

## PRESS RELEASE CAMPAIGN

### ***Pana-Expat “Blood For Everyone! Campaign***

National Hospitals, Non-Profit Organizations, and Foreign Residents work jointly to promote Campaign of Awareness. The National Blood Program, the Foundation Gotitas de Vida and Sangre (FUGSAVINI), el Hospital del Niño, Hospital Santo Tomas and various Expat Groups unite their efforts with the creation of the *Pana-Expat “Blood For Everyone! Campaign*, during our “Kick-off” running between October 31<sup>st</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup> 2010. Our main objective is to stimulate both Panamanians and Expats to unite as one in the effort of raising consciousness in regards to the constant need for all residents to actively participate in Voluntary Blood Donations, on a regular basis, on an Emergency basis, or both!

The *Pana-Expat “Blood For Everyone! Campaign* has 4 very important goals:

1) **DONATIONS:** Our blood banks are very low; and high season is just around the corner. *Yes, we are looking for immediate blood donations, but this campaign is about so much more!*

2) **AN OFFICIAL “EMERGENCY BLOOD DONOR CALL LIST”:** The official Emergency Blood Donor Call List will contain names, contact information, along with verified blood types of both foreign residents and Panamanians who, although *never* under obligation to donate, are willing to have the hospitals call in the case of an emergency need for his/her blood type. Registrants will *only* be called if the blood banks *do not have* the type of blood being called for, and in one of only three different types of emergencies:

- An accident, catastrophe, or similar situation.
- An urgently required operation.
- When the blood banks are getting dangerously low of the participants particular blood type.

All the participants will be able to indicate their preference of when to be called in regards to these three situations. Because of this, *it should be noted, this list is completely separate from the regular voluntary blood donor call list*, in that participants are **not** called for regular blood donations.

3) **EDUCATION:** In the past, many blood donation campaigns did not include promotion of educational activities, and thus resulted in a statistical stagnation in Panama’s voluntary blood donations, as well as continuation of the many myths and misunderstandings in regards to the donation of blood. Some seem to believe that if they donate blood, they might contract an illness or disease, and/or they will become weakened, and/or their bodies can’t replenish blood quickly enough to live a normal life, etc. There also seems to be a general misguided consensus that all hospitals have plenty of blood on hand at all times. *None of these beliefs are correct!* Our blood banks are very low, the need is very high, the procedure is very quick, painless, and most of all, completely safe and sterile. There is so much exciting information to share, and **EDUCATION** is the key to dispel these myths and misunderstandings. We must assist in this education in order to bring Panama’s blood bank supplies up to a stable level, and in turn, have a better chance to save lives.

And, most importantly:

4) **CONTINUATION:** It is important to note that October 18<sup>th</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> 2010 is only the beginning of the *Pana-Expat “Blood For Everyone! Campaign!* The need is constant; it is only through continuation of these efforts that we will be able strive for better understanding, consistency in the levels stored in our blood banks (blood can only be kept for a maximum of 35 days), and lessen the load presently carried by such a small number of volunteers.

It is for this reason, the *Pana-Expat “Blood For Everyone! Campaign* is also asking for everyone’s participation, including universities, companies, churches, and social organizations to add at least one activity to their 2011 calendar which will either offer educational activities or direct participation in the voluntary donation of blood. It is up to all of us to raise consciousness in regards to the necessity of voluntary blood donations as well as eliminate the myths and fears related to it.

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### *Pana-Expat* “**Blood For Everyone!**” Campaign

The non-profit organizations participating in this campaign are the **National Blood Program** (a Branch of the Ministry of Health) and **FUGSAVINI** (Foundation Gotitas de Sangre y Vida para los Niños). Corporations, organizations, and any other group wishing to donate to their cause, financially or through educational activities and/or wish to have a guest speaker at an event, may contact these organizations through FUGSAVINI.

**FUGSAVINI:** Bella Visa, Calle 32, Edificio Atalaya, Piso 1, Teléfono: 227-0718, Email: [fugsavini@gmail.com](mailto:fugsavini@gmail.com), Executive Director: Eulalia Romero.

The hospitals participating in this campaign are the Hospital del Niño (the children’s hospital), working jointly with Hospital Santo Tomas. Both hospitals will be receiving **donations** and/or additions to the **EMERGENCY BLOOD DONOR CALL LIST (also referred to as the EBDCL)** during regular Blood Clinic hours of operation (Monday through Friday of 7:00 a.m.-3: 00pm and Saturdays of 9:00 a.m. -12pm). Corporations, organizations, and any other group are welcome to make arrangements for medical technologists to come out to your place of business and/or event to receive multiple blood donations and/or multiple additions to the **Emergency Blood Donor Call List**. Please make contact via email:

**Blood Bank of Hospital Santo Tomas:** Lica. Esmeralda de Lam or Lic. Roy Cedeño [bancodesangre.hst@hotmail.com](mailto:bancodesangre.hst@hotmail.com)

**FUGSAVINI:** Executive Director: Eulalia Romero, [fugsavini@gmail.com](mailto:fugsavini@gmail.com)

Foreign resident and/or Panamanian owned businesses and websites such as Rincon Aleman, Bocas Breeze playacommunity, SpanishPanama, Dr. Charles Garcia, Jungle Land Explorers, and Newsroom Panama are already actively involved, ....and more are soon to be announced!

We have already received participation, and/or pledges of participation from multiple areas of Panama including Bocas del Toro, Coronado, Altos Del Maria, El Valle, David, and the city of Panama through foreign residents originally from countries which include Spain, Canada, Germany, United States, France, and England.....and more are signing up! All foreign residents are encouraged to join in the effort by either personally participating with a blood donation and/or registering themselves on the **Emergency Blood Donor Call List**. All those wishing to have their organization participate, are encouraged to present ideas for opportunities and events with their board of directors.

**GRATITUDE FOR PARTICIPATION:** As both a thank you and incentive, each person who either makes a blood donation or registers themselves onto the **Emergency Blood Donor Call List** will be receiving an entry form to win one of several Grand Prizes. The reverse side of this entry form is a coupon good for either a wine glass or a mug of beer with their meal purchase at Rincon Aleman (one of our Major Sponsors) located on Calle 51, Bella Vista. Grand Prizes will be drawn on December 31<sup>st</sup> at the New Year’s Eve Party in benefit of purchasing a Mobile Blood Unit Vehicle. This vehicle will be fully equipped and ready to receive blood donations, whether at an event for large corporations or organizations here in the city, or at community events in the interior of Panama.

We wish to thank the many sponsors who have already committed their support and/or provided thank you gifts or prizes for this noble cause; Restaurante Rincón Alemán, Dr. Charles Garcia, Jungle Land Explorers, Canal & Bay Tours, Expat Explorers, the Coronado Expat Group, The American Society, ....and those yet to be confirmed! Remember, together we can save many lives; one of which, at some unexpected point, might even be **our own**.

And, WE THANK YOU **FOR YOUR SUPPORT**,

The *Pana-Expat* “**Blood For Everyone!**” Campaign