

Address by Mrs. Marlene Talamas

Good morning. It is a distinct honor and pleasure to be asked to speak briefly about the inspiration behind Global Reach's desire to participate in this most worthy cause in the vein of many selfless individuals, families, and companies in Belize and abroad, who believe it is in giving that one receives.

How did this journey begin?

Taking the inspiration from the missionary work of my grandfather Dr McCleary, my mother, Maria Elena Sylvestre, with a history of health care in Belize, and a partner of Global Reach, invited their team to visit the amazing work being done in the Dangriga branch by Dr Grant and his team. Global Reach immediately saw the need for the Dangriga work to be duplicated in the city to alleviate the inconveniences of patients and their caregivers. Global's philosophy of "Be the change you want to see in the world" and humbled by the selfless work of Dr Grant and his team, coupled with the knowledge of my family's legacy of missionary work in Belize, Global Reach decided to be part of another miracle we are all here to inaugurate.

As the donors at Global Reach have wished to honor the legacy of my grandfather, Dr. Clarence James McCleary, a little bit of history.

Dr. McCleary was a distinguished surgeon and member of the Fellowship of The International College of Surgeons and a US military doctor during the Second World War, becoming a medical missionary together with his wife Frances, a surgical nurse, and their son Arthur. After spending several years as part of a medical mission team for the Seventh Day Adventist Church, their work led them eventually from the jungles of Nicaragua in Puerto Cabezas and to then British Honduras in 1955 by a special invitation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second.

They dedicated two and a half decades to the building and running of the Holden Memorial Hospital once located in the beautiful colonial structure of the Biddle Family home on Marine Parade. Today only ashes remain of the building, which during Hurricane Hattie, in spite of being severely damaged, was part of the effort to rescue many from the storm's devastation and then by the 1980's became known as The Hotel Chateau Caribbean.

The legacy of this very brilliant and talented doctor and his family however remains in the seeds that were sown from the dedication and love of the medical profession and the special care that was taught in the respect and treatment of every patient as a child of God, deserving of dignity and compassion.

The legacy continues in those who were trained by these missionaries and also by others who have followed the same principles of "first, do no harm" and second, complete informed consent before any medical procedure, as well as respect for every patient's cultural and religious beliefs in the holistic healing of mind, body and soul.

The fullness of such a legacy can be seen in this work of Dr Ellsworth Grant, and his incredibly talented and dedicated team in Belize City and Dangriga which motivated and inspired Wayne Talamas and Sergio Ruiz as the founders of Global Reach Miracle Foundation to provide the real impetus for Belize Cancer Center in Belize to become a reality as they have done in other countries assisting in orphanages and hospitals in need in India, Guatemala, and Venezuela to name a few.

As a Belizean of the diaspora, I am proud to have been a small part of this project together with my mother Maria Elena, Wayne, and Sergio of Global Reach all of whom are talented medical professionals in their own right all whose hearts are in the right place - that of serving selflessly the other, and expecting no other reward in this earthly plane other than to tread hopefully in the same path as the Good Shepherd and Divine Healer, Jesus Christ.