

## Triple Quest partnership begins distribution of water filters

By Matt Vande Bunte  
March 23, 2010

GRAND RAPIDS -- A new for-profit venture headed by the daughter of Cascade Engineering CEO Fred Keller aims to deliver 1,000 locally produced water filters to Haiti.

It's part of a "social business model" Christina Keller believes could bring aid to more than 2 million people per year.

That's roughly the number of annual deaths worldwide caused by waterborne diseases, a market potential Triple Quest highlighted Monday in honor of U.N. World Water Day.

"We have the ability right here in West Michigan to make a large impact if those (filters) can get to the people who are dying," said Christina Keller.

She is the launch leader for Triple Quest's distribution of the HydrAid BioSand filter.

Triple Quest is the name of a new partnership between Cascade Engineering and Windquest Group, a private investment fund led by former gubernatorial candidate Dick DeVos. The company bought the rights to the filter from International Aid, the Spring Lake-based nonprofit that had distributed the Cascade-made devices until it suffered financial problems last year.

Keller said Cascade has annual capacity to make 250,000 of the 8-pound plastic bins that by gravity run 75 gallons of water per day through cleansing layers of sand and microscopic critters. Several thousand filters already are providing clean water in the Dominican Republic, Honduras and Ghana.

Triple Quest announced Monday it is partnering with a regional chapter of Rotary International that's raising money for the filters, which cost about \$100 each to make and ship. A few hundred units were delivered this month through the U.S. Navy's Project Handclasp.

Rotary's Thirsting to Serve project also is holding a sixth annual conference Saturday at Calvin College to explore more partnerships related to clean water distribution.

"We're committed initially to 1,000 water filters (in Haiti)," said Jim Van Dyke, a Grand Haven Rotarian and president of Thirsting to Serve.

"We need to find a sustainable process to be able to keep this moving forward. (Triple Quest's involvement) makes it available to organizations like ours, churches, schools and other humanitarian people."

Keller said Triple Quest aspires to sell the filters to many non-governmental organizations.

"We're not going to be associated with any one nonprofit," she said. "(The filter) really is a solution that people are more and more adopting as a long-term solution.

"The key aspect of the filter is its longevity. In 10-plus years you could still be using it.



### IF YOU GO

#### Water for the World

**What:** Sixth annual Thirsting to Serve clean water conference  
**Who:** Activists from Rotary International, Pure Water for the World, U.S. Agency for International Development and other organizations  
**When:** 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Saturday  
**Where:** Calvin College's Prince Conference Center  
**Cost:** \$75, or \$20 for students  
**Web:** Register online at [thirstingtoserve.org](http://thirstingtoserve.org)