



### International Volunteer Day 2001

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*To inaugurate the International Volunteers Year, the United Nations Organization, through its Information Centre in the Republic of Panamá, distinguished a group of Panamanians that, in different areas of human interest, are doing a great job in benefit of the Panamanian society.*

*This homage took place at the residence of the Administrator of the Panama Canal on June 27, 2001, and the host was the Panamanian NGO "Cancer Foundation", through its President, Mrs. Martha Stella de Vallarino and the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations System in Panamá, Mrs. Elizabeth Fong.*

*The persons receiving recognition from the United Nations are individuals of an unquestionable altruistic course in our medium. Such is the case of Monsignor Rómulo Emiliani, who has been the driving force of important associations such as the Darién Children's Foundation, Offer a Home, and Light and Life. Mrs. Mary Morgan of the Mary Arias Foundation, dedicated to the rehabilitation of children with cerebral paralysis, among others.*

*The funds that were obtained from this activity were used for the purchase of an Image Analysis System for Bone Marrow Transplants, at a cost of \$15,000 and donated to the Institute of Oncology.*

*To commemorate the Year, the Government of Panamá appointed the Director General of the National Civil Protection System, Mr. Arturo Alvarado De Icaza as the National Committee Coordinator, comprised of non-governmental organizations, private enterprise, universities and individuals who respect and value volunteer service. This National Committee will continue working during the present year, and as long as necessary, with the purpose of promoting volunteer service and to improve the conditions of volunteers in the country.*

*For International Volunteers Day, December 5, 2001, the United Nations Information Centre along with the Director General of the National Civil Protection System, paid homage to acknowledge and present a Medal of Honor for Courage to the Volunteer Corps of the Children's Hospital represented by Marta Alvarez, the first lady volunteer at that hospital with 38 years of service, and Julia Alguero who started volunteer service at the hospital. The activity included awarding citations to the volunteers of the United Nations System in Panama, and awarding the Medal of Honor for Courage to journalist Carlos Rowe who rescued a 6 year old boy from a stream in Pedregal, saving him from drowning.*

*All these events were widely covered by the local communications media, considering that it was the first time in the Republic of Panamá that these recognitions were carried out.*

*The activities of the year closed highlighting the special recognition given by the Institute of Oncology to the President of the Cancer Foundation, Martha Stella Clement de Vallarino, for her untiring efforts to improve the quality of life of cancer patients in Panamá. At this event, the United Nations Organization through its Resident Coordinator, Elizabeth Fong, delivered a plaque with the logos of the UNV and the UNO.*