

Carmella (center left) with lead nurses (left and right) and lab technician (center right)



I had a good idea, but was it GOD'S idea?

As a little girl, IM Regional Consultant Carmella Jones dreamed of one day being a nurse. Sure enough, decades later, Carmella was providing spiritual and physical care as director of a faith community nursing program.

It was a career Carmella could have nurtured for a lifetime, but God intervened with an unexpected plan.

In 2003, a team from Carmella's church arranged a short ministry trip to Guyana, the only predominantly English-speaking country in South America. She decided to go along. Nothing in her twenty-plus years as a nurse had prepared Carmella for what she experienced. "People walked forever just to receive care," she remembers, "and they asked us to pray with them when they got there. For me, that was big."

She thought to herself, "Could God be calling me to a life of service in an international setting?"

A Message From Sharon Koh



This year, International Ministries celebrates 210 years of responding together for good.

In 1814, we began our global ministry by supporting Adoniram and Ann Judson in Myanmar (Burma). Soon after, we established ministries in other countries around the world.

Every time I receive news from one of our global servants, I realize that our work today is part of a legacy of faith. Throughout scripture, God often called His people to new places where they could bless and strengthen others. **Jesus said, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**

Not every follower of Jesus will physically go to the ends of the earth, but many can contribute to global mission in other ways. In every generation of believers, God's people pick up the mantle of cross-cultural ministry and carry it forward.

Now is our time – yours and mine – to bear witness to the life-transforming work of Jesus to people around the world. After 210 years, we are still listening to God's voice and proclaiming God's reign of justice, peace, and abundant life to all creation. Today, at IM, we are seeing earth become more like heaven in countries that didn't even exist when we first launched! Take places like Liberia for example, which wasn't founded until 1822.

Being Christ's witness starts with listening to Christ's words. In this edition of On Location, we share a story from Carmella Jones, an IM regional consultant who has spent a lifetime listening to God and others. Her open ears have given her – and us – a profound sense of God's direction as we advance our educational and healthcare ministries in Liberia and around the world.

You, our friends and ministry partners, are an essential part of how we have **responded together for good** in God's mission for centuries and will continue to do so. Thank you for your prayers and support.

Together with you in mission,

Rev. Dr. Sharon T. Koh
Executive Director / CEO

Inspired by what you read? If you would like to equip IM global servants to share the gospel, please use the enclosed reply envelope to send your gift of support or donate online: **internationalministries.org**

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Carmella's Journey of Faith and Service



Carmella Jones
IM Regional Consultant

Carmella had been a nurse – and a believer – long enough to know that every feeling isn't specifically a “calling.” After a career in listening to patients, Carmella comprehended the value of listening to God. For fourteen years, Carmella listened and waited for clear direction from God. Meanwhile, she earned a Master of Divinity degree and continue her medical work.

If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

– JAMES 1:5

Finally in 2017, after much discernment, Carmella understood her calling from God. She was commissioned as a global servant with International Ministries and was sent to Hungary.

"When people are hurting, it's not uncommon for others to want to shut them up. And quickly," Carmella says. But that's not God's (or Carmella's) approach to people in pain.

In Hungary, Carmella teaches kids with special needs. When a child has a meltdown, Carmella sits with them – and listens. When their concerned parents show up for meetings, Carmella listens to them, too.

As IM regional consultant for health and education in Europe, the Middle East, and Liberia, Carmella made her first trip to Liberia to help provide health consultation services.

How did she serve? As a listening presence.

In Liberia, staff members at the Ricks Institute Clinic, an IM-supported school health clinic, face overwhelming burdens – malaria, asthma, chronic disease, and onchocerciasis, commonly known as “river blindness” – and have few resources to combat them.

Carmella traveled to Liberia where she provided medical and management insight for clinic staff members and leaders. "One of the lab technicians was incredibly frustrated because he didn't even have Clorox to do his job with. He needed a listening ear and help finding a solution."

Staff also wanted to know...

- ▶ How do you run a 24-hour clinic with no lights at night?
- ▶ What can we do to help patients who are afflicted with malaria, a disease that always seems to be a prevalent issue?
- ▶ How do we help young women with menstrual health and hygiene when we have such limited supplies?

And what do you do when you're Carmella – who's expected to provide solutions to these problems?



Two nurses at Ricks Institute Clinic in Liberia

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You observe before you speak. And then you build on what's there.

"Liberia has a problem with malaria. Many sick patients stop taking their malaria medicine after one or two doses," Carmella explains. "They feel better and decide to save the rest."

However, stopping the medicine often results in a more severe infection since the parasites are still active. It can even lead to chronic complications that persist into old age.

The clinic staff got nowhere by lecturing patients about compliance. So, Carmella watched, and waited, and listened. The staff noticed that patients often arrived with a friend, and one day, a nurse happened to remark, "This is what friends are for."

"That was it!" Carmella said. "We could use friendships to help people stick with the treatment program."

Thus, the foundation was laid for a peer-to-peer support program to help people

comply with their malaria treatment. "We built on the pieces that were there," Carmella says, "so everyone has a friend in place when they come to the clinic."

Looking ahead, Carmella plans to develop the peer-to-peer support system further. She is also sketching out a new plan for menstrual health and hygiene. **"Young ladies are missing school for days because of limited supplies, cramps, or soiling themselves on their way to school. We want to set up a 'pink room', a safe place for them to receive supplies, clean up, and get support."**

The "pink room" is just one of Carmella's God-inspired ideas as she serves Hungary, Liberia, and other countries worldwide. She knows that when you listen to God, you wind up doing work bigger than you ever dreamed.

Want to partner with Carmella as she brings these ideas to life?

To learn more, visit:
bit.ly/carmellajones

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Carmella holds child at Ricks Institute Clinic in Liberia



Liberia, Africa

Steward Your Gifts Faithfully

I hope that as you read this edition of *On Location*, your eyes are opened to see God at work through your partnership with International Ministries. As a valued partner in God's mission, your generosity and commitment are transforming lives around the world.

Your faithful partnership and gifts of any amount will always be stewarded faithfully to help support global mission through our ministries around the world. Today, we would like to share with you three other approaches to giving – valuable ways to invest in God's work beyond traditional cash donations:



Marc Kirchoff
Director of Development

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“Gifts of any amount to IM are appreciated and help support our life-changing ministries. However, these alternative giving methods can offer significant advantages over cash donations.”

1 Giving Stocks or Appreciated Assets:

Did you know that donating appreciated stocks or assets can maximize your impact while minimizing your tax burden?

By gifting stocks or appreciated assets, you may receive a two-fold benefit: a charitable deduction for the full market value and avoidance of capital gains tax. Your contribution will enable International Ministries to advance our ministries while you enjoy the added advantage of potential tax savings.

2 Qualified Charitable Distributions:

If you are age 70½ or older and own individual retirement accounts (IRAs), you may consider making a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD).

Through a QCD, you can transfer up to \$105,000 annually from your IRA directly to IM. In addition, this distribution can satisfy your required minimum distribution if you are age 73+ while also excluding the amount from your taxable income.

3 Grants from Donor Advised Funds:

Donor Advised Funds (DAFs) have become popular mechanisms for strategic giving, offering flexibility and control over your charitable contributions. **By establishing or using your existing DAF, you can make tax-deductible contributions to the fund and recommend grants to IM over time.** IM Donor Advisors can help you establish your DAF.

By exploring these options, you can amplify your generosity and ensure your resources create lasting change in the lives of the vulnerable and marginalized around the world. **We encourage you to keep this article as a resource to guide your future giving to God's mission.**

Want to learn more about new giving strategies? Our team of donor advisors will make the process simple. Please contact Marc Kirchoff, Director of Development, to get started.

Project Spotlights



Expressive Arts in Transition (EXIT)

Help support a pilot program in Cuba to train local care providers in trauma healing through the arts. Every day, people affected by a crisis must make decisions about how best to use the skills and resources available to them to meet their emotional, psychological, and spiritual needs. Expressive Arts in Transition (EXIT) creates spaces where people affected by violence and disaster can experience connection and healing through play, movement, and the arts. EXIT focuses on helping individuals find a sense of home internally in the physical body and spiritually in the Body of Christ.

Deborah's House

You can help provide a safe place for women who are survivors of domestic violence and their children through supporting Deborah's House. This project provides programming that includes pastoral care, counseling, legal advice, and vocational training for women who seek refuge at Deborah's House. Ongoing coaching is provided to women who leave the shelter.

Educational opportunity is provided through remote learning for kids who cannot be enrolled in school due to security risks. Many women who have completed the program now know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Your support helps fund the significant operational costs and helps provide women and children at the shelter with hope and a future.



White Cross – Congo Medical Supplies

Provide medical equipment and supplies to Baptist hospitals in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR Congo). Most Congolese earn less than \$1 a day, and these hospitals serve poor and rural patients where healthcare is provided on a fee-for-service basis. Funds raised will help purchase supplies, consumables, linens, uniforms, and medicines; funds will also offset the cost of shipping to and within the DR Congo. White Cross has been especially helpful when hospitals face unexpected epidemics like typhoid, malaria, Ebola, cholera, and recent threats of hemorrhagic fever. This project is a beautiful demonstration of love and support between followers of Christ in the US and Congolese medical providers working in difficult circumstances to provide holistic health care to patients.



White Cross – Liberia Ricks Institute Meals

The Ricks Institute in Liberia has prevailed despite years of civil war and disease. The staff provides a quality educational experience for children in grades K-12 that focuses not on themselves but on serving others. The ministry is open to girls and boys from all over Liberia and beyond. As a Christian school, Ricks Institute's dedication to the gospel message is embodied in its feeding program. Living out the call of Jesus to care for the poor and hungry, they live out their testimony by feeding children so they can reach their full potential. This program costs \$98 per student each year. This means the school can feed each student for less than 27 cents a day! Your support today could change a student's life in Liberia.

To give to these or other projects, visit
internationalministries.org/category/projects



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global
encounter

Thank you for joining us at the Global Encounter to
celebrate International Ministries' 210th anniversary!



During the live-translated event, we welcomed hundreds of registrants in different time zones and countries. Thank you for *responding together for good* with us.

