

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH CARE OUTSIDE SANTO DOMINGO - A PLEA FOR PARTICIPATION

Guaricano, a sprawling suburb outside of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic is home to 200,000 people, many new immigrants from rural areas. People live in homes they build themselves, often from makeshift materials. Contaminated water is carried home in buckets every day and drunk by everyone. Electricity is sporadic at best. Most live off an informal economy, while other travel 30 Km to town.

FEDOPO (Federation of Dominican Popular Organizations) is a citizens group working on issues of community development, social service and social justice, having networks of members throughout Guaricano's many neighborhoods. The FEDOPO clinic is located on the only paved road, a half finished two story building that nevertheless serves as office for two public health doctors. They are the only primary care doctors in the area.

In early February 1999, Mr. William Castillo, FEDOPO Director, and Dr. Raimundo Diaz, Medical Director were in Cleveland presenting to students at Case WRU, Cleveland State, and Lorain Community College about their work with the Clinic. Dr. Diaz noted that parasitic disease, tuberculosis, untreated hypertension, diabetes, and diarrheal disease among infants are major sources of morbidity. I have joined up with Dr. Diaz and hope to raise funds to bring water and better electricity to the clinic. As well, I am developing an elective for second year and possibly fourth year students to share in the development of primary care services in this poor but fascinating town.

Our initial goal will be to participate in the improvement of the clinic itself and to develop patient education programs. A door to door survey of health status may be added.

I am looking for physicians and other health professionals to help in this project, and welcome hearing from you.

Doug Van Auken, MD  
CWRU Dept. of Family Practice  
MetroHealth/McCafferty Family Practice  
4242 Lorain Avenue  
Cleveland, Ohio

216-651-1199 McCafferty Family Practice