

A Short History of One Family International (OFI)

OFI was begun on a porch in Fiji in 1990, where Joseph Patrick (Pat) Winkley grieved his wife's early death at 47 years of age. Pat's oldest sibling, Bill Winkley, was living in Fiji and had invited Pat to come, hang out and think about his future.

Pat had already built an extensive history of charitable works, providing services to people in nursing homes and mental hospitals and to homeless individuals in the Austin, Texas, area, where Pat was born and had lived most of his life.

When asked by Bill as they sat together on that porch in Fiji, "What human need most matters to you," Pat immediately responded "Water, safe, potable, accessible water for people without. Water is life!" And thus, OFI was begun.

When he returned to Austin later that year, he, his brother-in-law, Ray Simpson, and an elderly West Texas child welfare worker, Teda Neill, crossed the Rio Grande in a boat near Ojinaga, Mexico, and visited a program for homeless street children. Children too have been a lifelong concern for Pat and a relationship of many years was begun with Casa Hogar of Ojinaga. Today the program is well resourced, has a non-profit based in West Texas that provided regular support and serves dozens of children at any given time.

But it is the water projects that really underscore Pat's commitment and generosity. A very successful businessman, Pat has donated and raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to water projects around the world, including Africa, Asia, Mexico, and, as the result of a partnership between Haiti Mission, Inc., and OFI, in Haiti.

Beneficiaries have included, among others, the Tarahumara Indians of Northern Mexico, Bangladeshis, S. Africans, Tanzanians, Ugandans, Ghanaians, Papua New Guineans, Fijians, and, of course, Haitians.

In the early 2000s, Bill Winkley and Lloyd Duplantis met in Thibodaux, Louisiana. As flounder and leader of Haiti

Mission, Inc. (HMI), Lloyd and his wife Faie had built a long and successful history of success in drilling wells and providing other vital services in Haiti. They immediately struck up a friendship based on the similarity of the work of HMI and OFI.

Soon Bill introduced Lloyd to Pat and thus began the partnership between the two agencies and the friendship and confidence between the two leaders.

Today, OFI's work is accomplished exclusively through the good works of HMI. Basically, Lloyd identifies projects that fit the OFI mission and proposes them to Pat. If Pat can secure the needed resources, OFI assumes financial responsibility for the project, while HMI does all of the organizing, oversight, equipping, and logistics to bring another well into fruition and thus improve the lives of those developing world beneficiaries.

Pat recently commented. "Finding HMI, Lloyd and Faie was a gift from God. With their background, commitment, philosophy and amazing ability to make things happen, HMI has ensured the continued work of OFI in bring water to those in need. I deeply appreciate Lloyd and Faie and the HMI board and volunteers. Lloyd's ability to lead never ceases to amaze me. A salute and big thank you to my friend and colleague, Lloyd Duplantis.