



Vitamin Angels Press Release, January 2nd, 2007

Howard Schiffer and Vitamin Angels are saving the world one multivitamin at a time

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What the world needs now is not love, but vitamins. That's what 40-year-old Howard Schiffer realized in 1994 after an earthquake hit the former vitamin salesman's hometown of Santa Barbara, California. Until then, Schiffer had been unhappy with his line of work. "If I die tomorrow," he remembers thinking, "they're going to write 'He sold a lot of products' on my grave."

But following the quake, Schiffer's contacts enabled him to send shipments of vitamins to those affected. The positive response was overwhelming. While other relief organizations provide shelter, medicine, and food, it turned out that none supplied vitamins. That was a significant oversight considering that one-third of the world's population lacks basic nutrition and the No. 1 global health risk is starvation.

By 2002, the **Vitamin Angel Alliance**—the world's only nonprofit dedicated to supplying vitamins—had delivered 12 million supplements. In 2005, with the frequency and magnitude of natural disasters making headlines, **Vitamin Angels** passed out 100 million vitamins in some 40 countries. And those figures were likely exceeded in 2006, with fewer dramatic catastrophes.

Headquartered in a small attic office in Santa Barbara that houses several full-time staffers and 15 volunteers, the organization can lay claim to saving toddlers in Tibet from rickets, infants in India from blindness and mothers in Bali from death during childbirth, as well as providing daily vitamins to 55,000 Honduran children.

But Schiffer is just getting started. In Honduras, for example, where a long-term project has been

so successful that it will be replicated in Belize and the Dominican Republic, community members were asked to work together to do more toward improving local health than taking their vitamins—and are rising to the challenge. “If you engage people and you open up the dialogue,” Schiffer explains, “they’ll figure out the solutions to their own problems.”

In the meantime, **Vitamin Angels** is working with suppliers like Rainbow Light vitamins and agencies like the World Health Organization to coordinate vitamin deliveries to those in need. And this year, **Vitamin Angels** will team with Save the Children to provide vitamins to 4.5 million kids in 26 countries.

One reason for such high-profile support is that in the nutritional-supplement realm, \$1 can save a life. “There are so many things that people donate to where people have to hope that their support can have an impact,” Schiffer said. “This isn’t one of them. We know that if we get X dollars, the kids won’t go blind, they won’t have anemia, the mothers won’t die during childbirth. It’s a low-tech solution to a global health problem.”

Vitamin Angels is a non-profit, non-sectarian organization dedicated to providing basic nutrition and fighting vitamin A deficiency childhood blindness around the world since 1994. Last year, Vitamin Angels donated more than 100 million supplements to people in need in 40 countries around the world. Their Operation 20/20 program starting in 2007 will reach 4.25 million children in 24 countries. For more information or to make a donation to Vitamin Angels visit www.VitaminAngels.org.

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