

MEDICAL MINISTRY INTERNATIONAL



Remembering the Past, Shaping the Future:

Pg. 2 Leanne's Farewell Message | Pg. 6 Long-term Partner Empowers Students

FAREWELL MESSAGE FROM LEANNE



Dear Faithful Partners and Supporters,

After 30-plus years of ministry, I will be stepping down as Executive Director this summer. I have wholeheartedly loved my years of ministry with you, 20 of which were as full-time staff. If you don't know my whole story, I actually started as a volunteer participant at the age of 12, joining a Vision Project to Mexico with my parents.

I was able to experience the programs in action, caring for patients and showing the love of Jesus. I remember, at age 12, writing "*Jesús te ama*" on many tennis balls in marker and giving them to the children coming into the clinic.

It was moving to experience the needs of others and work with a team of believers who met these needs in a tangible way. I saw the love of Christ in action long before I understood what it took to prepare the logistics for teams and to run an entire organization.

By Grade 8, I had already been on three Project Teams to Mexico, Honduras and China. When I attended university, I was asked to work part-time in the Canada office, preparing thank you letters for

donors, assisting with the accounting and joining more projects for vision, surgical and primary care.

Originally, I expected to become a doctor so I could serve on Project Teams. But when I didn't get into medical school, a board member encouraged me to pursue a Master of Business Administration because *"we are going to need someone to lead the organization one day."* So I did.

In 2004, I started working full-time for the ministry before going on to become the Executive Director for Canada in 2007 and, finally, Executive Director for all of Medical Ministry International in 2015.

Reflecting back, the most exciting thing for me has been witnessing Health Centers established more than 20 years ago led by local doctors and administrators—not only continue to see patients—but thrive in their communities.

Over the last three years, a foundation has been financially supporting our evangelism program in the Amazon. This program has been designed to proclaim the Kingdom of God among tribes or people groups who have previously been unreached by the gospel.

God has been sowing seeds of concern for the unreached in me for some time, and then the foundation asked me to consider serving as their Executive Director. At first, I thought I couldn't possibly leave, but with the Holy Spirit's prompting, I realized I needed to trust our Lord in this process.

While I am sad to part ways with this remarkable community, I am certain that Medical Ministry International is well-positioned for the future. We have strong international partners and programs, a talented Executive Team and staff, and supportive participants and donors across Canada and the United States.

It has been my joy and privilege to lead this work for as long as I have. However, I believe God is calling me to continue serving Him in a new way.

More than anything, I feel grateful knowing that supporters like you will continue to answer the calling of Luke 9:2: to proclaim the Kingdom of God and heal the sick. Thank you so much for being on this incredible journey with me.

In Him,

Leanne Ferris

Leanne Ferris

Leanne Ferris, 2015-2023 Executive Director



Leanne, age 12, volunteering as a participant of a Vision Project in Mexico.

FALLING IN LOVE WITH HELPING OTHERS

How Project Teams Helped Shape Caroline's Career

One trip can change the course of your entire life. That's what happened to Caroline Munshaw! Her story begins with a Project Team she went on to the Dominican Republic with her parents in the twelfth grade.

"That experience changed my life," Caroline remembers fondly. *"It was exactly what my mom and dad intended. They wanted me and my brother to have an appreciation for how a large percentage of the world lived."*

The whole family had such an incredible experience that they returned to Las Matas the following year, bringing some friends with them. And it came at just the right time! Caroline was finishing high school and this helped shape her post-secondary education.

"When we got home, I spoke with my guidance counselor and she described the field of International Development. I decided to study it at the University of Guelph. While there, I enrolled in an independent study and returned to the Dominican Republic to volunteer at a medical clinic," Caroline says.

Caroline was hooked! After falling in love with the Dominican Republic, she joined her mom on her third Project Team to volunteer on a surgical mission to Guanajuato, Mexico.

It was in the Dominican that she learned about microfinancing—a way impoverished communities can take out small loans and start their own businesses. *"I saw such strength in them and pride in their work and was convinced that microfinance was a dignified and empowering way to help people increase their incomes,"* she recalls.



Not long after that, she started volunteering with Opportunity International Canada, a global microfinance charity and was later hired on as staff!

"I am now the Director of Philanthropy for Ontario. I love my job as I am part of something that is transforming lives every single day. And it all started with that trip with MMI 35 years ago!" says Caroline.

Recently, she decided it was time to revisit her roots and join a Project Team in the Dominican Republic once more. This time, lending a hand as a translator.

"My Spanish is much better than it was in the '80s!" says Caroline. *"Being able to communicate directly with patients makes the experience that much richer. I loved that I could more effectively welcome patients, explain the process and answer their questions, and generally make them feel well cared for."*



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On this trip, Caroline provided assistance taking blood pressure, weighing children, and talking to patients as they waited for medication, while her husband supported the surgical team.

She felt extremely moved by the opportunity to work closely with our partners on the ground; witnessing how lovingly Dominican doctors Dr. Juan Carlos Cado and Dr. Charline Toussaint provided excellent care to each and every person who came to the traveling clinic.

Loving your neighbor is a value that Caroline's parents instilled in her and she tries to set the same example with her own children. She and her husband had hoped to share this experience with their teenage sons in March 2020, but the family's trip to Las Matas was canceled due to COVID.

Today, Caroline wants anyone who supports Medical Ministry International or is thinking about joining a Project Team to know this: *"When you participate in programs that help others, when you get involved in a direct way, it changes YOU. I encourage everyone to participate on a Project—and take your children if you can! The impact on your lives will be beautiful!"*

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Empowering Students With The Milagros Foundation

A LONG-LASTING PARTNERSHIP

We're so grateful for all of our partnerships. One of the partner organizations making an incredible difference is the Milagros Foundation. They collaborate in developing countries to provide scholarships, higher education and mentorship opportunities for young adults.

Executive Director of the Milagros Foundation, Scott Steele, was the Medical Ministry International Director of Donor Relations from 2004-2010. Since then, Scott has not only continued to support our programs, the foundation is now providing scholarships for students connected with our programs.

Currently, the Milagros Foundation is supporting 200 students through 30 charities in 25 countries with seven active students in Peru and nine in Bolivia. And they're adding the Amazon region to their roster soon! With a graduation rate over 80%, over 500 students have graduated since its inception in 1999.

One of those graduates is Joel Apaca. He was introduced to Medical Ministry International Peru in 2014 through his father, who is a pastor and would volunteer on Project Teams. The program helped Joel find focus, keep perspective on what success means and stay connected to church during his



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HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION!





International Peru. Her nine-year-old son, Dominiq, has a disability and is confined to a wheelchair most of the time. What's more, she's expecting another son soon. Through it all, she believes her struggles only strengthen her faith in God.

Thanks to donors like you, Dominiq had surgery on both arms to improve his motor ability and he is now receiving therapy services through Medical Ministry International Peru. When asked to describe the difference our partnership with the Milagros Foundation has made in her family's lives, Esther could only cry, overwhelmed with gratitude.

Chris Ferris recently had the chance to travel with Scott and visit these programs in person, meeting the local students whose lives are being changed by this amazing long-term partnership! Donor support has been vital to the success of this work and has made a tremendous impact on students. It's people like you who make stories like this possible.

studies. He has been an optometrist since 2021 and is now working full-time with us in Peru!

Another student, Esther Castilla, is studying accounting and volunteers with Medical Ministry



MEET CHRIS!

Chris Ferris has been serving as International Operations Director in our head office since 2020. He leads the Program Team and is involved in organizing Project Teams from start to finish. He runs the Human Resource department as well as manages the warehouse. He is also on the board of directors for Medical Ministry International Bolivia and was instrumental in helping to form the new board. He has been on Project Teams to Ghana and Bolivia and attended meetings across Central and South America. He has been learning Spanish and hopes to practice and apply his language skills.

Chris studied Chemical Engineering and worked in that field for several years before going back to school where he completed a Master of Business Administration degree. He has served in the Executive Pastor role at two large churches prior to taking on his current role at Medical Ministry International.

With the board's approval, Chris stepped in as the Interim Executive Director in July as they begin the process of hiring a new leader for the ministry.

You Made Double the Impact This Easter

When you participated in our Easter Match, your generosity went twice as far. We're beyond thankful for everyone who decided to give a special gift this spring. Every contribution made a world of difference, going towards medical care and healing to patients around the world.

Because of people like you, we met our match goal of **\$80,000**, raising an incredible **\$161,314.39** together!

Donors like you are having a lasting impact in under-resourced regions around the globe, bringing hope and healing to those who would otherwise have no access to medical care. Thank you for helping us share Jesus' love—we are truly grateful!



HERE'S A SNEAK PEEK OF OUR UPCOMING PROJECTS:

We're excited about all the upcoming Project Teams we have slated for the fall. With your support, we're creating lasting change through health care all around the globe! Here's a snapshot of what's on the calendar:

 **Ghana**

September 16 - 30

 **Peru**

October 14 - 28

 **Indonesia**

June 3 - 10

 **Amazon Hospital Boat**

Every month this fall!



If you're interested in supporting our programs or participating, please visit our website to learn more.