



American Airlines has more than 80,000 employees around the globe, and many are volunteering in their communities. But others, like Penny Rambacher, stray well beyond their neighborhoods as they seek to improve the lives of others. Rambacher, a flight attendant based in Miami, is the founder of Miracles in Action, a nonprofit charity whose mission is to help the disadvantaged and impoverished help themselves. She first became involved in humanitarian work after witnessing extreme poverty during layovers in several Latin American cities. “When I saw children living in a garbage dump, I knew I had to do something,” Rambacher says.

Over the past seven years, she and her colleagues have made numerous visits to Central and South America, where they fund the building of schools, libraries, and water systems, partnering with villagers who provide the labor. Through the support of donors and sponsors, they also deliver stoves, wheelchairs, and school supplies, and establish vocational workshops in sewing, carpentry, and handi-crafts. A new gardening project helps mothers and children learn how to grow vegetables and improve nutrition.

The goal is to provide help that is not merely temporary in nature but that actually changes lives. “It takes so little to make a difference in a place where a school can be built for a few thousand dollars,” says Rambacher. “Traveling from areas of relative wealth to the desperate poverty of children living and begging in the streets changes you. You become a more grateful, happy person.” She also notes, “I have learned to be generous. The moments when I have given to someone else and made a sustainable difference in their life have been the most rewarding and have produced the greatest memories.” To learn more about Miracles in Action, visit www.miraclesinaction.org.