

MISSION 21



On October 16th, a team of ten medical professionals, four Creole translators and three nonmedical support volunteers boarded a plane to participate in NOVA's 21st Medical Mission. Although this trip was organized six months earlier, we departed only 10 days after Hurricane Matthew devastated Haiti. That storm set the stage for a mission week unlike any other.

Despite concerns of traveling on washed away roads and bridges, reports of food and gasoline shortages and questionable availability of clean drinking water, the entire team remained unanimously committed to providing Haiti with medical care. This commitment only multiplied after word reached us on the loss of life in our clinic's



community. As we drove the four hours from Port au Prince to our medical clinic in the village of Cavaillon, the impact of the hurricane become more apparent. A massive loss of trees and vegetation as well as flattened homes and roofless dwellings became the reality that we immersed ourselves in.

We hosted two mobile clinics in remote mountain areas that were barely accessible in our four-wheel drive vehicles. These isolated and particularly poor Haitians were tremendously appreciative for the medical care. Many of the injured hurricane victims were treated at our clinic before our mission team arrived, but we did encounter

infections that manifested from cuts and open wounds that had been submerged in unsanitary waters.

On this mission, we also devoted an entire day to educating our medical staff in the detection and treatment of Cholera, Zika virus and CPR. The administrative team met with the local Mayor and his associates to discuss how NOVA could support the process of replanting crops and also help the leadership to assess their community's most immediate needs. The mission team later toured Cavaillon to identify homes in need of rebuilding as well as families that require food and clothing support as soon as possible.



On our last day, an unexpectedly powerful, 24-hour tropical storm prevented our volunteers from providing medical care. After experiencing first-hand the perils of local flooding, and our own "indoor water park" as a result of hurricane damage to our clinic's roof (which has since been repaired), we were relieved to finally head home...one day late because of a cancelled flight.

The good news is that not a single challenge noted above diluted the mission team's enthusiasm for returning again. Despite setbacks, and a variety of challenges, the on the ground, in-person experience kindled a connection to the people of Haiti in the minds and hearts of the volunteers, and the love of the Haitian people will keep us coming back.



OUR MISSION

To bring urgently needed humanitarian aid in the form of healthcare to the impoverished people of the Republic of Haiti, the poorest nation in the western hemisphere.



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COCKTAILS FOR A CAUSE !

NOVA's annual fall NYC fundraiser "Cocktails for a Cause" took place on November 10th and proceeds went towards our Hurricane Relief fund to help our community of Cavaillon, Haiti recover after the devastation of the storm. Combined with donations received prior to the event, we ended the evening with over \$120,000 to use for rebuilding homes, helping the town replant its destroyed crops and repairing the damage our clinic suffered as



a result of the hurricane. NOVA is extremely grateful to Ogilvy and Mather for sponsoring and hosting the event. The room was filled with NOVA friends – new and old. Everyone got a chance to mingle and talk to NOVA volunteers and learn



firsthand about what we do – in good times and when challenged with unexpected disasters. Cathy Sellinger, a pediatrician from Children's Hospital at Montefiore and NOVA volunteer missionary, was part of our 21st mission team and provided a first-hand account of what our town and clinic was like immediately following the hurricane.



How You Can Help

Donate Today:

Help NOVA continue to provide medical care in Haiti

Medical Volunteers:

- Pediatrics, internists, OB / GYN
- RN's, Nurse Practitioners & PA's
- Pharmacists

Non-Medical Volunteers:

- Creole translators
- Fundraising & event organizers

Visit [www.novahope.org](http://www.novahope.org)

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A Letter from the President

Dear Volunteers, Donors and Friends of NOVA Hope for Haiti,

As 2016 comes to a close and I reflect on another year of NOVA's work in Haiti, I realize that this year was a year of challenges and successes, but thanks to our incredibly, dedicated volunteers and our generous donors, we are starting 2017 strong and with exciting plans for the future.

Our 2016 challenges included the cancellation of our spring medical mission due to potential political unrest because of the contested Haitian Presidential elections. The election finally took place in late November with a clear winner.

During late spring/early summer, we also had unexpected staff turnover including the resignation of our newly hired doctor who relocated to the US and our part-time office manager. We sent a small US team down to the clinic to interview and hire a new doctor, who has been working with our medical staff since late September. We will also be hiring a full-time bilingual clinic administrator when we conduct our January maintenance mission.

Our biggest challenge by far was the destruction caused by Hurricane Matthew. The category 4 hurricane directly slammed into our part of Haiti and resulted in tremendous loss of life, property and agriculture. NOVA's 21st medical mission was scheduled to travel to our clinic two weeks later and the leadership of NOVA had to seriously consider the risks of sending a team when it was unknown whether the roads would even be passible. We decided it was important for us to be present to help our staff and the community so the mission went as planned. I joined the team in order to see firsthand the destruction and put into place a plan for how NOVA could assist in this time of extreme need.

In my 14 years of volunteering with NOVA, this one was one of my proudest moments in over a decade of many proud moments.

First, I was proud of what we built. Our building itself and our solar panels survived the storm with only minor damage despite the flooding of the river across the street from our clinic. Extraordinarily the building protected our clinic and investment in the physical contents of the building. During the storm, our facility became a safe haven in our community who fled to NOVA's clinic when the river submerged their homes or the winds knocked their houses down. Twelve orphans from a neighboring orphanage and seven families with young children were kept safe in our building while the storm raged.

Second, I am extremely proud of the work of our head doctor, Nixon Altenord, and the work he did in helping our neighbors during this catastrophe. Dr. Altenord has not only created an environment where people feel that they can come to NOVA for safety but he also made sure they were sheltered and fed until they could to return home. Our medical mission team witnessed this first hand, because while we were in Haiti a second tropical storm hit that caused the river to overflow again and many of our neighbors were forced to return to NOVA's facility.

Interview With Our Doctor: Dr. Altenord Nixon, M.D.



**Where are you from?** I'm from the city of "Les Cayes" in Haiti. I have lived in Haiti since birth. It is a 20 minute drive to the clinic.

**What inspired you to work in medicine? What do you most enjoy about working in medicine?** First, becoming a doctor was for me the most beautiful vocation, and it was the best way to help people who lacked medical care. It's a pleasure for me to question the patients, then to provide effective care.

After giving treatment to a patient and the treatment is effective, I am really happy.

**How did you first hear about NOVA?** In 2012 the Dr. Charles Kordula, Libby Barrett and Sarah Wren were visiting almost all the hospitals of Southern Haiti. At the time I worked at the " HOSPITAL CHARLES PASQUA " of Vieux Bourg d'Aquin as medical director. We met at the hospital and this is how I heard about NOVA.

**What is a typical day at the clinic like?** We usually start at 8 o'clock after the patients are registered. We take their vitals and then they see the doctor. If needed, they get lab work and prescription medication as treatment. We sometimes see some emergencies requiring sutures or sometimes for more serious issues like respiratory distress, diabetic acidosis dehydration, cholera and other gastro-enteritis problems. We take a 30 minute break and the day ends at 4:30. We see from 30 to 40 patients a day,

**Is there a particular patient who has stood out to you or is there a story about working at the clinic that you would like to share?** A woman came to our clinic with very bad burns. She did not get treatment at the Les Cayes hospital and our NOVA staff was able to treat her. She came back many times for treatment to care for her skin. NOVA's clinic had the medication and staff to treat her severe burns.

**Is there any thing else you would like people to know about he clinic ,or about working in medicine in Haiti?** The practice of medicine in Haiti is not well organized. People are dying every day due to lack of medical cares. NGOs like NOVA provide help that is really needed and appreciated.

I would like to thank NOVA for the valuable assistance it provides to the population without medical care.

I personally thank you for your coaching and sharing your experiences while leaving your personal activities.

THANKS AND GOD BLESS YOU  
DR. NIXON







CREOLE CORNER

For the New Year most Haitian households are preparing a traditional hot and spicy dish called Soup Joumou (Haitian Pumpkin Soup).

Soup Joumou is a blend of pureed pumpkin squash, beef, potatoes, vegetables such as celery, onions, cabbage, blended Haitian spices, and macaroni.

New Years Day is also the anniversary of the Haitian Revolution; the soup has become both a symbol and tribute to the Revolution.

Ingredients:  
1 lb of beef, 1 large scallion, diced, 1 half medium cabbage, diced, 2 large potatoes, peeled and chopped, 2 yams peeled and chopped, 2 malanga, peeled and chopped, 2 pumpkin squash peeled and chopped, 1 stalk of celery chopped, 3 medium carrots, chopped, 1 package of macaroni ,tomato paste, 1 scotch bonnet pepper, 4 parsley sprigs, garlic powder, onion powder, Adobo seasoning salt , Maggi beef bouillon cubes, cloves 2 sour orange, police oil, vinegar water

- 1. Blend 1 tsp black pepper, 1 tsp thyme, 1 scallion ,1 tsp Adobo seasoning salt, 2 Maggi beef bouillon cubes, 1 tsp garlic powder, 1 tsp onion powder, 3 cloves, 3 tsp of olive oil
- 2. Bring pot of water to boil
- 3. Put meat in separate bowl, add 5 tbsp of vinegar and clean meat by rubbing sour orange over meat.
- 4. Pour boiling water over meat once meat has been cleaned, throw out water.
- 5. Marinate meat with blended seasoning and refrigerate overnight.

- Preparation of Meat:
- 1. Place the seasoned meat in a stockpot and cover with water.
  - 2. Add oil and let boil over high heat. Keep covered until the water has evaporated.
  - 3. Uncover, stir and simmer a few drips of water occasionally to brown the meat.
  - 4. Keep stirring and simmer water occasionally until you have a nice browning color to the meat
  - 5. Stir in one tbsp of tomato paste. Remove meat and set aside pot for the vegetables.

- Preparation of Vegetables:
- 1. In a separate bowl, cut into small pieces the large scallions and half medium cabbage.
  - 2. Add the potatoes, yam, malanga, pumpkin squash, and carrots.
  - 3. Wash the vegetables. Add to a separate pot of boiling water.
  - 4. Cover and cook over high heat for about an hour. Reduce heat and add bonnet pepper.
  - 5. Once the squash is fully cooked, remove it from the pot. Use some of the cooking water to blend the squash into a puree.
  - 6. For best flavoring, pour the cooked vegetables, the squash puree and cooking liquid into the same pot that cooked meat.
  - 7. Add parsley, thyme, and macaroni
  - 8. Cook until tender.
  - 9. Combine meat into soup. Serve Hot
- Serves: 6

Third, the generous response of our donors to our Hurricane relief fund is humbling to say the least. I returned from Haiti with a wish list to help our community recover from the Hurricane. Between our online efforts and NYC fundraiser in November, our supporters donated enough money for NOVA to make a serious impact in Cavaillon toward recovery.

This experience has shown me that NOVA is not just a medical clinic in Haiti where people come and receive a check up and some medications. We are much more than that. We are an integral part of the community where people feel safe, supported, and helped.

The next year to three years will be again years of building for NOVA. But it will not be a time of building more bricks and mortar. The next three years will be a time to build and expand the work we do. We will implement more staff training and development to improve the quality of medical care we provide throughout the year. We plan to develop and implement education programs in health and hygiene. We plan build up and expand the medical care our visiting teams provide in Haiti.

Specifically, we plan to expand from two major medical missions to three missions per year. We will conduct more mobile clinics to remote areas during these missions to bring urgently needed medical care to people who cannot get to our clinic.

Finally we hope to launch a permanent annual week long dental clinic. We will be seeking volunteer dentists to provide dental care to our community which has no dental care. This is will take work but it is within our reach to accomplish.

As we close 2016 and begin 2017, I want to thank you for being part of the amazing work NOVA does in Haiti and I ask you to be part of the work that lays ahead.

Happy New Year,

- Joe





NOVA HOPE’S HURRICANE RELIEF EFFORT

On October 4th, 2016 Hurricane Matthew slammed into southwest Haiti and directly hit the community of Cavaillon where our NOVA clinic is located.

Twelve days later, NOVA's previously scheduled medical mission traveled to Cavaillon Haiti with twenty Volunteers. This allowed us to provide immediate and meaningful help on the ground, beginning with much needed medical attention. Getting to Cavaillon so quickly also enabled us to begin planning the role NOVA would play in helping the community recover even beyond the medical care we provide all year.

NOVA's team, working with the Mayor and other leaders of our town, identified four major impacts of the storm – loss of life, damage to homes/buildings, damage to farms/livestock and health threat of Cholera. Immediately following the storm, NOVA created a campaign to raise funds specifically for hurricane relief efforts. Over the course of just four weeks, NOVA raised over \$120,000 to assist in hurricane relief projects, including the following:

**Commitment of NOVA Staff:** Despite the damage to their families’ homes, NOVA's staff returned to work within days of the storm, providing much needed relief to all. Each of NOVA’s staff members suffered personal losses from Hurricane Matthew, whether it was house or property damage, loss of crops or necessity to shelter extended family who had lost their homes. NOVA gave each staff member special compensation to help them through this difficult time.

**Repairing & Rebuilding Homes:** NOVA is committed to repairing or rebuilding 20 homes in Cavaillon and the surrounding area. We hired a consultant to oversee the home rebuilding effort. As of December 31, we have successfully rebuilt 7 home and have 9 in progress.

**Repairs to NOVA's facility:** While our building was able to remain open and operational throughout the storm, it did suffer approximately \$10,000 in building and property damage.

**Farm Rehabilitation & Tree planting:** NOVA and the Mayor will be collaborating with KAMAK (Koperativ Agrikol Matino Kavayon), an agricultural cooperative in Cavaillon, to jointly work on rebuilding the agricultural sector, including purchasing seeds, insecticide, etc.

**Cholera Preparedness:** We have set funds aside for medication and staff training in the event of a cholera outbreak

We are very proud of our ability to quickly and directly aide our community in its time of need and are grateful to our donors for helping us achieve this.



DONOR SPOTLIGHT: JERRY HOOGENDOORN



**Tell us about yourself.** I grew up in Hackensack and now live in Montvale NJ. I am the owner of the HBC Company Inc. which is an electrical contractor firm operating in New Jersey and New York. We specializes in work such as airport lighting, aeronautical guidance systems, sub stations, intelligent highway systems, and all phases of electrical contracting. In my free time, I enjoy boating in the Adirondacks on Lake George with my family and friends.

**There are countless charitable organizations seeking support locally, nationally, and internationally? What inspired you to support NOVA specifically?** I learned about NOVA from Avo Goldien, an inaugural member

of NOVA's Board who I can't say enough nice things about. When I first talked to Avo about NOVA, his excitement and enthusiasm was so animated that it peaked my interest. I started to do some research and I saw all the good that NOVA does. The fact that they are locally based, both in nearby Bergen County, NJ and on the ground in Haiti was a huge plus for me. There are so many charitable organizations where the money does not get to where it is needed, but with NOVA I knew that I was looking at a small local group of honest people that have one goal in mind: to help the people of Haiti.

**NOVA and the people of Cavaillon have benefited tremendously from your generosity over the last 2 years. What is it about NOVA that has motivated your extended commitment of support?** When I started to meet some of the people involved, such as current President Joe Nuzzi, Vice President Jan Mansley, Treasurer Tom Mansley and Trustee Colette McDermott (just to name a few), and I saw them radiate the same enthusiasm and commitment that Avo had, I knew that this was a special group. Their commitment and determination to make a positive difference in Haitians’ lives is so palpable that it becomes contagious.

**In your opinion, what is the most important work that NOVA does?** That's hard to answer, It seems like everything they touch turns to gold. But from my perspective the most important work is much more than than the medical treatment we provide. It is the overall impact NOVA has on the community. It is the sense of love and commitment that is genuinely shared by two these communities worlds apart.

**Does anyone in your life play a role in supporting your involvement?** My wife has always been a big supporter. She regularly inspires me to do just a little more than I am comfortable with, and this has worked for us both professional and personally.

**What other organizations or causes do you support? Why do you volunteer and/or donate in general?** I also support Feed the Poor and the Padre Pio Foundation. I feel that I have been blessed to be where I am today and consider myself lucky enough to be able to further the missions of these charities.

**Of what contribution or achievement are you most proud?** My greatest achievements are my children. I have been blessed with two great kids, Alyssa and JJ, who are both honest and hardworking. My daughter Alyssa, who graduated from Albright College with a business degree, came to work for HBC and has worked her way up to her current position as office manager/ bookkeeper. My son JJ graduated from Miami University and will be starting medical school in January.

**Do you have any additional message you would like to share?** If you have the opportunity to read this article, I encourage you to take a few minutes to speak with the staff or anyone who has participated in one of NOVA's mission trips to Haiti. You will be blown away by what they have accomplished. You will want to help them.