

Welcome to the first 2026 edition of *Gratitude in Action*, our monthly newsletter. As we face down another year of deepening humanitarian crises, Aurora remains focused on highlighting the “human” in humanitarian and drawing out the humanitarian in each and every one of us. Join me as we dig into how that comes to life.

## The “Human” in Humanitarian...

The second Aurora Prize Laureate, **Dr. Tom Catena**, operates Mother of Mercy Hospital in Sudan’s Nuba Mountains, one of the few health facilities still functioning in the country. [It is the only provider of cancer care](#) for the region and much of Sudan.



Work like Dr. Catena’s inspired the [Aurora Research Grants](#). Our newest program surfaces the stories of [grassroots humanitarians](#) working in the most challenging arenas, among them Sudan, Gaza and Ukraine. There, as traditional aid pulls back and funding shrinks, local actors bear the burden of care for their communities. But far from driving despair, these conditions forge resilient, creative humanitarians. [Aurora Research Grants](#) advance their work, putting them in contention for the [\\$1M Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity](#). Our partners include Brown University, Duke University, UCLA, and more.

We invite you to join the effort! Program applications are reviewed on a rolling basis and places are limited.

**APPLY NOW**

and

**LEARN MORE**

## ...And the Humanitarian in Each of Us

You’ll find Aurora in great company this year, including at the [Munich Security Conference](#) in February and the [Skoll World Forum](#) in April. We’re on a mission to reclaim “humanitarian” as a shared identity and responsibility, spreading the stories of Aurora humanitarians to inspire would-be activists in their daily lives.



Let us know if you’ll be about—we’d love to see you on the road!



Another effort to expand the global pool of humanitarians is [Young Aurora](#), a competition among students to develop solutions to local humanitarian issues. We are proud to partner with United World Colleges for a ninth year of educating and learning from emerging leaders, each of whom carries a piece of Aurora’s humanitarian spirit into the future.

Discover this year’s finalists and the ideas they are bringing to life [here](#).

Meet the next generation of changemakers and learn about their fresh perspectives at a LIVE Young Aurora event on **Thursday, February 5, 2026, at 11:00 am ET.**

**REGISTER**



With warm regards,

**Armine Afeyan**  
CEO, Aurora Humanitarian Initiative

## Our Work Depends on You!

Your support enables us to continue to expand our impact. Every gift we receive strengthens our support for grassroots humanitarians and deepens our commitment to locally led action and trust-based funding.



**DONATE TODAY**

## In Case You Missed It: Aurora in the News

- Aurora Laureate **Tom Catena** [on his life-saving work in one of the world’s most severe humanitarian crises](#) and in [an ABC News report offering an on-the-ground view of what it takes to keep hospitals running in Sudan today](#)
- **Don Cheadle** and Aurora Prize Selection Committee member **John Prendergast** on [how in Sudan’s darkest moment, frontline humanitarians are keeping communities alive](#)
- Aurora Co-Founder **Noubar Afeyan** on [why the rise of “inhumanitarianism” makes supporting grassroots responders more urgent than ever](#)