

Sarah Rubino, volunteer nurse and midwife at St. Therese Hospital, South Sudan



Volunteer Report / Winter 2019

# Healthier Lives, Together

## *Volunteer for Change*



**cmmb**

Healthier Lives Worldwide

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# Welcome

Dear Friends,

I have been fortunate to work closely with so many of the volunteers who have come to support our work in [Mutomo, Kenya](#). I have witnessed their kindness and care, and how they have saved and changed the lives of the patients they've treated.



I have also seen how the guidance and practice of our volunteers transform the way our healthcare staff approach their work with patients both in healthcare facilities, and in the communities where they do outreach. This transformation takes place over time, often long after the volunteers who inspired it are gone. I suppose that's the tough part about being a volunteer. You don't always get to see the true impact of your contributions with your own eyes. But I have seen it, and the people are living it.

I love the way this issue highlights how different volunteers, with different skill sets - ranging from clinical, to programmatic, to operational - can all make a positive impact in the communities where they serve.

The message I want to leave our volunteers, and anyone considering volunteering, with is this one: you are needed. Your compassion and commitment in the field has and will continue to improve the health of the most vulnerable communities impacted by poverty. What I know for sure is that you will never regret the decision to make the world a better, healthier place. We are all ready to welcome you, to Mutomo, Kenya, or wherever you are chosen to serve.

Blessings,

Jesse Kihuha,  
CHAMPS Coordinator in Kenya

# Where In The World Are Our Volunteers Serving

Last year, we placed 661 volunteers in 17 countries, totaling 92,920 volunteer hours.



## Life After Service: What's Next?



*Stephanie Summa is a physician assistant from New York who "instead of being depressed by the suffering of the world, decided to do something about it." She volunteered at [Mwandi Mission Hospital](#) in Zambia for one year. She recently got back and is working with the palliative care team at Unity Hospital in Rochester, New York.*

### What's it like being back?

You know, I worked hard to delay coming back. I was only supposed to stay in Zambia for six months, but when the time came to leave, I realized that I was needed at the hospital. They were short-staffed and there was evidence of employee burnout. It helped a lot that they welcomed me and made me feel needed and valued.

**“Outside working hours, on evenings, weekends, and holidays, Stephanie would come to check on her patients. Still now patients ask about her. They miss her. We all do. She left a legacy of kindness and compassion.”**

*Chipuka Lushomo, RN, Mwandi Mission Hospital*

Now, I'm trying hard not to get tied down by all the stresses in life here in the US. Zambia made me realize joy is all around, we're just too distracted to seize the moment and experience it!

I'm also skilling up. While in Zambia, I learned about Helping Babies Breathe, a program that teaches how to resuscitate newborns. Did you know that about 1/4 of all neonatal deaths are caused by the failure to breathe at birth, and that something as simple as rubbing a newborn with a dry towel can stimulate that critical first breath?! I was part of a training for local health workers while in Zambia, and within weeks we were getting reports of babies who weren't breathing but then, with resuscitation, were alive and doing well! Since getting back to the US, I got the official certification, so now I have the skills to teach and I'm hoping I'll have the opportunity to do so!

## We Need You Now

Recruitment is now open for field deployment starting June 2019

- Doctors and physician assistants in [South Sudan](#) and [Haiti](#)
- Nurses in [Haiti](#) and [Kenya](#)
- Public health professionals in [Peru](#), [Haiti](#), [Kenya](#), [Zambia](#), and [South Sudan](#)

*\*Spanish and French speakers are highly needed for positions in Peru and Haiti*

Interested in joining our team of volunteers? Apply at [cmmb.org/volunteer](http://cmmb.org/volunteer) or contact us at [volunteer@cmmb.org](mailto:volunteer@cmmb.org)



# Filling the Gap

## Addressing the Global Shortage of Health Workers

We know from our experience in the field that a lack of access to basic health services often means the difference between life and death for women and children living in poverty. One of the biggest barriers: a lack of skilled health workers.

According to the WHO, the world will be short 12.9 million healthcare workers by 2035; today, it's estimated that only half of all countries have the health workers required to deliver quality healthcare. Many of the countries where we work suffer the most from this shortage. There are several factors that contribute to the shortage of health workers, including a lack of investment in education and training, international migration, and career changes among health workers.



In an effort to address this critical shortage, CMMB recruits, prepares, and places qualified volunteers to support local healthcare facilities and workers in some of the most remote places in the world. The goal? To strengthen local health systems by building the capacity of primary care clinicians and nurses. But we don't just send anyone. We work closely with our teams on the ground, assessing the needs of health facilities and communities, to identify the types of skilled professionals needed to fill gaps and achieve improved health outcomes.

Recruitment is challenging, especially for non-clinical positions like hospital administrators or logistics personnel. We rely on our valued partners, referrals, advertising, conferences and career fairs. We have been fortunate to find and place hundreds of highly-skilled volunteers, but the need is great.

“I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot, together we can do great things.”  
Mother Teresa



**And sometimes magic happens.** When people share CMMB's stories, when volunteers talk about their experience, when we are invited to speak at conferences or attend career fairs, and as more people learn about CMMB, amazingly dedicated people like Sarah and Martin Rubino find us. Sarah is a nurse and midwife and her husband Martin is an engineer. They are currently serving at St. Therese Hospital in South Sudan.

Here's their story:

“It is quite a challenge to find an organization that has opportunities for a clinical and non-clinical couple to work. We both wanted to serve in a developing country, but found it difficult to locate an organization that could fully utilize our individual skills. When we found CMMB, it was a perfect fit. For a midwife, the organization stood out because of its focus on women and children and with CMMB's commitment to strengthening health systems, including through building projects, my husband Martin, an engineer, was a perfect candidate. When we contacted CMMB, we learned that a major hospital expansion was underway in a place that was desperately looking for a nurse midwife to support its maternal and child health programs! Magic! Because CMMB has many projects that go beyond the realm of “just medical work,” we were both able to volunteer in a place that uses our full potential.”

— Sarah Rubino

One of CMMB's main goals is to strengthen health systems in a sustainable way. This includes building capacity of local healthcare professionals, renovating existing health facilities and constructing new ones, and providing essential medicines and medical supplies to ensure people have access to quality healthcare services. This requires people with all kinds of skill sets and professional backgrounds including:

- Clinical professionals
- Public health professionals
- Health administrators
- M&E, data, and research specialists
- Finance and business development professionals
- Marketing and Communications specialists

If you or someone you know is interested in helping fill the gap to bring much-needed skills to communities in need, contact our team: [volunteer@cmm.org](mailto:volunteer@cmm.org)



# Aurora Fellowship

## Inspiring Action

In May 2017, the Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity was awarded to our longest serving volunteer, Dr.

Tom Catena, for his courageous work as the first and only permanent medical doctor serving in the only referral hospital in Sudan's war-torn Nuba Mountains.

The award came with a \$1 million dollar prize, which Tom designated to three key partners, including CMMB. One of the initiatives supported by this award was the launch of CMMB's Aurora Fellowship program. The program provided opportunities for highly-skilled professionals to bring care to underserved populations in areas of extreme hardship; places that few are willing to go.



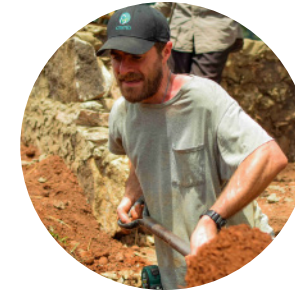
**Virginia Chapman,**  
Registered nurse, Mutomo Mission Hospital, Mutomo, Kenya



**Samantha Hodge,**  
Registered nurse, Mutomo Mission Hospital, Mutomo, Kenya



**Joanna Oleksik,**  
Registered nurse, Mutomo Mission Hospital, Mutomo, Kenya



**Martin Rubino,**  
Engineer, St. Therese Hospital, Nzara, South Sudan



**Beverley Farinelli,**  
Registered nurse & hospital administrator, St. Therese Hospital, Nzara, South Sudan



**Dr. Matthew Jones,**  
St. Therese Hospital, Nzara, South Sudan



**Carolyn Flaherty,**  
Registered nurse, St. Therese Hospital, Nzara, South Sudan



**Ruth Kahira,**  
Registered nurse, St. Therese Hospital, Nzara, South Sudan



**Dr. José García Ulerio,**  
Mutomo Mission Hospital, Mutomo, Kenya



**Dr. Daniel Maxwell,**  
Yambio State Hospital, Yambio, South Sudan



**Dr. Harry Owens Jr.,**  
Mother of Mercy Hospital, Nuba Mountains, Sudan



**Sarah Rubino,**  
Registered nurse, St. Therese Hospital, Nzara, South Sudan

## Meet Our Aurora Fellows

Thanks to the fellowship, CMMB placed 12 volunteers, including doctors, nurses, engineers, and hospital administrators, to serve at health facilities in extremely remote and impoverished communities. While the Aurora Fellowship ended in 2018, there are still fellows in the field, and the impact of their service will live on long after they have all moved on.

## Ways To Partner With Us

- Provide funding to create a fellowship program
- Pair with health facilities or mission hospitals
- Sponsor long-term volunteers in remote and challenging contexts
- Promote our volunteer opportunities with your colleagues, staff, or friends
- Encourage corporate responsibility initiatives at your workplace
- Become a volunteer


Contact us to discuss opportunities  
[volunteer@cmm.org](mailto:volunteer@cmm.org)

## Health Facilities Supported by Aurora Fellows

**South Sudan:** This young country has been plagued by decades of violence, leaving a deep and dark legacy and resulting in some of the worst key health indicators in the world. Patients include people entering from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Central African Republic.

**St. Therese Hospital**

- Serves 85,000 people
- 120 beds
- 19 health personnel





**Yambio State Hospital**

- Serves 200,000 people
- 110 beds
- 35 health personnel

**Sudan:** Located in an area with a long history of conflict characterized by insecurity, massive displacement, and restricted humanitarian access. Apart from victims of violence, communities have experienced high levels of mortality from a lack of food, safe water, and healthcare.

**Mother of Mercy Hospital**

- Serves 1 million people
- 435 beds
- 130 health personnel



**Kenya:** Located in a very remote, arid, and impoverished part of Kenya, people living in this community lack access to food and clean water. As a result, this hospital receives numerous cases of malnutrition and waterborne illnesses.



**Mutomo Mission Hospital**

- Serves 200,000 people
- 124 beds
- 62 health personnel





## Finding Joy in the Everyday: Gratitude

*Dr. Matthew Jones spent nine months serving at St. Therese Hospital in South Sudan. In addition to his clinical duties, Matthew captured photos and videos to tell the stories of this special place, its staff, and the people it serves. His contributions have provided us all with a better understanding of what life is like for the people working and living there. We are grateful for his care and service. Here we share an excerpt of a letter he wrote to the CMMB family.*

Dear CMMB,

I wanted to write this message while the emotion is still fresh and raw and painful, the emotion of leaving behind St. Therese Hospital in South Sudan, and all her staff and patients. The pain of loss, the pain of feeling you're leaving people behind in their struggle, the pain of all the faces you might never see

again. But it's a good pain, a necessary pain, a pain that accompanies love and joy, the necessary price for caring.

I found a beauty in the humble humanity, a joy in the everyday, a resilience in the people that felt timeless and untouchable by even the greatest obstacles to life and love.

I want to thank the CMMB team for the support, the trust, the opportunity, and the belief placed in every one of us volunteers. In the many tough moments over the long months, that belief and trust has helped and will continue to help us to overcome the personal doubts and insecurities, to place the comfort and well-being of others on par with our own smaller concerns, to never give up on a single moment or life any more than humanity should give up on a community on the edge like South Sudan.

I hope this isn't the end of my time with CMMB and with St. Therese Hospital. It doesn't feel like the end somehow. The faces seem too real in my mind, the voices, the hopes, the dreams, the tears. But however this ends, I am forever grateful for the chance to spend nine months in South Sudan. I have, every day caring for these children on your behalf, felt like a guardian and trustee of your values, of our values; standing on your shoulders and reaching a little closer to the sky. Holding their hands in their hour of need, the most vulnerable, and forgotten, people on Earth we are told.

But whatever poverty I have seen has been outshone by the riches of their community, the light in their hearts, and the courage in their souls.

**All my love,  
Matthew**

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