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**MARK E. HELBRAUN, M.D., AND EVANGELINE B. EPPER, R.N.
LEAD SURGICAL MISSIONS OF PEACE AND
MEDICAL RELIEF TO THOSE IN NEED**

More than 5,500 miles away from Hackensack University Medical Center (HUMC) in Nigeria, there is a general lack: a lack of resources for proper healthcare; a lack of money; a lack of the newest medical equipment; a lack of attention; a lack of education; and a lack of organization. But thanks to people like Mark Helbraun, M.D., chief of Colon and Rectal Surgery, and Evan Epper, R.N., both of HUMC, and the Physicians For Peace (PFP) organization, one thing Nigeria seemingly no longer lacks is people willing and able to help.

PFP is a non-profit, medical education organization headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia. Since 1989, it has provided more than 350 medical education missions in more than 50 countries to healthcare professionals and their patients in geographic areas of profound need and scarce resources. PFP is composed of volunteer surgeons and nurses, accepting these missions on their own vacation days from work and sometimes paying their own travel expenses.

Dr. Helbraun and Ms. Epper's dedication and commitment to providing quality

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care extends beyond their HUMC professions and into their days off, and of course, to different countries. They have been involved with PFP for the last four years, and in that time have served several third world countries by helping them with much-needed surgeries within their populations. Most recently, they traveled to Kaduna State in Nigeria, from June 25 – July 6, and helped provide surgeries for women suffering with vesicovaginal (VVF) and rectovaginal (RVF) fistula condition.

“Even if we only managed to improve a few of these girls' lives you felt you had lit a tiny lamp in a dark corner of that society. The good feelings you leave behind pale in comparison to those that you bring home with you,” remarked Dr. Helbraun.

“The medical mission was a life-changing experience, and something I wish everybody could have the chance to do,” said Ms. Epper. “It gave me the opportunity to meet an extraordinary group of people, who despite the differences in color, race, and religion came together as one to help bring hope to people in third world countries.”

In early October, Ms. Epper continued her philanthropic mission by traveling to Eritrea, Africa, and she has already been asked to partake in a mission to Vietnam in future months. The focus has been and will continue to be on VVF and RVF conditions, while also providing training in additional specialty areas as requested by health officials and medical facilities in those countries.

Dr. Helbraun and Ms. Epper have undoubtedly established themselves as ambassadors of goodwill representing HUMC around the world – saving and improving the lives of countless individuals in need.

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About Hackensack University Medical Center

HealthGrades® named HUMC as one of America's 50 Best Hospitals for 2007 and 2008. This designation recognizes hospitals that have demonstrated superior clinical quality over a seven-year time period, based upon an analysis of more than 75 million Medicare patient records from 1999-2006. These hospitals have achieved better survival rates and lower complication rates across dozens of medical procedures and diagnoses, from cardiac care to orthopedic surgery, consistently ranking among the top five percent in the nation for overall clinical outcomes. HUMC is the only healthcare facility in New Jersey, New York, and New England to be named one of America's 50 Best Hospitals, for two years in a row. For more information, please visit the medical center's website at www.humc.com.

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Photo Caption 1: Evangeline Epper, R.N. and Mark Helbraun, M.D., on their surgical mission to Nigeria in the summer of 2008.

Photo Caption 2: Evangeline Epper, R.N. and a smiling patient whom she aided on her most recent mission to Eritrea, Africa.