

背景资料

援手, HandReach(<http://handreach.org>), 就是从一开始到现在资助小世伟等几个中国伤残儿童到波士顿治疗的组织。他们与全美的Shringers医院系统合作, 为第三世界国家的伤残儿童, 特别是烧伤儿童提供免费的跟踪治疗, 直至其至成人。援手与前日号召大家向世伟和其他烧伤儿童网上捐款的Alifetime是姊妹组织。援手用后者的网上收款功能募捐。现任援手中国联系人的高琦的家就是第一个host世伟的家庭。世伟5岁以前的几次来美, 都是住在我村。分别住在焦洁, 李启弘家和湖边的那个小招待所。由于烧伤皮肤不能再随身体的增长而增长, 烧伤儿童需要每年做皮肤手术以适应增长的身体。所以资助烧伤儿童是一个长期的过程。我村村民每年都向世伟和援手捐赠款物。近年并延展到其他儿童。前日梁黎明更是和国内慈善人士联手捐助了援手为一圭亚那烧伤儿童来美治疗的旅行费用。下面是本村梁黎明会同国内慈善人士的善举和整个援助过程的介绍。

记录一下这几天的千里大营救, 感谢各位热心人, 也希望给两位捐款人一个交代

4月25日

南美洲圭亚那的一个15个月小男孩Devin Bishsoon因为哥哥不小心把易燃液体点着了, 导致全身烧伤。50%面积2, 3级烧伤, 当地医院只能保持身体不脱水, 却无力提供任何治疗或者药物。生命危险。通过国际慈善机构, 美国德州Galveston的Shriners慈善医院已经准备好接受小孩了。但是医疗飞行运输的费用还没有着落。为此慈善组织HandReach.org接到紧急求助, 要为此紧急筹款几千美元。

4月25日下午

通过许多个人筹到\$985

4月26日下午,

筹到\$1,865, 但是被告知commercial flight可能不行, 需要medical flight (需要医生决定)。同时要为小孩和妈妈办理出生证, 护照, 签证。medical flight几乎没有国际业务的, 唯一报价5万3美元。又联系私人飞机, 也要1万多油费。

4月27日

筹款依旧缓慢。为此HandReach的波士顿分支联系人找到了Sharon华人社区。之前HandReach一直帮助把中国烧伤小孩接到波士顿Shriners慈善医院治疗, 美容和康复, Sharon华人社区也出钱出力。因为之前两位国内的慈善家捐了一笔钱给梁黎明保管, 专门帮助来波士顿治疗的中国小孩, 有一定余额, James Wang就找到了梁黎明。

4月27-28日

与国内捐款人确认, 梁黎明把1841.26美元汇到HandReach.

4月28日下午

通过原来的途径HandReach筹到2700美元。小孩的护照下来了, 正在等签证。情况相对稳定。

4月29日

HandReach号召祈祷，因为一定要在这天拿到美国签证的面谈预约。否则下周一是放假。而且领事馆2点就关门了。（该死的美国签证！）

飞行要求也有新动向，根据小孩情况，或许有医护人员的商业航班也行。

4月29日下午3点多

终于拿到签证！筹款还得继续（在德州的费用，回程机票等）

5月3日下午

小孩Devin，他妈妈和医生通过商业航班安全抵达德州Galveston的Shriners慈善医院。United Airline免费把他们升级到商务舱。

至此营救告一段落，感谢两位捐款人的慷慨，你们的1800美元数目不算很多，但在最关键的时刻提供最关键的帮助，小孩才能确定可以飞来美国。

Devin's Legacy

BRECKEN CHINN·TUESDAY, MAY 10, 2016

In late April 2015, little 15-month-old Devin Bishoondai was playing in the yard near his home in Guyana, South America. His older brother had created a fire to try to combat mosquitoes. Without understanding, the brother put something on the fire that was highly flammable, creating a terrible explosion that engulfed little Devin, leaving him with serious 2nd and 3rd degree burns over more than 50% of his tiny body. His family was so poor that it was discovered he didn't even have a birth certificate when he arrived at the hospital.

On the morning of April 25th, I woke in Tucson, Arizona, with my partner Marriah Raphael Star-- a Tucson native -- for Spring Break. We were staying at an inexpensive trucker motel off Benson Highway. Upon waking, I sleepily turned on my phone and saw an email titled "Request for Assistance" from Lori Narine, introducing herself from SHEA (Saving Hands Emergency Aid) Charity, a small New York-based nonprofit helping kids in need from Guyana. Lori told us that she had been referred to my organization, HandReach, at the recommendation of Galveston Shriners, which had accepted Devin for life-saving medical treatment. "This child is 15 months old and we are looking for a sponsor to cover his travels and accommodations while he receives treatment in the U.S.," Lori wrote succinctly. The email included some very serious photos of a toddler in desperate need of burn care, ASAP.

I immediately forwarded Lori's request to HandReach's best-positioned individuals to make the call -- our Treasurer Steve McIntosh and Family Care Coordinator, Qi McIntosh, who had worked tirelessly to help HandReach get a number of serious cases successfully through Galveston Shriners. This would be HandReach's first acute case. Since we've been working mainly in China -- from where it is highly impractical to try to transport acute cases to the US -- we had been working mostly with non-life-threatening reconstructive cases. All of us knew immediately that this new direction was serious.

HandReach set up a campaign page to raise funds for Devin's transport to Galveston. Miraculously, people started showing up -- donating funds, picking up my phone calls, suggesting resources. How hard could air medical transport be for a small boy in this much need? My daughter Jolene Chinn Swartz, herself a burn survivor recently employed by the

Association of Air Medical Services (AAMS) in Washington DC, sent me an Excel spreadsheet titled "International Long Haul MedEvac Providers" and an explanatory PDF, "How to Choose a Fixed-Wing Provider." "What's a fixed-wing provider?," I had to figure out first. Oh right, not a helicopter.

By Wednesday morning, I received word that HandReach was officially signed on to sponsor Devin's transport. Volunteers in Guyana were scrambling to get Devin's birth certificate and to arrange visas for him and his mother, Leisa, to fly to Galveston. I started calling down the list of MedEvac providers, and this is when things got very serious -- not a single one of them "did charity work," I was told over and over again. We reached out to Shriners and other children's relief organizations for assistance, to no avail. One volunteer started calling organizations herself. I kept getting voicemails that began with "Unfortunately we regret that..."

The best quote we could get for a medical flight, which was presented to us as entirely reasonable by a flight company referred by Shriners, was \$53,400 -- for just this one flight. This amount exceeds the annual salary of most people I know and far exceeded everything HandReach had in the bank. I started to panic -- how could we cover this? I started to fear that all of the work HandReach has done since our founding in 2004 would grind to a halt over this one expense -- yet a life-saving, worthy expense -- one that we needed to make.

I spent the entire day Wednesday in a darkened motel room in Tucson making phone calls to air transport companies. After dozens of unsuccessful calls -- "I'm sorry, ma'am, we don't do charity work" -- I became desperate. One company even had the gall to say that I'd need to arrange a flight like this 30 days in advance. (Apparently they don't deal with trauma cases.) Finally, with one particularly robotic woman on the phone, I popped and said, "Ma'am, if this was your child lying dying of a burn injury, would you want people out there to be working as hard as they can to find solutions?" I asked her to go to her higher-ups and really ask what was possible. A few minutes later, I got the same email: "I am so very sorry to inform you..." HandReach's online campaign had raised about \$3,688, and an anonymous Chinese donor sent along another \$1,841, so we had just over \$5,500 to work with -- just around 10% of what was needed for the medical flight. Thankfully, it was determined by the staff in Guyana and Galveston that Devin could manage a commercial flight, and a dedicated doctor, Dr. Rajkumar, agreed to accompany Devin and his mother from Guyana to Galveston to keep him as safe as possible. Thankfully, United Airlines upgraded their tickets to Business Class. Can you imagine them squeezing into Coach?

The next hurdle came with the visas. Apparently the staff at the US Embassy in Guyana were on some sort of holiday, Friday into Monday, so we were told that things "didn't look good" for the visas to be issued for a few days, and each day passing was getting worse for Devin's condition. The longer we waited, the less able to endure a commercial flight he would be. SHEA had a lawyer contact who could get mom into the Embassy, but things were held up inexplicably for hours. Miraculously, a former student of mine, Lindsay Heath Holder, had a connection at the US Embassy in Guyana to whom she could text and get through. "Say it's life or death," her contact wrote. "It's life or death," we replied. And next thing we knew, Devin's mother was walking out of the Embassy with visas.

Things seemed to go okay with the transport, and we got word that Devin and his mom had safely reached Galveston. But just a day or two later, we got a dire email saying that Devin's

condition was worsening rapidly, and he “may not make it through the night.” The next thing I heard, Devin had passed. All those who had been praying for him united in collective heartbreak. My partner Marriah called from New York to settle me down. I tossed and turned all night, but waited for sunrise to write this post.

The thing that troubles me about Devin’s case is that it starkly reveals how badly our human family is caring for our most poor. It is exactly the way we as humans treat our most vulnerable that determines our evolutionary potential as a species. I’ve learned over the past decade or so that it’s relatively easy to qualify for funding to get “medicines” to the poor to treat things like malaria and tuberculosis -- these solutions come in pills that can be purchased from corporations. I’ve literally been told by doctors -- burn doctors -- that HandReach should “go out of the burn business” because it’s too depressing, doesn’t raise as much money as “happier” causes, etc. Well, I’ve got news.... HandReach is not “in the burn business” -- we are desperately trying to scrape together whatever resources we can find to stem the hideous tide of unnecessary misery and disability caused across our planet by one of the most painful things that can happen to a human body -- a burn injury.

The world’s poorest people are at the highest risk of catastrophic injuries, because they are the ones who are exposed to the worst job conditions, the world’s least safe dwellings, the need to boil their water just to drink it and not die. More productive work hours are lost across our planet as the result of trauma than from cancer and heart disease combined, according to the CDC. Cancer and heart disease (from which people are still dying in droves) have millions of dollars thrown at them each year. And it’s this hard to find a way to transport a healthy yet injured baby to a free hospital just a few hours away that has already accepted him??

Wake up, world. Take a look at what our vanity and distractibility wreak across our planet on a daily basis. There are literally 1-2 million burn injuries happening just in China and India alone in any given year -- do the math. There are countless burn survivors across our planet, most of them left at home, disabled and disfigured, because no one wants to look at them. My adopted daughter was on the path to become one of these people.

The amount of money that’s spent on producing and airing a single Superbowl ad, or that’s spent on the next round of fighter planes, could literally transform the odds for our world’s poorest. Kids like Devin don’t need to suffer and die like this. Our world -- Shriners as an excellent representative -- has incredible expertise to heal burns and trauma of the deepest magnitude; we just need to make these resources available worldwide, where they are needed most.

It’s clear to most of us that “the 1%” who have created a parasitic one-way stream of wealth into their pockets are wreaking serious damage to our species. Unemployment, corruption, environmental destruction, are all symptoms that “trickle-down economics” are a farce.

So come on, 1% -- give the world our fucking money back. We are trying to take care of our human family, even and especially the world’s poorest. What if it were you or a dearly loved one waiting in a burn unit somewhere for someone to care?

Lori Narine just emailed, “I am going to spend the day making arrangements to have Devin's body returned home and take care of his funeral arrangements. I wish this was all a bad nightmare and that he was actually safe. Many hearts are broken over this tragedy. Devin's older brother keeps asking when Devin will return home. He is very sad that he hurt Devin but I

don't think he understands that his baby brother is in heaven.”

Let's bring heaven down among us, folks. We can do this! This tragedy (and countless others like it) was so avoidable. It's time to be part of the solution.

义卖活动通知：

Sharon华人协会美食版与Sharon的老四川餐厅联手共同为致力于帮助中国伤残儿童来美治疗的慈善机构援手（Hand Reach - <https://goo.gl/5ob8Bw>）举办一场早餐义卖会。时间为6月5日，星期天，上午7:30到11:00。欢迎Sharon及周边的朋友参与。现诚招志愿服务人员，请填表：

<http://goo.gl/forms/xrtQoWdl8x>

随后会提供食客登记表。活动详情见下文：

本次义卖由老四川无偿提供场所，厨房和所有使用餐具。活动将招募Sharon华人志愿者、各大美食高手制作早餐。早餐义卖会将采取餐票形式，价格初步定为：成人\$8，老人及六岁以下儿童\$5。餐票包括一份基本早餐和茶水。基本早餐初步定为豆浆和当日早上制做的传统早点(待定)。早餐会同时制作其它传统中华早餐食品供选购，价格另计。早餐会只收现金。早餐会所收款项将全部捐给援手机构。援手机构的代表也将出席早餐会。

现招募以下工作的志愿者：1. 提供豆浆机及原料的家庭；2. 制作各种中西面点，中华传统早餐食品的面点师；3. 服务人员：收款和跑堂儿的。志愿制作食品者自带原料，可在自家或老四川厨房当早制做。有意志愿服务者，请与5月22日前填写上面的报名表，如有任何问题，请与刘华和李启弘联系。