



GREAT SHAPE! Inc.

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U.S. VOLUNTEERS RETURN FROM JAMAICA

More than 9,000 Jamaicans now have healthier teeth and a hefty dose of education, thanks to nearly one hundred volunteers from the United States. Volunteers from the Northwest, East Coast and everywhere in between have returned from the Island with open hearts and eyes.

Great Shape Inc., International Smile Power and Sandals Resorts International, all partnered to open free dental clinics over a four week period. Teams served Jamaicans in the regions of Ocho Rios and Negril. Our teams offered teeth cleaning, extractions, sealants and education. Crews also traveled throughout Jamaica offering dental education in several primary schools. Half of the volunteers are dental professionals, the other half are “civilians”.

Cavities and gum disease can lead to several health problems, including heart disease and low-birth weight, even death. In Jamaica dental care is very expensive. Plus in rural Jamaica, there is only one dentist for every 80,000 people! The majority of people we served had never even seen a dentist before.

This is the fourth year of the One Thousand Smiles project. The Jamaicans we spoke with are grateful and gushing with their world-renowned “One Love”. One U.S. volunteer says “This is a life-changing event. A healthy smile can mean the difference between a job and resolute poverty in Jamaica. This project changed the way I view my own life. Life is so easy for us in the US.”

This year, volunteers added a new program with the primary schools. We gave 5,000 books to school librarians who only have a dozen books on the shelf. We’ll use a school in Grangehill for the pilot project and track literacy rates over the next several years.

Rick Suhr and Lucinda Kay, both former journalists from KXLY, can offer raw tape of fantastic video and emotional interviews. For contacts in your local city, please contact 509-280-6237 or lucinda@lucindakay.com.

***Great Shape! Inc. “1000 Smiles Jamaican Dental Project”
Helping Children Since 1988***