



Diocese of Norwich Outreach to Haiti  
199 Broadway  
Norwich, CT 06360

*espwa, our newsletter of 'hope'*

Non-Profit  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit NO. 387  
New Haven, CT

## Sr. Ann Weller & Noreen Gibson

# Outreach Loses Two Friends

By KYN TOLSON • Programs Administrator



*Sr. Ann Weller*



*Noreen Gibson*

Outreach to Haiti lost two dear, longtime friends this winter, Sr. Ann Weller and Noreen Gibson.

Both women were stalwart supporters of the missions in Haiti of Hospice St. Joseph and Haitian Ministries for the Diocese of Norwich. (These missions were merged to form Outreach to Haiti in late 2010. Although Hospice St. Joseph started out under the sponsorship of the Diocese of Lafayette in Indiana, it moved under the sponsorship of the Diocese of Norwich in the early 2000s.)

Sr. Ann was 84 when she died in February in Indiana. She had entered the community of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Tipton in 1946.

In 1990, Sr. Ann responded to a request from Bishop Higi of the Diocese of Lafayette to cosponsor, with the diocese, a program in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. She was instrumental in establishing Hospice St. Joseph. As its co-director, she ministered among the Haitian people with great love and zeal. Often in the midst of civil unrest and danger, Ann never wavered from commitment to those she served.

In 2002, diminishing health necessitated her return to her Sisters at St. Joseph Center in Tipton, Indiana. Throughout her life she advocated for the poor and disadvantaged of the world. Today, Outreach to Haiti's primary care clinic has been named after this compassionate, generous woman. Donations are being made to the Sr. Ann Weller Clinic fund in her memory.

Noreen, a longtime resident of Connecticut who raised four children with her now-deceased husband, was 81 when she died in January in a community near family in New York.

Noreen was a parishioner of St. Mark the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church in Westbrook, CT, and volunteered for many years with Haitian Ministries. She volunteered both in Connecticut and in Haiti.

For more than five years, Noreen helped with and oversaw hospitality at Norwich Mission House in Port-au-Prince (Petion-Ville). Hundreds of guests at the mission house from the mid-1990s to 2005 have fond memories of her inimitable style, marked by high standards and expectations but balanced with an ever-ready dry wit and deep warmth and spirituality. No one enjoyed the company of teenaged- and young adult-travelers to Haiti more than Noreen.

## Mark the Calendar!

### CT WALKS FOR HAITI Saturday, April 14th, 2012

West Hartford Center, CT  
Registration: 10:30 a.m.  
Walk: 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
Music, crafts, food, silent auction  
Last year this event raised over \$16,000 for medical, nutritional and educational projects in Haiti. All proceeds go to charities that are experienced in "putting aid to work in Haiti," including Outreach to Haiti.  
Thank you for your support!  
For more information visit:  
<http://www.ctwalksforhaiti.org>



June 1-3, 2012

At The Catholic University of America, Washington D.C.  
Featured presenter: Outreach to Haiti Executive Director, Max Delices  
Haitian Craft sales by *Haiti's Back Porch*  
Don't miss your chance to come together with others working in Haiti!

# OUTREACH TO HAITI

## *espwa, our newsletter of 'hope'*



H E L P I N G   H A I T I A N S   H E L P   H A I T I A N S

## Building Skills, A Better Life, and A Better Community

By KYN TOLSON • Programs Administrator

Marie Jinette Polycarpe knows something about beating the odds.

For years, the 42-year-old has cared for her mother and raised her four children, largely on her own. She often relied on a job as a first-grade teacher for money to buy food and make her small, cinderblock house a home, although paychecks weren't always forthcoming.

Then, in January 2010, the earthquake in Port-au-Prince killed her sister, destroyed much of her own house and devastated her entire community – leaving thousands dead, many more injured and a landscape of rubble and ruin.

Marie took in her sisters' four children, all younger than her own. Her household – under tarp and tent – swelled to 10. In those first months following the quake, the central concern of most people in her city neighborhood of Christ Roi was simply to survive.

Marie, who lives near the home base of Diocese of Norwich Outreach to Haiti, went to that Rue Acacia site. She wanted both to help in any way she could and to see if she could find some assistance herself. Outreach's medical clinic was busy tending to the injured and ill. There was also activity elsewhere at the Outreach site. A small masonry program, which taught the basics of reconstituting rubble into concrete blocks, was starting up.

When that masonry program became bigger with a project to build about 900 small shelters (Ti-Shelters) in the Christ Roi area, Marie signed up to learn the trade. In that building project, which was a partnership effort between Catholic Relief Services and Outreach to Haiti, Marie gained skills and confidence.

Today, Marie is one of 45 people enrolled in a fledgling Masonry Program. It's an outgrowth of the Ti-Shelter project and the recipient of a new CRS Matching Grant. The dozen of such grants, awarded for the first time in the fall of 2011, are designed to promote and sustain livelihoods and economic development. Outreach received \$10,000 and matched that amount in order to collaborate with Little Brothers & Little Sisters of the Incarnation of Port-au-Prince in establishing a permanent



*Marie Jinette Polycarpe*

Masonry Program.

Marie is one of only two women in the course this year, which runs about nine months. Students range in age from 16 to the 30s. About half come from the Christ Roi neighborhood. Others are from the neighborhood of the Little Brothers/Little Sisters campus, which is on the other side of Port-au-Prince. The program is based there.

Classes are held every Friday and Saturday. At the end of the course, graduates should have either a Master Mason, Level 1 certificate (showing they have the ability to read charts, use engineer specs, do layouts, and giving them the capability of earning from \$20 to \$50 a day) or a Skilled Mason certificate (giving them the ability to earn up to as much as \$20 a day).

For Marie and others from the Christ Roi neighborhood, the trip to classes is difficult. It takes her about two hours each way; she must change "tap-taps" (public transportation) several times, and traffic is always congested.

Despite the hard work and long hours, Marie is hopeful. She says she's doing well in the course, and she enjoys learning and the challenge.

"Soon," she says to a visitor at the Masonry Program, "I will be able build a house."

## A Legacy of Education and Empowerment: The J. Anthony Collins Fund

By ANNA DeBIASI • Development Director

One year ago this April, Outreach to Haiti lost a dear friend. Anthony Collins was a vibrant and strong champion of young Haitians. Many of you had the chance to get to know him as the Master of Ceremonies at the annual gala event "For the Love of a Child." Anthony and his wife, Alva Greenberg, were the founders of this festive and important fund-raiser, in addition to being significant supporters of Outreach to Haiti's Education Scholarship Program.

Anthony understood the importance of education for Haiti's youngest generations. He saw access to high-quality education as a key to breaking the cycle of poverty, and, in turn, for creating a better tomorrow for the people of Haiti.

Alva recently established a scholarship fund in his name. The monies will help to ensure the sustainability of the scholarship program, specifically for students accepted into post-secondary schools, including universities and vocational schools.

University tuitions currently cost between \$2,000 and \$3,500 per year. Depending on the institution and area of study, the cost of books can bring the total expense closer to \$4,000. The scholarship program is currently facing some unique challenges. As the cost of education in Haiti rises, so does the number of Outreach scholarship students receiving acceptance letters to post-secondary institutions. While it is a testament to the strength of the schools that our students attend and the achievements of the students themselves, the increasing number of college students is a strain on Outreach's education funding. The J. Anthony Collins for Haitian Students Fund will help Outreach to face this challenge. It will help to ensure that all scholarship students accepted into post-secondary institutions will have the opportunity to attend.

Anthony's legacy of love and support for Haitian girls and boys and young adults will live on through the establishment of this special fund.

While the fund helps pay post-secondary student tuitions, we still have primary and secondary school students who need sponsors. "Sponsors" can come in many forms. Office branches, departments, sports teams, local schools, religious education classes,

*continued on page 2*



# espwa

A publication of  
Diocese of Norwich Outreach to Haiti  
199 Broadway • Norwich, CT 06360

860.848.2237 ext. 206  
info@outreachtohaiti.org  
www.outreachtohaiti.org

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

Max Delices, Executive Director  
Kyn Tolson, Programs Administrator  
Anna DeBiasi, Education &  
Development Director  
James Michel, Board Chair

## JUST A CLICK AWAY!

Learn more about our work and how you can  
assist children and families in Haiti.

Visit our website:  
[www.outreachtohaiti.org](http://www.outreachtohaiti.org)

Follow us on **Twitter**:  
@outreachtohaiti

**Facebook**:  
[www.facebook.com/OutreachToHaiti](http://www.facebook.com/OutreachToHaiti)

Join our e-mailed listserve by sending  
your e-mail address to:  
info@outreachhaiti.org

You will receive short updates on  
happenings concerning our Outreach  
mission and other Haiti-related  
news and events.

## OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Sponsors are still needed for  
**OUTREACH TO HAITI  
EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP  
PROGRAM**

*Sponsor a student  
and change a life.*

**ANNUAL COST OF TUITION**  
Primary School Student: \$425  
Secondary School Student: \$500  
University Student: \$2,500

**For more information call**  
860.848.2237

# Outreach to Haiti's Education Program: Building a Hopeful Future for Haitians

By ANNA DeBIASI  
Development Director

For most of her childhood,  
Yamilé Perez lived with her  
mother and two siblings. Her older  
brother, Perret Dorlus is 20 years  
old and her little sister Amawanda  
Perez is 16 years old. Her father  
left the house many years ago.

Her mother, Vanette Dorlus,  
had to make the difficult decision  
to leave her children to move to  
the countryside where she found  
work as a housekeeper in a hillside  
parish north of Port-au-Prince,  
called Jean Rabel.

Because of the departure of  
their mother to the countryside,  
Yamilé and her siblings had to  
move in with their grandmother,  
in downtown Port-au-Prince.

"Living that far from my broken  
family is really a sacrifice, but I have to make money  
for my family to live," Vanette explains.

Because most Haitian families survive on less than  
\$4 a day, the cost of one school year's tuition often  
exceeds the entire annual revenue of the family. This  
was the case for the Perez family.

"I didn't know if Yamilé would be able to go to  
school. She is so smart and I would be so sad and  
worried for her future if she had to stop going be-  
cause I couldn't pay," Vanette told Outreach.

In 2008, Yamilé became one of many students who  
are able to attend school through Outreach to Haiti's  
Education Scholarship Program. Access to education  
for these students is made possible through sponsors  
from throughout the United States who pay students'  
tuitions. None of these students would have the  
means to attend school without the support of these



*Yamilé Perez is a scholarship  
student in Outreach's Educa-  
tion Scholarship Program.  
She has been accepted into  
The University of Haiti, the  
country's only public univer-  
sity system.*

dedicated donors.

This school year marks the 4th year  
that Yamilé has taken part in the Educa-  
tion Scholarship Program. She is very  
smart according to school reports, and  
approaches her studies with enthusiasm.  
Reading and music are her favorite  
activities. While she was in high school,  
she excelled in math and biology.

Last year, she finished high school  
close to the top of her class. She then  
went on to pass the very challenging  
Haitian National Exam, a test which  
all students must pass in order to be  
eligible to apply for university. This  
past fall, she received the wonderful  
news that she has been accepted to The  
School of Agronomy at The University  
of Haiti. It is the country's only public  
university system, and is free to attend  
for those who get in.

Since her acceptance, Yamilé has  
been thinking about becoming a doctor. She decided  
to take the national medical school exam to see how  
she would do. Her score landed her the title of Laure-  
ate for this national test!

"I'm starting to think that I would feel bet-  
ter studying medicine," Yamilé told Erolde Ezerbe,  
director of the education program. "There have been  
people who have helped me along the way, and I want  
to be able to help people in my job."

Because she is part of the education program,  
Yamilé is able to dream big and explore where those  
dreams will take her. Whatever major and future  
career she chooses, we do know one thing: Haiti is a  
stronger country when children have access to educa-  
tion, and thanks to our sponsors and the education  
program, Outreach is building a stronger, brighter  
future for Haiti.



*Tw of the youngest girls living at Paula's orphanage listen intently  
during class as her teacher explains the assignment.*

## J. ANTHONY COLLINS FUND

*continued from page 1*

individuals and families have  
come together to sponsor stu-  
dents. People receive pictures  
and annual updates on the  
students' academic progress.

If you and your group want  
to consider sponsoring a stu-  
dent (university or otherwise),  
please call 860.848.2237 x206  
for more information on how  
you can make a difference in  
the lives of our students and  
the future of Haiti.



## FOR THE LOVE OF A CHILD

# Outreach to Haiti, Helping Children for Over 25 Years

By ANNA DeBIASI • Development Director

Marvens Damis, age 4, holds his sister's hand  
as they walk through the streets of the  
hillside neighborhood where they live in Port-au-  
Prince. Their bellies growl with hunger pains, be-  
cause their family does not have enough money to  
cook meals for them every day. Five days a week the  
siblings are welcomed with open arms into Madame  
Samson's house, where she serves them their only  
hot meals of the week.

Syndie Simon is 10 years old and in the fifth  
grade. She is growing up in an orphanage in Port-  
au-Prince because her family does not have the  
means to care for her. She wants to be a doctor one  
day and would like to work in the clinic next to  
the orphanage where she lives—Foyer des Filles de  
Dieu, a home known to many friends and support-  
ers of Outreach to Haiti as Paula's orphanage.

In the mountains above Port-au-Prince a group  
of children laugh and play. Their laughter and hope  
in their faces are evidence of the blessings that their  
home provides. Before they were welcomed into the  
orphanage where they live, fear and grief were at the  
center of their lives as most of these children were or-  
phaned due to the loss of their families to HIV/AIDS.

The Diocese of Norwich has been supporting  
needy children in Haiti for over 25 years. Today,  
thanks to Outreach to Haiti, girls like Syndie have  
bright days and hope for the future, and children  
like Marvens have food in their bellies.

Outreach to Haiti currently supports a neighbor-  
hood meal program and two orphanages, provides  
education sponsorships to 300 students, facilitates  
medical outreach and nutrition programs, and oper-  
ates a primary care clinic in Port-au-Prince. These  
programs serve thousands of the most vulnerable  
children in Haiti.

## ACTION FOR CHILDREN

In 1988, members of The Dioceses of Nor-  
wich traveled to Haiti. They met a woman named  
Madame Samson in a crowded slum neighborhood  
in Port-au-Prince. She explained that many of the

children in her neighborhood go  
without a hot meal on most days.  
The sight of starving children was  
too much for her to bear.

"They're starving, and many go  
all day without eating. They have  
malnutrition," she said when she  
came to the gate of our nearby mis-  
sion house. As a neighbor, Outreach  
to Haiti decided to help her help the  
children around her. The ministry  
provided a stipend to purchase the  
food so that she could provide meals  
for the most vulnerable children in  
her neighborhood.

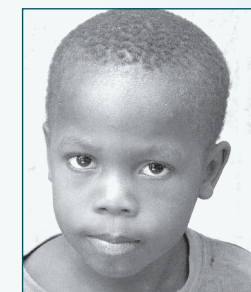
With the support of the Diocese  
behind her, Mme. Samson soon be-  
gan the neighborhood meal program,  
Aksyon Pou Timoun (Action for  
Children). She began cooking cauldrons of food for  
a group of young children at her small cinderblock  
house. For many, the midday meal they receive at  
Madame Samson's is the only food they have.

Today, Madame Samson continues to run the  
meal program out of her home. More than 70 chil-  
dren visit her home in 2 shifts, 5 days a week to have  
a hot meal and vitamin supplements. This program  
embodies the true essence of Outreach to Haiti's  
mission of helping Haitians help Haitians.

## THE HOUSE OF THE GIRLS OF GOD

Like Madame Samson, Madame Paula Thybulle  
also provides a safety net for the most vulnerable  
of children. She founded Le Foyer des Filles de  
Dieu (The House of the Girls of God, also known as  
Paula's orphanage) in 1987, and she continues to run  
it today. The orphanage is not far from downtown  
Port-au-Prince and has more than 70 girls in its  
close quarters.

Without this home, some of these children would  
likely be left to themselves on the streets of Port-  
au-Prince, vulnerable to sexual abuse and other  
violence. At the orphanage, the girls are welcomed



*Marvens Damis, age  
4, is one of 70 children  
who receive warm lunch  
and vitamins at the  
meal program, Aksyon  
Pou Timoun (Action for  
Children).*

into a family where the oldest (18 years  
of age) look out for the youngest (3  
years old). Girls receive an education,  
with the aim of their becoming healthy  
adults capable of independent living.

## THE RAINBOW HOUSE

In the mountains above Port-au-  
Prince lies La Maison L'Arc-en-Ciel,  
or The Rainbow House. Founded in  
the 1990s, The Rainbow House was  
the first of its kind to provide a haven  
for children affected by HIV/AIDS.  
Many have lost at least one parent to  
the disease, and some are HIV-positive.  
The Rainbow House provides a safe and  
loving environment for these children,  
who have daily medical oversight and  
education and/or vocational training.

Along with this residence for chil-  
dren, a walk-in clinic in Port-au-Prince provides  
AIDS education, counseling and care. They hope to  
help in eradicating the stigma of AIDS and to teach  
the wider community about the proper treatment of  
those affected by the virus, especially children.

## FOR THE LOVE OF A CHILD

As Outreach to Haiti continues our work on the  
ground, we remain committed to serving the Haitian  
people in the spirit of the gospel, especially children.

Join us in support of needy children in Haiti at  
the 2012 annual For the Love of a Child gala, Satur-  
day, April 21, at The Clinton Country Club, Clinton  
CT at 6 pm. The evening will feature live and silent  
auctions, a Caribbean-themed meal, Haitian a cap-  
pella and local children's choirs.

We welcome people from throughout Connecti-  
cut and beyond to take part in celebrating, honor-  
ing, and supporting the most vulnerable of our  
Haitian sisters and brothers. Tickets are \$150 each,  
\$75 of which is tax deductible. For more informa-  
tion please contact Anna DeBiasi at 860.848.2237  
(x206); anna@outreachtohaiti.org.