Mission and Vision

Mission
The Flagstaff International Relief Effort (FIRE) is dedicated to providing resources and support to individuals and communities in need, to reduce poverty, political instability, and to minimize the impact of natural disasters. Currently FIRE’s programs are exclusively focused in Mongolia.

Vision
FIRE works with partners at all levels - local, national and international - to improve education, health, and reduce poverty through programs that enable individuals and communities to design initiatives resulting in an improved quality of life.

Since 1999, FIRE has shipped ten, 40-foot containers filled with donated winter clothing, medical supplies, and educational materials. Over the last 14 years, 23 FIRE medical volunteers have conducted more than 1,200 hours of training with 2,700 Mongolian medical professionals around the country and delivered $720,000 worth of medical supplies and 94,000 sharps containers (biohazard boxes for sharp medical waste) to 278 clinics and hospitals countrywide. Additionally, FIRE has tested 1,000 health care workers for hepatitis B and C with 142 being vaccinated against hepatitis B. 46 FIRE clothing volunteers personally distributed 76 tons of winter clothing to over 65,000 individuals, and 80 computers and 6,000 English-language library books to one dozen schools. To date, FIRE’s programs have provided aid in 15 of Mongolia’s 21 provinces.
Dear Friends of FIRE,

2011 was FIRE’s most successful year yet. We created the greatest impact we have ever had in our 14 year history. We expanded our office in Mongolia and received ten times as many grant funds than we have in all previous years combined.

This continues to be an exciting time for us as we complete phases of existing projects and make plans for new programs. We have been approached with several new program ideas and new partnership opportunities and are excited to see what the future holds.

Some of the new partnerships established in 2011 include joining the World Hepatitis Alliance, signing a partnership agreement with Family Health International, the largest health NGO in the world and working with a new division at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Washington, D.C. We also received a grant from the American Association for the Support of Liver Diseases (AASLD) in support of our Medical Director in Mongolia, Dr. Munkhjargal Ayurzana, to travel to San Francisco in November for their annual conference. This was the first ever grant that AASLD has made for this purpose. It was an honor for us and a great show of support for our work and hepatitis related programs.

The contributions and volunteer hours of all of our friends and supporters make our programs possible. We cannot thank each of you enough for your continued and generous support and the variety of ways in which it is shown.

Please continue reading for a summary of what you helped make happen in 2011.

Respectfully,

Meredith Potts
Executive Director
2011 Program Highlights

**National Institutes of Health (NIH) Hepatitis Research Program**

In cooperation with NIH and the Mongolian Academy of Medical Sciences (MAMS), FIRE has initiated a study researching the prevalence of blood borne viruses among high-risk health care workers through 1,000 collected blood samples from across Mongolia. The results will provide a better understanding into transmittable infections (i.e., is there a genetic predisposition toward contracting hepatitis, or against being able to clear it?). It will also provide Mongolian authorities with a basis from which to form health policies and develop strategies for increasing awareness, prevention, detection and treatment of health care workers. In 2011, 350 samples were collected from two provinces and sent to NIH where the testing process began. In support of this project, Meredith Potts, FIRE’s executive director, gave a talk to the “Super Nerd” group of NIH, Center for Human Immunology Inflammation in July of 2011.

**Sharps Containers Distribution**

Through the support of Rotary Clubs in Mongolia and the United States, 14,000 locally made safety boxes (biohazard boxes for sharp medical waste), meeting WHO (World Health Organization) design specifications were distributed to Dornod Province in Eastern Mongolia. This was enough for a two-year supply for all 39 hospitals and health care clinics in this province. Plans have been made to complete 3 more provinces in 2012. In addition to the distribution of boxes, FIRE also provided a half day training program for representatives from each health care facility in the province.

**Health Safety Training Program**

FIRE joined the World Hepatitis Alliance (WHA), a global organization providing support to halt deaths and improve lives of people living with chronic viral hepatitis B and C round the world. In support of WHA’s World Hepatitis Day on July 28, FIRE participated by providing 80 minutes of TV programming on STAR TV and Education TV (Mongolian TV Channels) to educate the public about hepatitis. FIRE’s medical director gave a newspaper interview entitled “Hepatitis B is 100 times more infectious than HIV”.

In conjunction with the sharps containers distribution program and the NIH Hepatitis Research Program, FIRE provides important training to health care workers, waste handlers and inspection agents about the proper use of safety boxes and safe disposal of sharps waste nationwide. In 2011, FIRE trained 500 health care workers. The objective is to substantially reduce the number of inadvertent needle sticks and lacerations with contaminated needles or other medical sharps waste. In 2011 we began turning this program into a one-hour training video to be distributed nationally by the spring of 2012.
Hepatitis B Vaccination Program

For the first time in 2011, through donor specified funds and in conjunction with the National Institutes of Health’s (NIH) Hepatitis Research Program, FIRE began supporting a vaccination program for health care workers. Over 400 health care workers were tested for hepatitis B in two provinces in Mongolia. Vaccination was provided for 142 health care workers who tested negative or had not been previously vaccinated. With an average of only 7% of health care workers vaccinated against hepatitis B in Mongolia, we hope to continue to grow this program.

Orthopedic Training Program

FIRE hosted two orthopedic surgeons at Trauma Hospital in Ulaanbaatar, the only orthopedic hospital in Mongolia, for two weeks of advanced Orthopedic training. Dr. Satkauskas and Dr. Uvarovas from Lithuania provided lectures, surgical assistance and bedside training in the spring of 2011.

The Dulaan Project

In 2011 FIRE received 1,036 hand-made knitted winter items shipped directly to our office in Mongolia from knitters around the world. We distributed these items directly to the people who needed them most during the winter months of October through December. Some of the recipients included orphanages, a school for disabled children and homeless adults. These beautiful items help brighten the day and warm the lives of everyone who receives them.

Quotes From Mongolia

(Original quotes are translated from Mongolian)

“I have been working as a nurse for more than 10 years in the countryside. I am very lucky to be tested and vaccinated against hepatitis B virus thanks to the FIRE team. Viral Hepatitis B and C are the most prevalent blood borne infections in Mongolia and many health care workers affected by at least one of those infections somehow. FIRE’s work will save many lives.” — A. Tsatsaral, Nurse, Umnugovi Province

“We are grateful for your donation of safety boxes to all of our health facilities. We also appreciate your valuable contribution to the prevention from hospital borne infections and improvement of medical waste management within hospitals.” — K. Buyanaa, Dornod Province’s Health Department

“We are grateful for your donation of hand knitted clothes, warm hats and gloves to disabled children. They are helpful to our kids to keep good progress in their studies and let us spend money on important things like food. May humanity for children blossom.” — J. Chimedzaya, Director, 25th school for children with special needs, Ulaanbaatar
FIRE is committed to keeping administrative expenses as low as possible. We are proud that in 2011, 91% of all income, including grants and specified and unspecified donations, went directly to program expenses in Mongolia. FIRE makes the most of every donated dollar, maximizing support through efficient and responsible fiscal management.

2011 Financial Statements

2011 Board of Directors

David Edwards
Way Yuhl
Susan Bigley
Karen Duffy
Troy Levitt
Meredith Potts
2011 Donors

The following list recognizes the friends of FIRE who made contributions in 2011. Without their generous support, FIRE’s work in Mongolia would not be possible. We are immensely grateful for the examples of loyalty and commitment to FIRE.

Benefactor (Buyanii Uilsten) ($1000+)
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Lee S. Blaugrund
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Tim Coursen
The Dealy Foundation
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Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund
John and Clara Higgins Foundation
Troy Levitt
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Flagstaff Cultural Partners
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“May good deeds spread.”

Сайн уйлс дэлгэрэх болтугай.