

Pharma staff renovate services for the Simon community and put the foot to the pedal to raise money for Haiti earthquake survivors

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Volunteers from Novartis Pharma swapped their office attire for paint-flecked overalls and cycling shorts to renovate, decorate and fundraise for two special organisations recently, helping transform lives both here and abroad. A group of thirty staff members from the company's headquarters in Dublin put nearly 400 work hours into projects for the Dublin Simon Community and the Cycle4Haiti fundraiser between April and May 2013.

Novartis Ireland has taken part in the global organisation's Community Partnership day since 1997, and for the past two years has partnered with the Dublin Simon Community to help them with projects and services in the Dublin area. This year the group of eager volunteers were given the chance to help the Simon Community refurbish and renovate their tenant premises at Hazelwood House and their Dorest street service.

Over three days, the group helped to clean, decorate, build furniture and improve the outdoor area and gardens, improving the premises and living conditions for the tenants who use the vital services that the Simon Community provide.

Speaking about Novartis participation, and her own personal experience of volunteering, Loretto Callaghan, Managing Director, Novartis Ireland said, "Novartis Ireland has been involved in the Community Partnership Day for the past 16 years, and we feel it is very important to give our time and support to society in a practical way. We are very lucky to have the opportunity to partner with Dublin Simon Community on projects such as this renovation and to gain a better understanding o the crucial services they provide."



In addition, eight members of the Novartis Dublin staff took part in the 2013 fundraiser Cycle4Haiti and cycled almost 220KM from Dublin to Galway, raising over €5,000 for the charity. The cycle-enthusiasts set off from Dublin on Saturday 4th of May, with a stop-over in Athlone, and sped through the finish line in Galway the following day. This is the second year volunteers from Novartis took part and they have raised €11,000 in total so far.

When the devastating earthquake disaster occurred in Haiti in 2010, Novartis joined the urgent relief efforts by offering assistance with its global healthcare resources. Novartis continues to support the people of Haiti by donating medicine, and through local fundraising efforts such as Ireland's Cycle4Haiti.

"We feel it is an important aspect of our role as a healthcare provider to support communications on both a local and global level. The cycle was hard work, but we thoroughly enjoyed it and were delighted to raise money which will go towards helping those in Haiti to rebuild their lives," Ms Callaghan continued.

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