

# OUTREACH TO HAITI

## *ESPWA, our newsletter of HOPE*



HELPING HAITIANS HELP HAITIANS

### *Moving Forward Despite the Challenges*

by Conor Brooks, Board Chair

If you've followed any of the news in Haiti over the last several months, you've likely seen a glimpse of the deep struggle our Haitian brothers and sisters are experiencing. It is a stark reality. Violence, demonstrations and kidnappings roil the cities. Inflation and shortages limit the availability of food and fuel and make day to day life incredibly challenging.

It is at a moment exactly like this – when Haitian circumstances are so astonishingly difficult – that it might be easy to despair, to throw our hands up and ask, “Why?”

Our Haitian staff could have done just this. But they did not.

It is at a moment exactly like this, that I'm reminded of the dedication of our staff and the resilience of the people we serve. Most days our staff overcomes these challenges and arrives at our facility to greet the people we serve who somehow do the same. Our scholarship students manage to get to schools. Our clinic staff buys needed food, medication and laboratory supplies in advance when these are available so that our critical services are not interrupted. Our staff continues to work with the various parishes served by our Twinning program so that people in those parishes also receive needed services and support in Port-Au-Prince and beyond.

This is what true perseverance and blessed work look like. There is poverty, and yet there is triumphant

*Continued on page 2*



The Norwich Outreach Center houses the clinic, administrative offices, a computer lab and modest guest rooms for international volunteers who come to share in our mission. There is a chapel where all can gather for liturgy and prayer.

### *Hope Rises — The Norwich Outreach Center*

by Sue Petruzzi, Board Member

Late afternoon on January 12, 2010, we learned that a major earthquake had hit Port-au-Prince. We were shocked to see how badly it was devastated. We were glued to CNN over the next several days while we tried desperately to contact the staff in Haiti. Finally after 3 days of worry we heard from the Director of Operations in Haiti that while the building in Christ Roi had pancaked, all the staff and guests were accounted for and safe. We were overjoyed that we had experienced no loss of life, but the grim reality of what we were facing set in.

It was quite a few weeks before we were able to see the devastation for ourselves. What we saw when we arrived was that the Christ Roi neighborhood was mostly piles of rubble and greyness and bleakness everywhere. A makeshift plywood clinic and dormitory had been built to serve patients and accommodate visiting medical professionals and

Board members. We hugged and cried with our employees – no words or common language necessary. The one bright spot was some children in our school program had been asked to visit so we could give them some drawings and notes made by children here in Connecticut. I often describe it as my “Wizard of Oz” moment when Dorothy opens the door after landing in OZ – everything went from black and white to color! The children were dressed in their best colorful clothes and greeted us with hugs and smiles.

It was a bittersweet moment. The building which had stood as a beacon of hope in the neighborhood for many years was now gone and there would be much work to do.

But now, much of that work is completed and thanks to the generosity of many reading this, we go from mourning to resurrection with the gift of a new building. It is a gift from you to Outreach and to the people whom we serve.

*Continued on page 3*

# Exciting News for the Sr. Ann Weller Clinic

In his public ministry Jesus taught his disciples by word and example.

The gospels recount stories of Jesus healing the sick, feeding the hungry, curing blindness and leprosy all with a compassionate hand and a caring heart. He reminds us that doing for others is doing for Him. Our mission to the neighborhood of Christ Roi is based on this gospel calling. Nowhere is that more apparent than in the Sr. Ann Weller Clinic.

The need for medical care and nutritional aid is seemingly endless in Christ Roi. Our staff continues to identify needs for doing more for the neighborhood.

Currently the clinic staff sees 6,000 patients a year and are known for their skilled and compassionate care. Our Nutrition Program brings malnourished children back to health. The program for expectant mothers does the same for them and provides prenatal and postnatal care increasing the likelihood that their newborn children will be healthy. Our laboratory assists the doctors with diagnostics and our pharmacy dispenses needed medications. Our three health agents walk the neighborhood visiting people in their homes, administering vaccines and referring people to the clinic when needed.

We want to do more and now there has been some good news. Earlier this year we received much needed help in

## Moving forward

*Continued from page 1*

hope. There is pain, and yet there is tremendous faith. There is struggle, and yet there is God, working through all of us, to show beauty.

This newsletter focuses on some accomplishments of our staff, our board and the people who benefit from your generosity. We continue to need you to partner with us. I am endlessly inspired by you and those with whom I work. And I await the glorious results of so much wonderful work done so well.



*Our OB-GYN Dr. Deus provides prenatal and postnatal care to expectant mothers.*



*Our lab tech Jean-Marie Garry assists doctors with diagnostics.*

the form of 2 three-year grants which will allow us to expand our reach and provide new services. Grants from the Tom and Julie Wood Family Foundation and the Leep Family Foundation will allow us to increase the number of patients in each of our nutrition programs by 20 percent.

See "New Clinic Plans" below to learn what else these grants will provide over the next three years.



*Health agents Fabiola and Telemaque discuss home visits with Beatrice, our pharmacy tech.*

## New Clinic Plans

- An additional pediatrician
- New diagnostic equipment including an ultrasound.
- Cervical cancer screening program
- Trauma and stress management services.
- Dental Program
- Technology to assist patient record keeping and data management



# A Blessing is Never Lost

A substantial part of what Outreach to Haiti does is to invest in the education of children in our neighborhood. There is very little public education in Haiti where only about 2 out of every 100 children graduates from secondary school! This is a sobering statistic indeed. Although not all of our students reach this milestone, most do and we try to support as many as possible to go on to a post-secondary education at a university or vocational school. We count doctors, nurses, mechanics,



Agronomy student Josue Eliassaint

and accountants as just some of the professions they have pursued.

Right now we have an amazing student whose name is Josue Eliassaint. He is an agronomy student in his last year of school. He hopes to change the face of agriculture in Haiti. In his recent Facebook post he wrote: In school I developed a love and passion for the field – planting in pots, bags, gallon containers – studying the physiology of plants. Today I feel close to the land and I can make the best choices to provide my services and help my community. I feel so much satisfaction when I see someone eating the produce I have planted! Wealth is in the land but the sector needs the right infrastructure and scientific knowledge to access the wealth. I could not have had these experiences without the Lord, my family, Outreach to Haiti and my farmer friends and agronomists.

There are many more children with hopes and dreams like Josue. They need sponsors willing to support them. Here is one such child.

Rose Samantha Pierre is 14 years old and lives with her mother and 2 brothers. Sadly her father passed away last month. He was the sole breadwinner when work was available. Now it all rests on the shoulders of her mother. Rose is entering the 9th grade this year. She loves French and hopes



9th-grader Rose Samantha Pierre

to one day work in the medical field.

The needs are great. Education is a blessing that can address many needs, and in the words of Mezalus Emil, our Director of Education “a blessing is never lost.”

## Our Holistic Approach to Education Also Provides

- Medical care
- Computer Lab
- Tutoring
- A personal development program for adolescent girls
- English language classes
- Internships
- Alumni groups
- A “Giving Back” volunteer program

## Hope Rises — Norwich Outreach Center

*Continued from page 1*

Phase 1 of the new building is now complete and we have begun Phase 2. Funding programs remains a priority, but as funds become available, Phase 2 will continue and provide additional solar energy, needed outbuildings and paving.

Every square foot of the building reflects the dignity of our staff and the people they serve, and will, once again, be a sign to the Haitian people that we will always be there for them.



At left, drone shots of the building before it was painted.

Above, the completed structure.



Diocese of Norwich Outreach to Haiti  
815 Boswell Avenue  
Norwich, CT 06360  
espwa, our newsletter of hope

Non Profit  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
Permit No. 11  
Winsted, CT

A publication of  
DIOCESE OF NORWICH  
OUTREACH TO HAITI

Most Reverend Michael R. Cote D.D.  
Bishop of the Diocese of Norwich

Conor Brooks,  
Chair, Board of Directors

Fr. Frank Rouleau  
Twinning Director and Chaplain

Susan Wallace  
Executive Director

info@outreachtohaiti.org

860.800.3601

## Update on the FAK (Famn Avanse Kounyea) Program

The third group of 30 women has now completed the 15 month program. You may already know that Advancing Women Now or FAK is a business training, micro finance and personal development program. It is designed to enable the participants to start a small business that allows each of them to lift their families out of poverty. But it has been much more than that.

Rather than quote statistics or provide a list of the successful businesses that have been put in place, we thought you might want to hear what a few of the women had to say about FAK:

**Doris:** Words cannot express my feelings about the program, the entrepreneurial training has helped me tremendously about business management, and micro-finance. The coaching sessions made me grow stronger. It helped me identify

my resources which permitted me to make decisions for myself and my family. Prior to the program my husband was the only one in charge, but after the self leadership session I was able to communicate better and shared decisions with him along with the family.

**Fara:** This is a miracle program. Prior to this program, I did not pay attention to my personal life. The coaching sessions made me realize how important it is to have a balanced life. It also helped me understand how to run a business, it showed me how to identify my skills, and empowered me to face future life challenges. Thank you.

**Sarah:** I am grateful to have been accepted as a participant in the FAK program. I have learned the concept of business expansion. The program taught me how to manage and understand cash-flow, profit and



*Sarah, a participant in the FAK program, now operates a small bakery.*

loss, and how to avoid unnecessary spending. The coaching sessions helped me recognize my personal skills, also how and when to use them efficiently.