, at the 2022 MedWish Gala.

Dear Friends of MedWish,

As 2022 comes to a close, we reflect on a productive year in which we reached important milestones and made a meaningful impact on the lives of many. We kicked the year off by shipping four 40-foot containers filled with medical supplies and equipment to Ghana over the course of 5 days. At the end of February, we began our immense Ukraine Relief Efforts. Many of our Skill Building Program participants resumed in-person volunteering, and we returned to in-person events. We are also proud to report that our Local & Domestic Giving Program grew to include more than 205 partnerships.

Our mission, to save lives and the environment, is only possible through the help of our incredible community. Whether you are a volunteer, donor, recipient, or someone helping spread the word about our work, **YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE**. For the little boy in El Salvador who received a wheelchair to allow him to move freely in his home, **YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE**. For the doctor in Ukraine who now has the orthopedic and trauma supplies needed to treat those coming through her hospital's doors, **YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE**. For the woman caring for her bedbound mother who needs hygiene and personal care supplies to help her mother age with dignity, **YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE**.

While this newsletter cannot capture the gratitude felt by our recipients or the immense impact of our operations, we hope it will highlight the importance of our mission and demonstrate how **WE MAKE A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE TOGETHER**. None of our efforts are possible without our incredible community. On behalf of our team and all our recipients - **THANK YOU!**

Next year, MedWish is celebrating its **30TH ANNIVERSARY**, and not only are we planning to celebrate all we have accomplished over the last three decades, we are also looking ahead to how we can build upon our work and do more to touch the lives of those in need. We hope you will consider renewing your support of our mission as we move into the new year and help us grow our impact **AROUND THE CORNER AND AROUND THE WORLD**.

SINCERELY,

Britta Latz

BRITTA LATZ
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Lee Ponsky

LEE PONSKY, M.D.
FOUNDER & BOARD PRESIDENT

MEDWISH

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lee Ponsky, MD
President & Founder
University Hospitals

Valerie Henderson, MPH, DSc
Vice President
Emergency Management
Consultant

Brennan Igoe
Treasurer
Argonite Partners

Ashley Wilson Baer
Secretary
PSI Services LLC

Krysta Alexinas
Dexcom

Javier Echevarria
Ingredion USA

Rafid Fadul, MD
Community Intensivists
& North Bridge Management

David Landever
Barrasso Usdin Kupperman
Freeman & Sarver, LLC

Joshua Miller, DO, FACP
Cleveland Clinic

Zac Ponsky
Ponsky Capital Partners

Emily Quan
Eaton Corporation

Charu Ramanathan, PhD
Lokyata & vitalxchange

Sheldon Rose, MD, RDMS
Weatherby Healthcare

Brian J. Smith
Health Tech Development

Michael Zweig
Rockefeller Global Family Office

UKRAINE

CRISIS RELIEF



LOCAL SUPPORT FOR UKRAINIANS

In June, MedWish staff had the unique opportunity to personally distribute nearly 2,000 pounds of hygiene items, diapers, wipes, and other basic medical supplies during a Legal Resource Clinic for Ukrainians hosted by Global Cleveland. These supplies helped refugee women and children who have relocated to Cleveland after fleeing their country amid the current crisis. We are glad we can support these individuals, who are arriving here in Cleveland, while at the same time packing and sending shipments to the impacted areas in Ukraine.

Since March, MedWish has been working with our recipients to provide humanitarian aid to those in Ukraine. MedWish has shipped nearly 150,000 lbs. of medical supplies and equipment to date.

Initially, many of these shipments were transported on planes to ensure expedited delivery, with some being airlifted. We have recently transitioned to shipping more 40-foot cargo containers full of supplies to provide large-scale support.

To date, we have deployed 8 shipments of this size, and more are being planned.

As the need for aid continues, MedWish is prepared to shift our focus from an emergency response to the long-term recovery process.



Pictured from top to bottom:

- Recipient photos from a hand-carried shipment reaching Ukraine.
- Members of the Cleveland Maidan Association after an emergency supply sort.
- Photos received from a partner organization on the ground in Ukraine.
- Members of the MedWish team with recipients from an event with Global Cleveland.



Volunteers sorting through supplies on-site during the supply drive.

FROM CLEVELAND TO UKRAINE SUPPLY DRIVE RECAP

In **March**, MedWish hosted a supply drive in partnership with **Medworks** to collect items needed by those in Ukraine. The amount of support we received was incredible.

More than **100 volunteers** worked tirelessly on a cold Cleveland weekend to help collect and sort the generous donations as they came in. In total, MedWish collected **almost 14,000 lbs.** of aid in just **two days**!

"While I wish I could be there [in Ukraine] to help, I realize it is more important that I am here [in Cleveland] because, with MedWish, we can do a lot. I'm really impressed by the support I am seeing today. I am Ukrainian, so these are my family and friends in trouble. The people that are volunteering and donating today are not, but they are still more than willing to help. That has really touched my heart."

OKSANA MOLOTKOVSKAYA
BROOK OF HOPE

CLEVELAND

UKRAINE



Crash carts ready for shipment in the MedWish warehouse for use in Ukraine.

OUR IMPACT IN UKRAINE

149K+

POUNDS DISTRIBUTED INTERNATIONALLY

4.6K+

POUNDS DISTRIBUTED LOCALLY

17

RECIPIENT ORGANIZATIONS

67

ORDERS FULFILLED INTERNATIONALLY

8

ORDERS FULFILLED LOCALLY

**as of 12.1.2022.*



A group of Ukrainian delegates visiting MedWish with Global Ties Akron packing supplies to take back with them to Ukraine.

INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS

Global Ties Akron is a nonprofit organization that links local and international communities by building networks and friendships to promote understanding and world harmony. Working to implement professional programs for **international dignitaries**, Global Ties hosted several delegations of doctors from Ukraine to exchange experiences and establish professional connections between **Cleveland and Ukraine**.

These conferences - **covering topics like intensive care and burn surgery, transfusion medicine, and more** - included several trips to MedWish to learn more about our work around the corner and around the world. These visits ended with members of the delegation packing suitcases of supplies to take with them to Ukraine at the end of their stay. **These visits have been a great opportunity for our staff to hear from these recipients firsthand** and learn about the current state of healthcare in Ukraine, while simultaneously allowing these doctors to pack up supplies to support their work at home.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

with Senator Portman

In April, MedWish hosted **U.S. Senator Rob Portman**, alongside members of the **United Ukrainian Organizations of Ohio** and representatives from local hospitals, including the **Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals, and the MetroHealth System**.

During this visit, we had a **roundtable discussion**, diving into each organization's response to the ongoing **humanitarian crisis in Ukraine** and the importance of **collaboration and partnerships**. It was an honor to host this event at our warehouse!



Senator Rob Portman and others on a tour of the MedWish World Headquarters + our roundtable discussion.

LOCAL & DOMESTIC GIVING

MedWish International's **Local & Domestic Giving Program** was established in 2018 as a natural extension of our services. This program allows MedWish to serve our local community and across the United States in an effort to reduce health disparities among those unable to gain access to the medical supplies and equipment they need to maintain their health and well-being.

Thanks to grant funding and the generosity of our community, we have been able to operate this program fee-free since March 2021. With more than **109 recipient organizations** and over **500 orders fulfilled**, we estimate that more than **30,000 people have been served** so far this year. Thank you to all of our supporters who have made this possible!

A special thanks to everyone who donated to the **October Giving Challenge!** We raised the **\$10,000** needed to **receive a matching grant** to support these efforts.



A dedicated MedWish volunteer delivering our 500th Local Giving order this year.

HYGIENE BAGS & BABY SHOWERS

The Caring is a local nonprofit founded to lend a helping hand to those in need. Started in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, this organization serves as a resource for homeless and at-risk adults and their children. **In 2021, The Caring became one of MedWish's Local & Domestic Giving Program recipients.**

So far this year, they have received nearly **2,000 lbs. of hygiene products, baby supplies, and PPE from MedWish** through our Local & Domestic Giving Program. Tyra Jackson, the founder of The Caring, has distributed these supplies through various events hosted by the organization for families in need all around the west side of Cleveland.

In April, The Caring held its **annual Easter event and a community "baby shower"** where they provided diapers, wipes, books, formula, clothes, PPE, and more to dozens of families (and families to be). **Many of these supplies were provided by MedWish.** We are proud to be a part of these efforts and look forward to continuing our work together in the future!



An expectant mother attending the event and items in the distributed hygiene bags.

INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN AID

AID TO ECUADOR

Healing the Children New Jersey, Inc. (HTCNJ) is a nonprofit organization with the vision to create a world where every child has access to quality medical care. This past summer, MedWish worked with HTCNJ to ship **more than 1,000 lbs. of supplies** to Ecuador. This shipment included scales, IV poles, PPE, and other supplies and equipment to help doctors improve the quality of life for children and families in Guayaquil.

Upon their return, HTCNJ reported that they were able to successfully operate on **40 children with complex urology diagnoses** thanks to the supplies from MedWish.

Pictured (right): A doctor and a patient receiving care in Guayaquil.



“Without the assistance of MedWish International over the years, we would not be able to facilitate these life-changing missions abroad.”

HEALING THE CHILDREN NEW JERSEY, INC.

COUNTRIES SERVED IN 2022

ALBANIA · ARMENIA · BOLIVIA · CHAD
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC · ECUADOR · EL SALVADOR
ETHIOPIA · GHANA · GUATEMALA · GUINEA
GUYANA · HAITI · HONDURAS · KENYA · LEBANON
LIBERIA · MEXICO · NICARAGUA · NIGER
PAKISTAN · SENEGAL · SIERRA LEONE · TANZANIA
TOGO · UGANDA · UKRAINE · UNITED STATES
VIETNAM · ZIMBABWE

SPECIAL EVENTS

MEDWISH GALA

On **August 27th**, MedWish hosted our first in-person Gala since 2019. The event was a great opportunity to reunite and celebrate the recent work of MedWish and the milestones from last year's operations.

With the support of our sponsors, the event host committee, the MedWish Board of Directors, and many friends of MedWish - old and new - **we raised more than \$240,000 for MedWish International's mission** to save lives and the environment.

This year's event highlighted our recent work in **Ghana with the OKB Foundation** and helped showcase the impact of our Local & Domestic Giving Program on the lives of a family who relocated to Cleveland in the midst of the current humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. The evening also included a silent auction, live music by Taylor Lamborn and Birds in the Boneyard, award presentations, and more!

(In case you missed the event, you can still check out the mission moment video at medwish.org/gala)



MEDWISH MILES

On **July 9th**, MedWish hosted our MedWish Miles event. This 5k run/2k walk started at the Sterling Center and culminated with the 'walk through the warehouse' during a busy Saturday Sort. This was the first time MedWish has hosted the race in-person, as MedWish Miles was created during the COVID-19 pandemic and was held virtually. **We were pleased to welcome more than 135 runners and walkers on-site and cheered along the 25 virtual participants who logged their miles that weekend.** This event raised **more than \$20,000** in support of our general operations. We look forward to seeing you at the starting line next year!





MAKE YOUR MARK WITH MEDWISH

We can only do this life-changing work with your support.
Donate today and **MAKE A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE!**

Visit medwish.org/donate to make your gift by New Year's Eve
for a tax deduction on your 2022 tax return.
(to the extent permitted by law)

EVERY DOLLAR MAKES A DIFFERENCE!



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS



LIGHTNING MCQUEEN

St. Dominic Church in Shaker Heights has been involved with MedWish for many years, taking supplies with them on international mission trips. One of their medical teams met Marcos in April 2022. Marcos has Spina Bifida and lives in a very remote area in El Salvador. Until now, he has crawled on the ground by moving on his hips, with his legs falling behind him. He didn't have a wheelchair. Due to his condition, he was unable to start kindergarten last year.

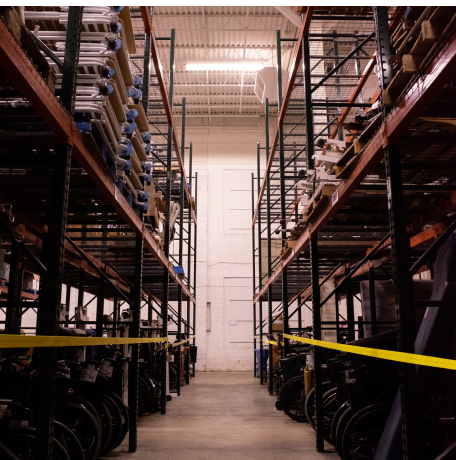
After meeting Marcos, their team began exploring how they could get him a pediatric wheelchair and came to MedWish for help. We were able to provide a wheelchair for Marcos, and on a very recent trip, it was taken to El Salvador for him. The team reported that Marcos immediately took to the chair – naming it “McQueen” after the Disney Cars character Lightning McQueen – and began maneuvering around his small home. Although it won't be easy for his family to get him there, the chair opens the possibility for Marcos to attend school.

This is a beautiful example of how one piece of equipment can truly change someone's life.

"PEACE, LOVE, & FRIENDSHIP"

For years, the Jewish Family Service Association (JFSA) of Cleveland has brought students to MedWish to participate in our Skill Building Program. Many supplies sorted and packed by participants are distributed to local and international recipients through our aid efforts, in addition to supporting our Alternative Recycling Program. These recycled items are no longer viable to support our medical aid programs but are made available to art teachers, therapists, camp counselors, and animal shelters for alternative uses.

Recently, some of our JFSA Skill Builders were part of a project to create these beautiful panels that are now installed at the Chagall exhibit in the Maltz Museum in Beachwood. They used sponges from MedWish's Alternative Recycling Program for painting, and plastic trays from MedWish to hold paint. We love that the supplies sorted by this group were in turn able to support the JFSA's other programming!



CHAMPION CONNECTION

MedWish diverts approximately 600,000 lbs. of medical supplies and equipment from landfills each year. This year, we are on track to hit more than 610,000 lbs. Our network of 140+ hospitals and healthcare locations help champion these efforts, facilitating the donation of usable surplus, all items that would otherwise be sent to local landfills or remain unused.

We greatly appreciate all our healthcare and manufacturing partners, volunteers and individuals donating medical supplies from their own homes, and Champions advocating for our mission!



VOLUNTEER BREAKDOWN

2.2K+

GENERAL VOLUNTEERS

+

14

SKILL BUILDING PARTNER GROUPS

=

15.7K+

TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS

*as of 12.1.2022.



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

SHELDON SCHAFFER

MedWish is proud to recognize **Sheldon Schaffer** as our 2022 Volunteer of the Year. In his time as a volunteer, **Sheldon has accumulated more than 500 hours of service** and has been involved in all facets of the volunteer program. His primary focus is our **Biomed Program** in collaboration with Cleveland's own Case Western Reserve University (CWRU). Sheldon is a graduate of CWRU and first heard of the program through the alumni newsletter. After seeing the great work a fellow alum and colleague was doing at MedWish, he decided to join in on the fun.

After retiring from his 40-year-career in medical imagery, Sheldon was the perfect fit for assisting with the Biomed Program. Sheldon spends most Tuesdays and every other Saturday on the third floor of our warehouse **testing medical equipment and overseeing Biomed students from CWRU.**

We are incredibly grateful to Sheldon for his dedication to our mission and were thrilled to recognize him with the 2022 Volunteer of the Year award.

SAVE THE DATE

BRIGADES ARE BACK!

HONDURAS:
JUNE 14 - JUNE 19

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC:
JULY 4 - JULY 9

REGISTRATION
OPENS **SOON!** SPOTS
ARE LIMITED
SO **STAY TUNED**
FOR UPDATES.

QUESTIONS? CONTACT
BRIGADES@MEDWISH.ORG

