

Education. Treatment. Hope.

What's new in Cameroon

July 2010

New CD4 machine for Kumba clinic donated to CAAA

A generous gift of \$30,000 has been made to Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago by Paul and Ellen Gignilliat for the use of Cameroon America AIDS Alliance (CAAA). The gift will be used to purchase a CD4 machine, which tests and analyzes blood for HIV/AIDS patients.

The gift includes testing supplies and additional equipment needed to run the machine—a Point Care NOW System. The new system will replace the CD4 machine currently in use which will then provide backup. The CAAA clinic is the only health care facility in the region with a working CD4 system—a critical tool that measures the progress of HIV so that patients receive proper treatments and care.



Lab Tech Eyambe Bricly with CD4 machine



Dr. Bernard Blaauw and lab techs at Kumba Clinic

Dr. "B" continues patient care at Kumba clinic

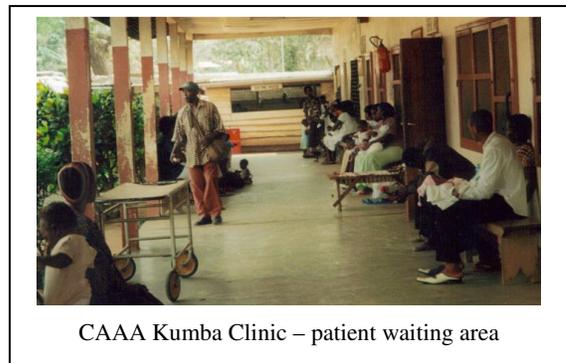
CAAA's Medical Director, Dr. Bernard Blaauw, treats more than 2,000 out-patients each year at the Presbyterian Health Centre in Kumba, Cameroon. He also makes ward rounds visiting hundreds of additional patients at other locations. Fondly known as "Dr. B.", he has volunteered his time and expertise as an HIV/AIDS specialist in Cameroon since 2006.

Medical updates for local physicians

Dr. Blaauw initiated a weekly series of medical updates for the four physicians at the Presbyterian Hospital in Kumba. Topics range from hypertension, diabetes and prostate cancer to pregnancy & HIV and what to do when exposed to HIV. He also provides written summaries. Because CME (continuing medical education) is not required or readily provided in Cameroon, these sessions are critical for patient health care.

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CAAA Kumba Clinic – patient waiting area

Cameroon America AIDS Alliance (CAAA), founded in 2006, is working with local partners in Cameroon, Africa, to help stem the spread of HIV/AIDS and alleviate the physical and psychological devastation of the disease.

CAAA helps individuals and organizations better understand and respond to the AIDS epidemic through prevention, education, testing, treatment, counseling and promotion of healthy lifestyles.

A beacon of light and hope, CAAA is committed to operating a highly effective programmatic model that, in time, will be replicated in other African nations in the battle against HIV/AIDS.

What's new in Chicago and beyond

In 2010-2011, CAAA plans to:

- Sponsor an **educational conference** on HIV/AIDS for community leaders
- Coordinate a **trip to Kumba**, Cameroon, for people who want to see our work, get involved, and visit this special African country
- Hold a **fundraising event** for CAAA in the Chicago area; look for news about timing and location in your e-mail and on our website

World Prayer Day in Palatine

CAAA Board Members Marilyn Cason and Jan Lohs participated in World Prayer Day at The Presbyterian Church of Palatine. Because the focus was on Cameroon, they presented CAAA's work and church members have responded with great interest and fundraising support for CAAA.

From Carol Gates - Cameroon Update 2010

After Carol Gates' second trip to Cameroon in two years, the Fourth Church member sent this insightful update.

Chicago, March, 2010—"Yesterday I returned from two weeks of volunteering in Kumba, a city of about a million people in the South West Province of Cameroon... Once in Kumba, I settled into my room at the Guest House at the Presbyterian Church Centre... I worked in the outpatient clinic at the Presbyterian Hospital with Dr. Blaauw who asked me to help in the laboratory again this year.

Patient reception - I sat at the reception desk and took in patient medical records, which were in the form of small booklets. Unlike the U.S., patients keep their medical records at home and bring them in each time they come to the clinic. I found the lab tests doctors ordered for patients and wrote all the blood tests on one slip of paper, all the urine tests on another, etc. and delivered the slips to lab techs.

The techs recorded the results on the slips of paper and I helped copy the results into the patient medical records. The goal was to finish the tests in time for the patients to see their doctors again the same day. Many of the patients traveled long distances and it wasn't practical for them to come back on another day.

Dr. Blaauw to attend international AIDS Conference

Before returning to Cameroon this summer and continuing his work at the CAAA Kumba Clinic, Dr. Bernard Blaauw will attend an international AIDS conference in Vienna, Austria. He recently completed a review course on HIV at Harvard.

Matching Grant of \$10,000

The \$10,000 matching grant donation made last year continues to be viable. For every \$2 received from other donors, the grant will match it with \$1. With your help and the support of others, CAAA hopes to raise \$30,000.

Cameroon Physician Trains with Dr. Blaauw at CAAA Clinic

CAAA's Medical Director, Dr. Bernard Blaauw, is training Cameroonian physician Dr. Eben Tong, in the latest HIV/AIDS treatment. They treat patients at the CAAA Kumba Clinic in Cameroon. Future plans include having a local physician fully trained in HIV/AIDS patient care at the Kumba Clinic.



Carol Gates, a member of Fourth Church, works at reception desk with Comfort Abong (L) at the CAAA Kumba Clinic.

Common diseases - Every day in the lab we saw the full range of diseases common in the developing world - malaria, typhoid fever, rheumatic fever, HIV/AIDS, TB, river blindness and various other parasitic diseases.

Here are a few of my observations about healthcare here:

- Many children are treated every day in the outpatient clinic, and they usually come in for something fairly serious. Malaria and typhoid fever hit children particularly hard.

- There are more cases of typhoid this year because of the early rains (typhoid can be transmitted through unsanitary water). There is a typhoid vaccination, but many parents don't have their children immunized.

- The only routine screening tests are HIV, syphilis, and diabetes for expectant and new mothers. Routine screening like we do in the U.S. (i.e. for cholesterol) is completely off the radar.

- I was more conscious this year of the prevalence of HIV/AIDS because I had to gather additional information from patients requesting HIV or CD4 tests.

-The words "HIV" or "AIDS" are never used in patient medical records since the records are taken home. The stigma associated with HIV/AIDS is so great that a woman could be beaten or kicked out of the house if her husband discovered her status. Once a positive result is confirmed, a CD4 test should ideally be done every four to six months to determine the correct therapy...people travel considerable distances to have the test done here.

... the trip was an experience I found both enriching and fun."



Kumba Clinic lab technicians share experiences with Carol Gates

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Ways You Can Help

Donate

Help us benefit from a \$10,000 matching grant by making a donation. For every \$2 you donate, an additional \$1 will be received from our donor.

CAAA needs your help to continue our programs – you can donate by sending a check to our address or making an online donation at our web site: www.preventaidsafrica.org

Any donation is appreciated and will be used to fund treatment and prevention of HIV/AIDS.

Volunteer

You can get involved NOW in one of the following ways:

- Help plan a fundraising event this year
- Submit the names of potential new board and/or working group members
- Reach out to your network about CAAA's programs and events
- Join our marketing and communications committee

CAAA Mission

To control the spread of AIDS by establishing a sustainable program of education, prevention and treatment in partnership with the people of Cameroon.

Join CAAA and Help us achieve our goals. Be a part of our future!