

NEWSLETTER June 7, 2016

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Dear Partners in Mission,  
There is so much to tell that will be surprising and wonderful to you, for you are so much a part of all that happened in Canal do Anil. I will let Bel tell it all to you as she wrote this report with the President of our Association. I may be far away in distance but am in touch by e-mail and phone weekly. However, even with being in constant contact with what happened, what is happening and what will happen, was and is, a surprise even to me. You are our mission partners in all of this! Just imagine, from the top of a shanty hut in the early 90s, with your support, we have come to this.



Read on for Bel's report:

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, peace to you all,

Our NGO, AECS (Association of Community Health Educators), completed 20 years of service to this community of Canal do Anil in May. During all these years it has changed and transformed the lives of women, men, adolescents and children in their struggle to bring basic health services to the community as well as those surrounding Canal do Anil. There have been many achievements, principally for women as the majority of the professionals who are working in the clinic today are composed of local women, former students of our health educational course, who are now able to support their families. Our NGO's commitment, in addition to health, was and still is, with the professionals who work with us. Many



had had to drop out of school in order to work to support their families. Because of this our Association offered professional qualification by giving scholarships for those women who had finished basic education (equivalent to Jr high) and up until they were able to graduate.

**Our exciting victory: Our community received from the city of Rio on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March, a NEW clinic, named the Barbara Mosley de Souza Family Clinic, a well - deserved honor to this woman who made a difference in the lives of so many persons and families in our community!**

**This new clinic is 5X larger than our clinic you all helped us to build over the years! Our Family Health Clinic was serving about 20,000 persons, but the new Family Clinic will serve 80,000 people and will cover many of the surrounding communities. We had 3 health teams; the new clinic will have 9 health teams!**

On the year when we are completing 20 years of struggle and victories, we are now confronting new challenges. Our major challenges are related to our 3 buildings which contain our Association's offices and all these years held our Family Health clinic. Another concern is the continuation of our Association's other projects such as the Physical Therapy program, which in this whole area (district) is the only one. The leaders of our community received the support of the Mayor of Rio de Janeiro and the Health Secretary to set up a partnership for the Physical Therapy program to continue serving persons who need rehabilitation treatment, so necessary for those who suffer the consequences of accidents and illnesses that incapacitate them, so that they may once again be able to return to work to support their families financially. This victory is extremely important



because to maintain our NGO's building, we need an adequate monthly amount of money. Physical therapy is too expensive for our financial situation, but extremely important for the population. So if the City will support it financially with improvements and additions, we will be able to provide the service and have our PT employees paid with the required benefits. The other 2 projects are: the children's program, Desenho e Arte, for children and adolescents between 7 and 14 years of age in which we offer workshops such as reading therapy, sports, computer education, the environment, culture and recreational activities. None of these subjects are available in local public schools where the children are there for only a half day. The second project is the course for the training of Community Health Educators for women and men, beginning at age 15. Students examine the basic study of illnesses, their causes, symptoms, treatment and prevention. Many persons who finished our course are now part of health teams in many of the health centers in the city. It was this course which Barbara brought to our Community in 1993, that was the beginning of all that our Association has accomplished over all these years.

Our hopes for the second semester of 2016 are high. We have proposals from various partners to add to our projects; a sewing course enabling women to earn money and still be at home, proposed by the Banco de

Providencia; a project for learning skills or educational aid for high school students and the implanting of a public library in partnership with SESC (Commercial Social Service). These services are free to the community. In addition, service of dentists at popular prices; artistic embroidery on clothes and uniforms, another way for women to earn money at home; basic course in health diets; studio de Pilates-speciality exercises (at popular prices). Many of these projects will bring money to our NGO so that we can maintain our 3 buildings and be a benefit to the community. We know that there are many challenges, but our Board of Directors believes that all is possible when there exists commitment and love for others as Barbara taught us by her example from the moment she arrived in our community.

We know certainly that it was your support over all these years that contributed to the better quality of life for so many families in our community of Canal do Anil and beyond. God Bless you all!

Sincerely,

Bel and The Board of Directors of AECS (Associacao das Agentes Educadoras de Saude)

To you our partners, we send this paraphrasing of a prayer written by the Christian Conference of Asia: it illustrates what you have all been a part of.

Give us people and churches more courageous than cautious; not only to merely comfort the afflicted but to act to bring changes necessary to remove the afflictions; people and churches not only loving the world but judging the world as to concrete action to bring about these changes; people and churches not only pursuing peace but demanding justice; not remaining silent when others are calling for a voice; people and churches not passing by the other side when wounded peoples are waiting to be healed; people and churches who will be called not only to worship but also reach out, to witness, to lend a healing hand; persons and people following Christ even when others doubt the possibility of making the changes needed.

We are all God's hands in mission. Thank you!

Barb and Gus

