

Old Friends and New Ministry in Belize

2018 was our fourth year to send a mission team to Belize and each year we make new friends and further connect to those who we met in previous years. Our team varies from year to year but many of our core members keep coming back each year which further builds and strengthens those blessed relationships in Christ.

Last year, many of you may remember the God story of how while fitting a little girl, Ciara for a wheelchair and building a two level ramp at her house, a neighbor brought Wilson [pictured right] to where we were working to see if we had any mobility items suitable for him. The “Divine” appointment was sealed moments later when Leanne and John arrived onsite with the items picked out for Ciara which included an “extra” stroller perfect for Wilson’s needs.

This year, we had the privilege of building a three way ramp at the school where both Ciara and Wilson attend. While Ciara was not at school that day, we did get to see Wilson and fit him for his first wheelchair that he could use there on site. The look on his face was priceless when he realized he could actually move himself around on the concrete walk ways. You see, until this moment Wilson had always been carried everywhere by his parents and although they had a stroller per our meeting in 2017, Wilson was still left to the care of others for his mobility. However, now at the age of eight years old Wilson could move himself WHERE he wanted and WHEN he wanted. This new found independence was like a light bulb going off in his mind that radiated through his infectious smile.

Later that week we made a visit to Ciara’s house since we missed her at school and while there we discovered both of her wheelchairs needed repairs and amazingly she was able to stand a bit due to a surgery she had recently. She still needs the wheelchairs to go outside her home and to school so we took them to the mission for the needed parts and work but celebrated this small but great victory with her, too.

While visiting Ciara and her family, we were directed to the home of a boy named Elmer who lived a few roads away. He had Cerebral Palsy similar to Ciara but with much more contractures and much less mobility. Once we arrived at his house where he sits each day on the porch, we realized he needed a new wheelchair and one that addressed his posture challenges. None of the wheelchairs we had on the Hearts of Christ bus were a good fit so we invited him and his family to come to the Expo that Saturday. Unfortunately, they had no way to get Elmer the 10 mile distance to the site where we were holding the distribution but thankfully we had a ramp van [one of only two we know of in the country] so a volunteer was able to transport him to and from the outreach.



When the Expo day arrived we were flooded with folks with disabilities from distances of over 2 hours away including a young girl named Fani [pictured left] who despite being born with no legs had been working in the banana fields. Her father had come to our outreaches for two years in a row requesting a power wheelchair for her to use outside but without Fani being there herself we had no way to verify the need and fit her with an appropriate item. Now the circle was complete as we could meet this precious but industrious young lady who was married, climbed banana trees and spearfished in the river despite here disability. Her Philippians 4:13 attitude which was instilled in her by her father, who grinned “ear to ear” as he shared about her accomplishments, was so evident as we showed her the technical aspects of using her new power wheelchair.

There were so many more old and new friends at the outreach that day. From Ciara and Wilson who enjoyed the day of fun activities to Elmer and Fani who received new mobility items as well as the over 50 wheelchairs and countless walkers, crutches, canes and medical supplies given out that week, our 2018 mission trip was truly a testimony of God weaving lives together year after year.

