

## **Alliance for Progress Helping our Own Status Report**

As of April 6, 2009

### ***Genovevo Ramirez***

#### *Background*

Genovevo Ramirez has worked for King of Texas Roofing since 2003. He is a dedicated, hardworking man that has had multiple devastating crises hit his family in recent years. He has two young children. At the age of 5 his son was diagnosed with epilepsy. Approximately two months after that Mrs. Ramirez became ill and eventually became paralyzed from the waist down. She went into the hospital and began undergoing hundreds of tests to determine the cause of the paralysis. Three weeks later she received the diagnosis of Gullian-Barre syndrome, a devastating neurological disease. The next day she received the news that she had cancer of the spine. She immediately began undergoing radiation therapy.

The Ramirez family has no insurance. The family tried to get his mother the necessary Visa so she could come to the U.S. and help with household responsibilities, including taking care of the two young children. Their request was denied.

King of Texas gave Mr. Ramirez raises to help compensate for his financial burdens. However, the medical bills, rehabilitation and home care expenses and medical equipment costs began building up. His immediate need initially was for financial assistance with daycare expenses.

The Alliance approved \$14,000 in funding to be used for childcare expenses and anticipated medical costs.

Shortly after receiving the Alliance funds, Mrs. Ramirez learned she would need chemotherapy treatments at an estimated cost of \$50,000. The hospital advised the family that they had to come up with a \$15,000 deposit before the treatments could begin. After paying for childcare expenses and a motorized chair for Mrs. Ramirez, there was a balance of \$12,338.20 left from the Alliance funds. This remaining amount was sent to the hospital along with contributions from King of Texas so the \$15,000 deposit could be met. Mrs. Ramirez's treatments began in early January.

After the \$15,000 deposit was paid to the hospital, \$35,000 remains as the balance due for the chemotherapy treatments. A request for an additional \$15,000 to be applied to this expense was made at the October, 2008 Alliance Board of Trustees meeting. The request was approved.

#### *Status*

As of March 9, 2009 Mr. Ramirez reported that his wife is receiving chemotherapy treatments every two weeks. They are ongoing until the deposit runs out.

On March 13, 2009 Mr. Ramirez reported that Mrs. Ramirez is actually improving dramatically as a result of the treatments and therapy. She is now able to get out of bed and out of chairs without assistance. The family is very happy and pleased with her progress and very much appreciates the financial assistance provided by the Alliance.

## ***Bobby Koder***

### *Background*

Bobby and Joanie Koder's lives took a dramatic turn with the birth of their son, Robert Lowell Koder IV (Robby), weighing only 1 pound, 11 ounces. Robby was delivered 12 weeks early during an emergency cesarean section. Shortly after his birth, Joanie went into complete liver failure. She was rushed by helicopter to Tampa General Hospital. For reasons unknown, her liver had failed and doctors said a transplant was the only option. Two days later her kidneys and lungs also shut down and Joanie was placed on dialysis and a ventilator. Two more days went by and her doctors induced hypothermia to preserve her organs as they waited for a liver. More bad news followed when Joanie's brain began to swell. After two more days, Joanie went through what her mother described as a "total miracle." – her liver started working just enough to keep her alive and the brain swelling went down. The progress continued for days. Then, they found a donor and on March 11 Joanie received a new liver. However, complications set in, tests were done and the results showed that Joanie had no brain activity. Then, low and behold, a few days later new tests were done and showed that her brain was active and her liver improving.

It was an emotional roller coaster for Bobby Koder. He was at his wife's side in Tampa while his son remained more than two hours away at the Fort Myers Hospital. "Seeing her improvements have been helpful to just keep going," Bobby Koder said. "The thing that's kept me going through all of this is seeing how strong Joanie is and all that she has to live for." "Holding him (Robby) for the first time was one of the great moments I will remember for the rest of my life. I cannot wait for the day Joanie is able to hold him; that will be absolutely amazing."

### *Status*

Bobby Koder's aunt writes, "I just got back from Fort Myers. We celebrated Robby's first birthday. Oh, what a wonderful day! Robby is on track for his "corrected" age of nine months – since he was three months premature. There does not seem to be any signs of cerebral palsy. His vision and hearing testing went great. At birth he weighted 1 pound 11 ounces – now he is almost 20 pounds. He is our miracle baby!

Joanie has been in the hospital twice since last fall. It has now been determined that she will need a kidney transplant. She has not been put on the list yet because her kidneys are working at about 30 percent. The liver numbers are great – thank the Lord! She goes to physical therapy two or three times per week. She is getting stronger but is still unable to care for the baby without help."

The \$15,000 in Alliance funds, approved last fall, is being given to the Koder family in three installments. The funds are being used for medical bills, rehabilitation and home care expenses and medical equipment costs for Joanie and Robby.