

## **World Health Ambassador (WHA) Program Update**

**Biloxi, Mississippi** – 2006 has been a busy year for the WHA program. In April of 2006, WHA sent a team to Biloxi, Mississippi to evaluate the Katrina aftermath. The survey members teamed up with members of the Dallas chapter of the Vietnamese Professional Society (VPS) to tour the city. The WHA, in conjunction with the Vietnamese American Medical Association (VAMA), has contributed more than \$30,000 to the victims of Katrina hurricane. This first hand experience of the devastation and human tragedy will help shape the WHA future goals and directions.

**Lisbon, Portugal** - since the completion of the inaugural medical mission to Cambodia in March of 2005, our team members had reviewed and analyzed the data collected from the trip. At the 12<sup>th</sup> International Infectious Disease Congress meeting in Lisbon, Portugal in May 2006, our team members presented, in the form of a poster session, an abstract on prevalence of illnesses in remote Cambodian villages. The presentation was well received by the international conference participants.

**Can Tho, Vietnam** - In July of 2006, a five-member WHA team was sent to Can Tho, Vietnam to evaluate the city and surrounding villages as a potential site for a medical mission in early 2007. The team included top Vietnamese-American US government official, physicians, and logistic manager. The team met with local authority and health officials, and toured Can Tho School of Health Science, Can Tho General Hospital and the local communes. The trip was both informative and productive. Upon the completion of the trip, a full report was submitted to the VAMA board of directors in August. At the VAMA national convention in Dallas, Texas on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, the board of directors and the executive committee gave approval for the WHA program to proceed with a full medical and dental mission in Vietnam in 2007. This is a historic decision for the VAMA and a new chapter for the WHA program. For the first time, WHA program will be able to treat needy patients in its home country.



### **DESTINATION VIETNAM**

**Geography** - Can Tho has an estimated population of 1.2 million people living in an area of 1,390 km<sup>2</sup>. Can Tho has recently been classified as one of the five major or most populous cities in Vietnam. Located at the centre of Mekong Delta, Cần Thơ constitutes an independent municipality and is the delta's biggest city. The Mekong Delta population is estimated at 20 million individuals. It is estimated that 16% of Can Tho City's population and a higher percentage in the rural villages live below poverty level, which is defined as generating an income of less than \$10 a day.

#### **Our objectives -**

1. To provide medical and dental care to underserved villages in Can Tho province in cooperation with the medical and dental teams from Can Tho School of Health Sciences.
2. To establish a physician cooperative program: WHA physicians to work along side with the local physician staffs at Can Tho General Hospital to exchange medical knowledge.
3. To establish a visiting professor program: our physicians to perform medical and dental teaching at the Can Tho School of Health Sciences.

#### **Come and join us for this upcoming project!**

You can contact us at:

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For those who would like to be part of the mission team, the spaces are already more than half filled so let us hear from you soon.