

## **History of Other Greater Voice Training and Support:**

### **2003: HAITI**

Three year old child named Lotie was rejected by hospital when her mother asked for a hearing test. "Come back when she is 5". PGV counselled friends of Lotie's family, coordinated audiological evaluation in Santo Domingo, and then donated two hearing aids with Give the Gift of Hearing donation when diagnosed profoundly deaf. Lotie's parents received our PGV packet of parent information, resources, and hearing aids. Her mother, a nurse, engaged Lotie immediately in listening and language therapy and she was tremendous in supporting Lotie's needs. Lotie has since moved to southern Florida, where she received a cochlear implant and now has access to better education and services.

### **March 2006: INDIA**

Teacher of the Deaf, Uma Soman-Gokhale and Executive Director, Joanne Travers assessed and visited 10 programs for the deaf in Mumbai and Pune, India. Observations and program discussions involved audiology clinics, early intervention centers, private therapy centers, mainstream programs, and schools for the deaf. Joanne addressed parents in both Mumbai and Pune, holding three meetings with over 80 parents of children with severe and profound hearing losses. The preferred mode of communication is the spoken word and remarkably some of the children they met were learning 2 or more spoken languages. Parent meetings incorporated discussion on the following topics: social emotional growth, transitioning, assistive technology and general information on hearing loss. Joanne consulted Vahistai, parent and teacher of deaf, at AURED on how to start parent network called V-Connect. Vahistai continues to run this program and successfully engage parents in the option to teach listening and spoken language in her private practice.

### **October 2007- 2012: HONDURAS**

Coordinator Carol Serna, Cornell Graduate and recent program engineer manager for water projects in Honduras: Agua del Pueblo. Carol's host family in Honduras had no support for their young daughter, Angie, detected with hearing loss. Carol connected with Greater Voice and Joanne counselled her on deafness and listening and spoken language (the desired communication modality of the mother). Through the Gift of Hearing program, Angie received her first hearing aids and her parents received counsel and parent support. Working with Carol on location, Joanne was able to guide Carol in obtaining audiological evaluations, school placement and language development support. Angie was placed at a prestigious private school, though Angie has since moved into public school system.

A visit to Tegucigalpa in June 2009 assessed the market for DHH children integrated in schools, as well as hearing health and diagnostic support in the country. Joanne and Carol also visited Angie's home as well as Angie's family in Ojojona. Workshops to 13 SPED teachers at Angie's school was conducted, as well as several parent meetings throughout Tegucigalpa. The visit allowed Greater Voice to assess schools and needs of families. The realities of hearing health were learned by assessing seven different institutions: 3 schools, 2 hospitals, 1 related foundation, and a speech therapy business.

### **Current: AFRICA**

There urgent need in hearing healthcare and habilitation services throughout Africa is well known. Past support via email with parents in Ghana and Kenya provided support electronically, and currently PGV welcomes an invitation to deliver essential coaching strategies and training that effectively engages and empowers parents. Year long conversations with parents in Kenya, Uganda, and Nigeria appeal for PGV support. Discussion to deliver *Essential Programs to Coach and Empower Caregivers of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children* continues with several organizations.