



Who We Are

N'AP Kanpe Ansanm

"We Stand Together" SPRING 2019

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Port-au-Prince, Haiti
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Dr. Susan Nelson
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Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Régine Désulmé Polynice,
Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Kenneth H. Quigley, Chair
Mechanicsburg, PA
Ary Théodore, Esq.
Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Our Mission

To provide special educational opportunities and life skills training to children with disabilities in Haiti.

Principles:

Ensure that every child receives an education that meets the requirements established by the Haitian Ministry of Education and prepares them to be global citizens in the 21st century.

Ensure opportunities for continuing education and certification for all teachers.

Incorporate life skills and vocational training into the curriculum to aid students in their formation as productive adults in Haitian society.

Contact Information

Website:
www.stvincentshaiti.org

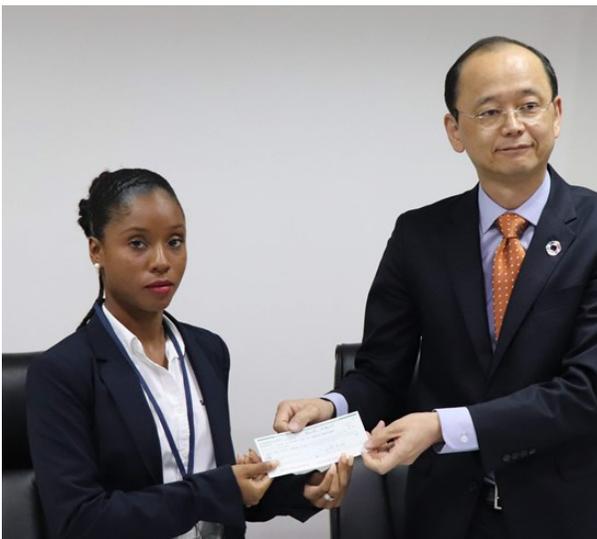
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St. Vincent's is a Brand Name in Haiti

St. Vincent's is a brand name like Coca Cola when it comes to medical care in Haiti, according to Dr. Pierre Marie Woolley, Director of the St. Vincent's Medical Center in downtown Port-au-Prince. "It is recognized everywhere for Orthopedics, Prosthetics, and Physical Therapy. We provide low-cost health care to a population that desperately needs it," he says.

One of two trauma surgeons in the Caribbean and the only Haitian trauma surgeon, Dr. Woolley has recruited five orthopedic surgeons, each of whom spends one day a week from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Medical Clinic. He has recruited five pediatricians who adhere to the same schedule. An ophthalmologist comes every Wednesday and Thursday. There are patients a-plenty on a daily basis, averaging 25 in orthopedics and 20 in pediatrics.

The Japanese Embassy, which has a long history of supporting reliable health care in Haiti, recently awarded St. Vincent's a major grant to purchase an x-ray machine. One of the rooms at the current Medical Center will be retrofitted to accept this machine, whose computer can send images anywhere in the world.



Aurélie Fièvre accepts a check from Mr. Mitsuaki Mizuno, Japanese Ambassador to Haiti, for the new x-ray machine at the downtown Medical Clinic.



Dr. Woolley makes his case for an expanded medical clinic at SVC in downtown Port-au-Prince.

The x-ray machine should be installed and operating by the end of the calendar year. It is expected to provide an additional source of revenue for the Center.

Dr. Woolley also expressed a larger vision for the Clinic on Rue des Casernes in downtown. "The prosthetics shop and physical therapy both need more space," he said. "The demand certainly exists. Plus we could build around the perimeter of the current site perhaps adding an operating room, a pre-natal care center, and a pediatric center. All of this will enhance the St. Vincent's storied brand and provide much-needed low-cost care."

The St. Vincent's Center Board is gathering information to turn this vision into a plan and then a reality. Stay tuned!

Salaries Increase, but So Do Prices

The government recently set new minimum salary levels for all employees in Haiti. Beginning in April, all SVC employees received a raise toward minimum requirements. For 36 of our teachers this meant an increase of nearly 40%. Other staff who were at the previous minimum or above, received a flat 2,000 gourdes per month increase. Remember, however, that at the current exchange rate that is not quite \$25 more per month.

With inflation surging and the dollar/gourdes exchange rate changing daily (at nearly 85 gourdes to one dollar in April), Haitians find it difficult to buy even the essentials. As a result, civil unrest has surged. St. Vincent's lost nearly a month of instruction days due to political demonstrations.

Also, this year, the government instituted a mandatory 2% of all employees' pay for health services. The very practical result of this is that our faculty and staff can now enter hospitals without having to pay upfront. While St. Vincent's Medical Clinic never turns anyone away for inability to pay, that is not so at other medical facilities in the country.

Board Adopts a 2019 Budget of \$440,000

A 2019 budget of \$440,000 was approved by the SVC Board at its meeting in Port-au-Prince on April 5. It is roughly equal to our income and expenses of last year. The budget will be reviewed, and likely adjusted, on a quarterly basis.

Expenses cover school administration, faculty and staff salaries, health care and pension, the Medical Clinic, Brace Shop, and maintenance. While St. Vincent's realizes some revenue from the Medical Clinic, (and in 2020, the x-ray machine will increase our revenue there), the Brace Shop, and the \$120 we ask families to pay for their share of tuition (only about half of families can do this) -- the bulk of our funding - close to \$300,000 -- must come from donations from the United States.

None of the capital projects which we envision in this newsletter are included in this budget. Once we have reliable estimates for the cost of these significant improvements, we will be seeking major gifts to fund them.

Former St. Vincent's Resident Now Attending Medical School



Mackenson St. Victor grew up at St Vincent's. His mother Naomi was a cook at the school. He and his younger brother Jobson attended classes and the family lived together in the resident dorms.

The devastating earthquake of January 12, 2010, killed six people at St Vincent's, including Naomi and Jobson. Mackenson was 16 years old at the time; his brother was 11. In the aftermath, Mackenson's family asked Père Leon Sadoni, the Priest-in-

Charge, if Mackenson could continue his schooling at St. Vincent's. Père Sadoni agreed. So Mackenson continued to live with his St Vincent's family.

One day, when an American team was visiting the school, a conversation took place in a hot, dusty classroom after classes ended. Mackenson explained that he dreamed of becoming a doctor someday. He wanted to show everyone that handicapped people are "just like everyone else", and because he himself was not handicapped, he wanted to be an advocate for his St Vincent's brothers and sisters. However, he realized he had no family support and no way to pay for his education. He decided he would have to become a building contractor to support himself.

Instead, scholarship funding has made it possible for Mackenson to finish high school and now attend medical school at the Episcopal University of Haiti. In Haiti, college and medical school are combined into a six year program, similar to the French system. Mackenson is now in his third year. He has his own apartment, but still visits his friends at St Vincent's regularly.

The Two Campus Solution

Currently, most St. Vincent students ride a bus to school at Santo 17, sometimes spending up to two hours a day each way in heavy traffic. Most live in the downtown area of Port-au-Prince or nearby villages. As a result, time in class has been curtailed and there is no time for extra-curricular classes such as music or art. Also, the buses, provided by the government, are driven by men who are often not paid for months at a time.

Listening carefully to parents, teachers, staff and students, the SVC Board recently took bold action to remedy the problem. St. Vincent’s plans to operate two campuses – a downtown day school for Grades K-9 with full-day classes and time for extra-curricular activities; and a residential campus at Santo 17 (about 10 miles east of Port-au-Prince) for upper grades, a trade school, sports, and entrepreneurial activities.

Following the earthquake in 2010, which destroyed the main campus, St. Vincent’s moved into several buildings and temporary classrooms at Site 2, a block away from the Medical Clinic.

Several years later the government of Haiti, which razed many blocks adjacent to the site to construct a new complex of government office buildings, expressed interest in taking the site by eminent domain. Their interest in the site, a structurally unsound dorm, and the purchase of Santo 17, led to the school moving from downtown. Ultimately, the government did not take the site by eminent domain.

The downtown campus is expected to open in part or completely, if possible, by the fall of 2019. With no bus transportation required, the academic day can be extended and after school extra-curricular activities added.

A Haitian-American architect, whose mantra is "beauty attracts," has been asked to develop the plans and provide as much green space as possible, with fragrant flowers such as jasmine for our visually-impaired students. He is also looking into solar power and roof-top gardens.

Santo 17 will become a fully residential (weekly and semester) campus for newly-added grades 10, 11, 12, and 13 with a trade school which will provide a path to gainful employment for students not following an academic career. The plans at Santo 17 will be phased in as the school meets the new standards for an upper grade curriculum.

In time, with 8.6 acres of land, the Santo 17 campus offers an extraordinary palate of opportunity on which to build a master plan.



Above: SVC Board Members and staff meet with Haitian architects Hervè Sabin and Stephanie de la Rosa at Site 2 (formerly the temporary school site) in downtown Port-au-Prince to discuss renovations/reconstruction. Above right: Bus loads of students and teachers begin the daily long ride home. Below right: Students gather before boarding the bus.

Board Elections

The Board expressed its gratitude to several departing board members who had completed their term of office: Dr. Gretchen Berggren, Bill Craddock, Dr. Dianne Jean-François, Valerie Flambert Mathon, and Dr. Stan Shaffer. The Board unanimously elected Karen Grass and Dr. Pierre Marie Woolley to serve as Trustees. Additional board members will be elected at subsequent meetings.

The Board also elected Ken Quigley as its new Chair. Ken is currently Senior Program Director for the Endowment Management Solutions Program of the Episcopal Church Foundation. He had served as treasurer of the Board for the past three years and has been involved in Haiti for the past 25 years, helping to found the Children’s Medical Mission of Haiti.

How Does Our Garden Grow?

Exponentially is the answer, thanks to Monsieur Dolphin Mentor, Head of Buildings and Grounds. Papaya and mango trees, bananas, corn, okra, spinach, pumpkin, beans, cucumber, eggplant now flourish on the grounds — all nourishment for our Santo students and adult residents.

M. Mentor recently harrowed a second plot, fully half an acre in size, to the left of the residence and installed underground pipes for irrigation. The plants are growing gloriously. Eggplant and spinach were being harvested as early as April. Cherries are on their way as are mangos. The SVC diet is healthier than ever.



**We
Change
the
World
One
Life
at a
Time**



\$12.50 a week for each of the 52 weeks in a year equals \$650.00. That's the cost of one student's tuition at St. Vincent's Center. Sometimes a family can pay the requested \$120 a year contribution. Most families pay something but cannot afford the full cost.

A year of instruction, in Braille and/or in sign language, with a hot, nutritious mid-day meal, is life-giving and life-changing in Haiti. In this season which celebrates the Resurrection, please consider sponsoring a student with a gift of \$650. You may send your check to:

St. Vincent's Center, Haiti
P.O. Box 771142
Memphis, TN 38117

Or, go online to our website www.stvincentshaiti.org and click on the *Donation* button. All gifts are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. To make a gift of appreciated securities or a gift from your retirement fund, please contact Ken Quigley at khquigley@comcast.net or call him at 717-796-1852.

