



NOMMS NEWS

Volunteer Profile | Container Shipments

[VOLUNTEER](#)

[DONATE](#)

Warehouse Hours

Our warehouse in Elmwood Industrial Park is staffed from 9 AM until 1 PM every Wednesday and Saturday, except for holidays. We accept medical supplies from anyone. Medicines must be in sealed containers. We offer medical equipment, such as crutches or walkers to anyone. Best to call ahead to confirm we have what you need. Our number is 504-392-1934. We're at 625 Distributor's Row.



Volunteer Profile

Venture into the heart of our warehouse, and you will encounter a small group of dedicated volunteers who diligently manage NOMMS equipment and supplies. I have previously highlighted a few of these volunteers, and I am pleased to introduce Kathy Lopez.

Continued On Page 3

Container Shipments

The New Orleans Medical Mission Services encompasses a diverse range of operations. While medical missions are the most prominent aspect, the organization operates a 9,000 square foot warehouse in Elmwood that is actively engaged throughout the year. The warehouse's primary functions are to receive and store donations of medical equipment and supplies, and to distribute these resources to the hospitals we support, primarily in Latin America. Additionally, we extend our services to our local community by providing free supplies and equipment to those in need.

Typically, medical professionals and hospitals must retire outdated equipment when newer models become available. Often, these retired models continue to function effectively. Medical supplies frequently have expiration dates that must be adhered to in U.S. hospitals. These supplies can often be utilized in underserved communities. Surgical packs that have not been utilized are frequently discarded. We are pleased to accept these items for our recipients. Occasionally, we receive highly specialized equipment, such as hemodialysis machines, phacoemulsification systems (for cataract removal), anesthesia machines, and electric hospital beds, to name a few. In some instances, we may need to repair the equipment if it is not operational, which can be a technical challenge for sophisticated electronics.

Our local residents are cordially invited to visit our warehouse if they require patient supplies or equipment, such as wheelchairs, lifts, hospital beds, and so on. Additionally, we will prepare supplies and equipment for our medical missions, which typically occur two or three times a year. However, the majority of these supplies will be donated to hospitals in various locations. Over the years donations have gone to the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Tanzania, Ghana,

Continued On Page 2

Container Shipments

Ecuador, Chile, and the Philippines. We will pack a 40-foot container and dispatch it to our recipients, undertaking this process approximately five or six times annually.

A shipment costs anywhere from \$3,000 to \$4,500, depending on the destination. An equal cost will be incurred in the paperwork and customs processing. Our volunteers work with charitable organizations or even some individuals in the receiving country who can underwrite the shipment cost. NOMMS will sometimes contribute, but our resources are limited. Typically for this expenditure the recipient is receiving a shipment often worth 200 to 300 thousands of dollars. We recently sent two phacoemulsification machines which cost about \$250,000 each when new. Examples of other costly equipment we've donated include hemodialysis machines, anesthesia monitoring units, and a pair of optical coherence tomography imagers for diagnosing retina issues.

For each container we must produce a manifest which lists every single item in the container. Each container will be subject to embarkation inspection by the customs authorities of the recipient's country. These manifests are painstakingly created by one of our volunteers, and can include 15 to 20 pages. The list is remarkably detailed including such entries as; Central Catheter Kit, X-Ray Cassette Drape, CPAP Machine, Patient Gowns, and more! As these items are loaded onto the container they are checked by a volunteer. Any discrepancies between the manifest and the actual contents of the container can cause the whole container to be rejected by customs.

A recent example of the scope of our donations to our recipients, a nursing home company was liquidating and they offered NOMMS over 200



hospital beds. We could not take that many beds into our warehouse, so instead we had containers delivered to the various nursing homes and our volunteers loaded them "on-site". The containers were then shipped to several of our supported hospitals. One recipient, in Tanzania, could only use non-electric beds, so we pulled all of the mechanical beds in the donation. Those went to an orphanage for handicapped children. Another recipient in the Dominican Republic took the electric beds.

A great deal of coordination occurs for each shipment. We start by asking the recipients what do they need. From that list we work through our inventory and designate items for that shipment. Sometimes, for unique or unusual items, we will contact our donors and suppliers. The process is labor intensive. Small items are packed into cardboard boxes, which are then stacked on a wood pallet. The pallet is then wrapped and sealed in plastic. Larger items must be secured with zip ties and padding if the equipment is delicate. The items are then carefully loading into the container, with the knowledge that items on an oceangoing vessel may be tossed around.

After all is said and done, our efforts are amply rewarded by seeing the reception our containers receive at their destinations. A hospital that once had only cots for their patients now have hospital beds.



Continued On Page 3

Container Shipments

When the containers arrive they are inspected by the recipient's customs. Once released the recipients must collect and transport the equipment and supplies. This can often be a daunting task as these photos show.



Volunteer Profile



Kathy Lopez is a registered nurse, a native of New Orleans, and has been an integral member of NOMMS for approximately two and a half years. Her extensive medical background includes obtaining her nursing degree from Touro Infirmary, followed by a bachelor's degree in nursing from Loyola University. She further pursued a master's degree in education from Loyola and, most recently, a doctor's degree in healthcare education.

Continued Page 4

Visit our web site for updates, photos, videos and information about NOMMS!
WWW.NOMMS.ORG

NOMMS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

R. Daniel Jacob, MD
 Chairman of the Board,
 President

Thomas Kennedy, MD
 Vice-President, Medical
 Director

Ralph Senner
 Chief Executive Officer

Jeanne Driscoll
 CPA

Dana Dallas Atchison, Esq.

Kevin Ericksen

Tejas Godiwala, MD

Jack Dardis, CFP

Jennifer Esler

Dan Milham

Mark Dawson

Dominic Gargiulo, IV, DO

David E. Richards CPA

Jessica Shulman

Msgr. Andrew Taormina
 Chaplin

Volunteer Profile

Throughout her nursing career, Kathy has specialized in infection control, managing patients with contagious illnesses. Her expertise extended beyond patient care, encompassing the mechanisms of contagion. In later years, she transitioned into teaching infection control, starting at Touro and subsequently working at Children’s Hospital, East Jefferson Hospital, and finally, upon the opening of University Hospital.

At NOMMS, Kathy oversees Community Services, inviting our local community to utilize our resources for patient aids and sick room supplies. Our inventory encompasses a wide range of items, including wheelchairs, crutches, commodes, hospital beds, orthopedic equipment, and more. We diligently collect these supplies and equipment from our generous donors, and Kathy meticulously inspects each item. Items are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected as necessary and then inventoried and stored. To ensure that we meet the specific needs of our community, we kindly request that individuals seeking supplies or equipment contact us in advance to confirm availability. Often, the type of equipment required depends on the diagnosis, and Kathy’s expertise proves invaluable in this regard.

Community involvement has been steadily increasing over years. For the first quarter of this year, approximately 60 individuals visited our warehouse and received supplies. This figure has surged to 130 in October and November of the same year, and we have yet to tally December. Kathy diligently monitors the monetary value of the supplies provided to our community, and the total amount exceeds \$150,000 this year. Additionally, we maintain strong relationships with several local charities, including veterinary services. Prominent among them are **Split Second Foundation** and **Team Gleason**. Veterinary services are often permitted to utilize expired supplies that are not suitable for human consumption.

Kathy is highly motivated to enhance our community services and can point to substantial growth opportunities. A recent example is the establishment of a facility by the Salvation Army near Ochsner Baptist to provide temporary housing for

patients upon discharge. Some patients may not be eligible for skilled nursing facilities but are not recovered enough to care for themselves. This facility offers them additional time for recovery. We recently donated a substantial number of hospital beds and furniture to their facility. We also maintain strong relationships with Ochsner and LCMC social services, which refer to us patients and families seeking equipment and supplies. Furthermore, positive word-of-mouth referrals contribute to the expansion of our services. This discussion prompts us to consider the future growth prospects of NOMMS.

Join us for a day of golf and friendship.

Fred Mikill Memorial Golf Tournament

BankPlus

Friday May 9, 2025

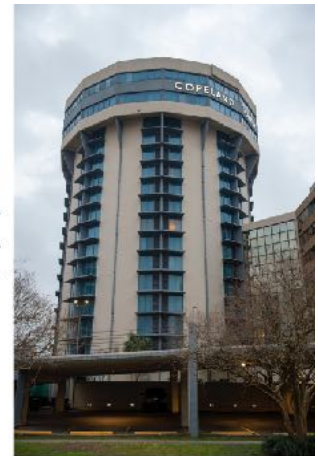


2025 Mission Possible Gala

**Saturday,
October 18, 2025**

Join us in our new venue for our annual Mission Possible Gala. There will be food, silent and live auction, and music to celebrate NOMMS!

Copeland Tower has ample parking for our local guests and rooms for our traveling visitors.



New Orleans Medical Mission Services, Inc.
(504) 392-1934
P.O. Box 6249
New Orleans, LA 70174

NOMMS Warehouse
625 Distributors Row
Harahan, LA 70123
NOMMS Editor
jsimon@nomms.org

www.nomms.org