

APRIL 2026

# NEWSLETTER



Children's Global  
Health Fund

Supporting Clínica de Familia La Romana



April 2026

Children's Global Health Fund begins the new year by reaffirming its commitment to supporting the work of Clínica de Familia in advancing the health and well-being of the communities it serves in the Dominican Republic. We are grateful to the donors and partners whose continued support allows Clínica de Familia to strengthen services and sustain the progress made over more than a quarter of a century.

As the year begins, we look ahead with a shared commitment to build on what has been learned, strengthen ongoing efforts, and ensure that Clínica de Familia continues to provide accessible, high-quality care to the individuals and families who rely on its services.



**Rachel Rempell, MD**  
President  
Children's Global Health Fund



**Stephen Nicholas, MD**  
Treasurer & President Emeritus  
Children's Global Health Fund



**Mina Halpern Lozada, MPH**  
Executive Director  
Clínica de Familia La Romana

# New Leadership of the Children’s Global Health Fund



At the Board Meeting of the Children’s Global Health Fund on April 7, 2026, the following officers and directors were elected: Dr. Rachel Rempell, President (left), who is the Associate Medical Director of the pediatric emergency department at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia and an Associate Professor of Pediatrics at the Perelman School of Medicine. She has a long-standing connection with the Clínica de Familia La Romana, spending 2000-2001 working in La Romana as its first program coordinator. Dr. Marlyn Delva, Vice President (right), who is the Dean of Students at the Columbia University School of General Studies and previously was the Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Dean of Students at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health. Her health-related research has focused on Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and U.S. populations from the Caribbean. Other officers: Dr. Stephen W. Nicholas, Treasurer and President Emeritus, and Mr. Richard Kearns, Secretary. Members of the Board of Directors: Dr. Linda F. Cushman, Dr. Consuelo Beck-Sagué, Dr. Andy Dean, Ms. Ana Jiménez-Bautista, and Ms. Allison Manko. The Board extends its sincere gratitude to Dr. Linda F. Cushman for her dedicated leadership as President from 2024 to 2026.

## Phillies Menu Item Supporting Clínica de Familia

The Philadelphia Phillies have introduced a new player-inspired menu item for the 2025 season—“Sánchez Sliders”—created in partnership with pitcher Cristopher Sánchez to celebrate his standout performance on the field. Available at Citizens Bank Park, the proceeds will support Clínica de Familia La Romana. This initiative highlights Sánchez’s commitment to giving back to his community, as he is originally from La Romana, Dominican Republic, and helps advance Clínica de Familia’s mission to provide essential, high-quality healthcare services to vulnerable populations in the Dominican Republic.



# Program Updates

**Brides' March:** Clínica de Familia publicly showed its commitment to building a society free of gender-based violence by leading the Dominican iteration of the Brides' March in November 2025, a powerful demonstration marked by symbolism, hope, and community. Under the theme “Enough is Enough,” the initiative brought forward a collective call to prevent gender-based violence, honor the memory of victims of femicide, and promote a culture of respect, dignity, and peace. The march originated in New York City after the tragic femicide of Gladys Ricart on the day of her wedding in 1991 by a former abusive partner.



**Clínica de Familia at the International Conference on Family Planning:** Thanks to the support of Planned Parenthood Great Northwest, Hawai'i, Alaska, Indiana, Kentucky, two members of the Clínica de Familia La Romana team participated in the Seventh International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP), held in November 2025 in Bogotá, Colombia. Family planning nurse Helen Santos and Adolescent Program Director Luz Messina attended the event, where Luz presented a poster on the innovative peer education program of Clínica de Familia. They also participated in multiple sessions on adolescent education and family planning, and the knowledge gained is already being applied at Clínica de Familia to strengthen and expand our programs.

**Research:** Clínica de Familia has participated in several studies published recently, including one on factors related to improving the quality of cervical cancer screening for women living with HIV in *AIDS Behavior*, one on re-envisioning global health partnerships in times of decreasing foreign aid in the *Journal of Philanthropy*, one on adolescent male sexual behavior and consistent condom use in the *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health*, and another on experiences of social support and the roles of engagement in a digital educational support group for adolescent mothers' health in *PLOS Digital Health*. A fifth article was published in *International Journal of STD & AIDS* and examines factors associated with asymptomatic sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among marginalized women in the Dominican Republic, highlighting important gaps in syndromic management approaches. An analysis of data from 833 asymptomatic cisgender women collected between 2015 and 2019 found a 24% STI prevalence, with chlamydia as the most common infection. Higher risk was associated with younger age ( $\leq 24$  years), early sexual debut, lack of a regular healthcare provider, and recent drug use, underscoring the need for targeted screening and prevention strategies for vulnerable women where diagnostic testing is limited.

## Pincus Family Foundation and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia visit Clínica de Familia



The Pincus Family Foundation and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia reaffirmed their partnership with Clínica de Familia La Romana during a visit to the Dominican Republic in February 2026. This long-standing collaboration supports the David N. Pincus Global Health Fellowship and programs that promote the well-being of adolescents, adults, and families in the country's Eastern Region. The visit provided an opportunity for representatives of the institutions to exchange experiences, strengthen collaboration, and reflect on shared efforts to support vulnerable communities.

## Congratulations, Dr. Andrew Steenhoff, 2026 Lewinter-Suskind Global Health Faculty Awardee!

Children's Global Health Fund and Clínica de Familia are pleased to share that Dr. Andrew Steenhoff, Medical Director of the Global Health Center at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Pennsylvania, has been named the 2026 recipient of the Lewinter-Suskind Global Health Faculty Prize, awarded by the Penn Center for Global Health. This award recognizes a faculty member from the Perelman School of Medicine for a sustained

commitment to advancing global health and expanding access to care. Dr. Steenhoff's leadership in building international partnerships, including with Clínica de Familia, advancing training programs, and mentoring future leaders continues to make a lasting impact worldwide.





Mara, a 43-year-old woman, first came to Clínica de Familia in 2011 in a very fragile state, recently diagnosed with HIV. She felt confused, scared, and deeply shaken. In pain, she said she would rather die than face the reality of her diagnosis.

Over time, and thanks to the support and guidance of the clinic's staff, Mara made a life-changing decision: to begin antiretroviral treatment and commit to taking her medications. Her greatest motivation was concern for her partner, who was unaware of her condition and also dealing with health problems. Filled with fear and guilt, she shared her anguish with the clinic team, making it clear that protecting her partner's well-being was her top priority.

The counseling and mental health team supported the couple through this process. Mara's partner was able to get tested, receive his diagnosis, and access comprehensive HIV care at Clínica de Familia. He started treatment and became a vital pillar of support for Mara.

Despite remaining adherent to her therapy and her partner's support, Mara went through a period of deep depression. She struggled to fully accept her diagnosis, began experiencing suicidal thoughts and missed medical appointments.

It was then, thanks to the dedication and support of Clínica de Familia's mental health team, that Mara found a safe space full of understanding and support. Little by little, she was able to rebuild herself emotionally, regain confidence, and rediscover her self-worth.

Today, Mara describes herself as an optimistic, strong woman with a solid relationship. Together she and her partner have built a stable and happy home, responsibly attend their medical appointments, and both maintain undetectable viral loads.

With gratitude, Mara expresses at every visit that her current well-being is possible thanks to the care and warmth of what she calls her family at Clínica de Familia.

## Meet Eliana Peña, pediatric infectious disease physician and Pincus Global Health Fellow



My name is Eliana Peña, and I am a pediatric infectious disease specialist. I began my work at Clínica de Familia in August 2023, when I started my role as a David N. Pincus Global Health Fellow at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

From my very first day working at Clínica de Familia, I was impressed by the institution's level of organization. The institutional policies are clearly established from the start, and the visibility of its values of inclusion and non-discrimination felt refreshing within the Dominican work environment. The employees appear happy and grateful to be there, and their level of commitment to their work is evident and inspiring to anyone who joins the team.

Currently, my work involves providing medical care to pediatric patients living with HIV. Through this experience, I have discovered how passionate I am about caring for populations living on the margins of society, and I have come to realize how valuable my patients are to my own growth as a human being. I have learned to see people from a more personal perspective, understanding that the circumstances that make each individual unique must also be considered when making effective health recommendations.

The fact that the clinic has such an extensive network of collaborators allows the work to be carried out in a more comprehensive way and enables us to provide support in areas that, in developing countries, often represent a major challenge for both patients and healthcare providers.

Hearing people express how grateful they feel for the care they receive at the clinic and knowing that many choose to sacrifice time and money to be seen here, is the best reminder that every day of work is truly worthwhile.



# Children's Global Health Fund

Supporting Clínica de Familia La Romana

The Children's Global Health Fund has earned the 2025 Gold Seal of Transparency on Candid (formerly GuideStar). One hundred percent of donations to the Children's Global Health Fund directly support Clínica de Familia La Romana, covering approximately 24% of the clinic's overall budget, supplementing their direct grants, contracts, earned income, and in-kind resources.

## 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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