

## **January 20-22, 2018 Sierra Leone Travel Team Update**

The Team had a productive day Saturday and a little bit of a break on Sunday. We spoke to them for about an hour Sunday evening (their time) and they had a lot of valuable information to share. They seemed in great spirits and were very optimistic about completing the work. As when we started at Centennial, there are many organizational challenges at the Hospital and we are fortunate to have Herb and Tom Portland there to lead the visioning process which will address some of those issues. Thirty-five participants are expected for the visioning process.

One of the challenges facing the hospital is income since the hospital won't turn anyone away, even if they can't pay, and that results in significant financial pressures. The water bagging system is one way they hope to generate income. The hospital received a water bagging system from an anonymous donor and since they have sufficient water and power, this could be a steady source of income. The team said the hospital is selling about 15,000 liters/week although they are still working on determine their profits on the sales.

Over at Centennial there continues to be more good news. The maintenance fund seems to be recovering from the Ebola epidemic when there was no school for a year and they were not allowed to collect fees for many months after school resumed. The school has also welcomed their first boarding students after since before the civil war. About 10 girls are now staying in the dorm renovated with a European Union grant.

In addition to their donation of computers for the Library, mining company Sierra Rutile is going to build four additional classrooms. And speaking of the library, books and computers are being used regularly. In fact, they received so many computers that we are discussing ways to provide additional power so they may be fully utilized. One challenge for the school is sticking to a schedule of routine maintenance. They seem to be doing well on repairing things when they break and they addressed most of the issues raised by the 2017 Travel Team but there is still work to be done on developing a maintenance culture.

From Herb:

### **Saturday**

Joan, Chris, Jose and the construction team finished roofing the toilets, installed the grab bars and began installing the plumbing. The team also poured the cesspit cross beam. At the end of the day, the construction team celebrated their accomplishments this week.

Tom and Herb continued planning for the visioning session by defining the groups and planning other details. Allison and Emilia will be leaving us tomorrow.

### **Sunday**

We plastered the toilet facility and set the toilets and sinks. Jose, Joan and Chris completed their technical assessments at the school. Herb and Tom continued preparations for the visioning exercise and Allison and Emilia are on their way home!

## **Monday**

Today, the construction team began tiling the stalls, finished plastering, wired the lights and poured the concrete ramp from the hospital area to the toilets. Tom and Herb finished preparations for the visioning meeting tomorrow. Chris started reviewing several of the current hospital structures in need of repair to develop estimates.