



Elisabeth Eugene (center), Clinic Outreach Worker, learned she was HIV+ while pregnant with her younger daughter. Thanks to our program, her baby (on left) was born AIDS-free.

Fall 2020

Dear Friend,

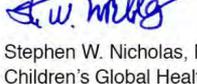
In the past 20 years, Clínica de Familia in La Romana, Dominican Republic, has succeeded in reducing the rate of mother-to-child HIV transmission in La Romana Province from 40% to nearly zero. Today, it continues to operate one of the country's largest outpatient HIV/AIDS treatment programs.

Over time the program has also evolved and expanded its scope to provide outreach, education, preventive services, and care and treatment to vulnerable populations, including adolescents, sex workers, men who have sex with men, people with chronic diseases, and the general population.

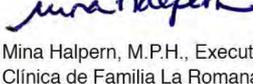
Please see, below, an update on the critically important work being done by the program and how it has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. Read about our new dermatology center. Meet Dr. Maureen Connolly, who first came to the clinic prior to going to medical school and now writes about how those experiences influenced her career in Detroit. We also share pictures from our 20th Anniversary celebrations in New York and the D.R. For greater detail on recent progress, please refer to the most recent Annual Report, which can be found [on our website here](#).

While we have made substantial strides to expand patient care revenues that will sustain the program long-term, we still rely heavily on donations to do our work. If you are able to assist, your [donation](#) -- no matter how small -- would make a real difference in the lives of children and families in La Romana and help ensure the continued success of Clínica de Familia La Romana.

Sincerely, and with deep gratitude,



Stephen W. Nicholas, M.D., President
Children's Global Health Fund



Mina Halpern, M.P.H., Executive Director
Clínica de Familia La Romana

Clínica de Familia La Romana Update



Over the past two decades, Clínica de Familia La Romana -- now with a predominantly Dominican and Haitian staff of 106 health care workers (above) -- has increased services both to individuals at risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections as well as to the general public. Last year, we provided care to over 11,000 adults, adolescents, children and infants. In addition to providing high-quality low-cost primary care, the Clinic operates a comprehensive HIV care and treatment program, including mental health and psycho-social services; an adolescent reproductive health and education program; specialized services for sex workers, immigrants and LGBTQ clients; Camp Hope and Joy, a summer camp for children and young people living with HIV; a range of medical sub-specialty services; and internationally-recognized research and training programs.

COVID-19 Response at Clínica de Familia

COVID-19 has dramatically impacted the families for whom we care, and it has disrupted the operations of our program. Our detailed COVID contingency plan was developed to protect our immuno-compromised clients by limiting their clinic visits and bringing medications, counseling and other supports to them in their homes. We have increased our community-based outreach for everyone enrolled in clinic care, managed care through new telemedicine tools and social media, and delivered food packets for those who are experiencing food insecurity.

Awards and Honors

- In October, Clínica de Familia was one of eight Dominican institutions honored with a "Believe in Your People 2020 Award" from the **Brugal Foundation**. This award recognized the program's exemplary work on prevention and education during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- At the "Place the Hope" award ceremony on October 21, 2020 Clínica de Familia received the **Children's Place International Hero Award**, which is given to individuals and organizations who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to helping children overcome extreme poverty by supporting their health, nutrition, and educational needs. Mina Halpern was the keynote speaker for the event.
- The laboratory of Clínica de Familia has received **international ISO 9001 certification**, indicating that the lab meets international standards of quality. Such certification has been conferred upon very few labs in the Dominican Republic.

New Services and Initiatives

- **New medical specialties** have been added over the past year, including pulmonology, internal medicine, nephrology, nutrition and HIV PrEP (HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis) services.
- Clínica de Familia received a grant from **Gilead Sciences** in July 2020 to enhance the navigation, home visits and community education of HIV-infected and at-risk individuals. The grant also supports the implementation of new digital information and telemedicine systems.
- Clínica de Familia is collaborating with the **Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and the University of Pennsylvania** to evaluate the mental health status of health care workers in the Dominican Republic during the pandemic.
- Clínica de Familia inaugurated a new **Dermatology Center** in Villa Hermosa, with support from the **Pincus Family Foundation** (below left).
- A new **community family planning program** began in July 2020, serving teens and adults with support from **Planned Parenthood** (below right).



20th Anniversary of Clínica de Familia La Romana

Clínica de Familia La Romana was founded in 1999 by Dr. Stephen Nicholas under the aegis of Columbia University. Today, it is a free-standing community health organization with a Dominican board of directors. Last year, the program commemorated two decades of providing health services to the eastern region of the Dominican Republic with celebratory events in La Romana and New York City.



LEFT: Martha Victoria, Cecilio de la Rosa, and Hilda Peguero, members of the Board of Directors of Clínica de Familia La Romana, at a cocktail reception at Toñito's Grill in La Romana on September 20, 2019.

MIDDLE: Members of the Board of Directors of Children's Global Health Fund: Ana Jiménez-Bautista, Richard Kearns, Linda Cushman and Stephen Nicholas, with Mina Halpern at a gathering at the New York Athletic Club, hosted by Dr. Stephen Nicholas and his wife, Ellen Sargent, on October 24, 2019.

RIGHT: Honorees Leslie Pincus Elliott (daughter of the late David and Geraldine Pincus) and Lynn Syms (widow of Sy Syms), standing in front of a picture of Ingrid Bretón, the first HIV+ pregnant woman in the Dominican Republic treated to prevent mother-to-child HIV transmission, and her AIDS-free daughter, Esmeralda. Esmeralda, now 20 years old, is a medical student at the Universidad Central del Este in San Pedro de Macoris.

Coogan's Fundraiser for Camp Hope and Joy

Medical student volunteers from Columbia University's Program for Education in Global and Population Health organized a fundraiser in New York City with co-sponsor, Coogan's Restaurant, for Clínica de Familia's **Camp Hope and Joy**, a summer camp for young people with HIV in the D.R.

At this event, Congressman Adriano Espaillat awarded a **Certificate of Celebration and Recognition** to the Children's Global Health Fund for its mission and work with Clínica de Familia La Romana.

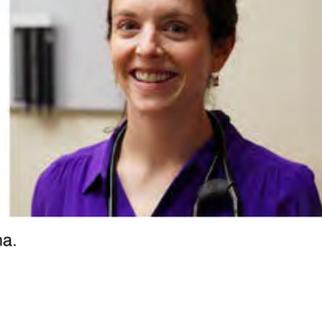


LEFT: Columbia University volunteers at Coogan's.

RIGHT: Rep. Adriano Espaillat presenting our Congressional Certificate, with Dr. Ana Esteban-González, Director of Columbia University's Digame program.

Why I Keep Giving

Dr. Maureen Connolly



LEFT: Maureen Connolly in 2008 with CFLR Colleagues in La Romana.

RIGHT: Dr. Connolly in 2020 at her clinic in Detroit, MI.

When I was 22, I received a college travel fellowship and moved to the Dominican Republic, where Dr. Stephen Nicholas invited me to join the amazing work in La Romana. I stayed on for an incredibly formative year, helping with the coordination of student volunteers, the program for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, and directing Camp Esperanza y Alegría for children living with HIV. I returned to the US to attend medical school and came back to La Romana during my fourth year to help develop the clinic's strategic plan, and have been back to visit several times over the years.

I am now a pediatrician and director of a clinic for homeless youth in Detroit I have used many of the strategies that I observed in La Romana -- a team-based approach to community healthcare, reducing barriers and building trust with clients, offering deep and genuine support - in my own work with young people. I continue to support the clinic financially because I got to see first hand the level of passion and dedication they bring to providing high quality services to those that need them most. Clínica de Familia is the real deal!

[Read the full text of Dr. Connolly's story at \[childrensglobalhealthfund.org\]\(http://childrensglobalhealthfund.org\)](#)

Please Donate!

www.childrensglobalhealthfund.org/donate

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Special Opportunities:

Set up Recurring Contributions, to provide sustained support.
Include Clínica de Familia in your Legacy Giving plans.
[Contact us to learn how.](#)

Donations to Children's Global Health Fund support approximately 40% of Clínica de Familia La Romana's budget, supplementing their direct grants, contracts, earned income and in-kind resources. Donors may specify how to apply their gifts -- for general support, specific programs, pediatric programs or Camp Hope and Joy. Contributions may be made by check, credit card/Paypal online and electronic transfers.

Follow us on social media:



Our relationship with Clínica de Familia La Romana

Children's Global Health Fund is a 501c3 charitable organization with the mission to save the lives of vulnerable children and families globally by raising funds for and providing support to organizations improving family health in developing countries. Our current priority is Clínica de Familia La Romana, an internationally recognized model for patient care, professional education and training, and clinical research.

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