



Who We Are

Members of the St. Vincent's Center Board

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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.

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

Ensure opportunities for continuing education and certification for all teachers.

Contact Information

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Former SVC Student Appointed Gov't Advocate for the Disabled

Soinette Désir, recently appointed as Secretary of State for the Integration of People with Disabilities for the country of Haiti, attended St. Vincent's for six years in the early 1990s.



At the recent ceremony dedicating the new x-ray machine, she expressed her gratitude to St. Vincent's saying "I am here today thanks to St. Vincent's." She credits the Center for an operation that allows her to walk today without using a wheelchair.

In her remarks, she described St. Vincent's as a "good," "a heritage of the country that gives service without partiality to everyone". She also made a plea to the street protesters to protect St. Vincent's so that it remains a model of service.

As a young child she fell ill with a fever that left her with reduced physical mobility. Her parents brought her to St. Vincent's because the doctors there could help her. She lived and studied at St. Vincent's from 1991 through 1997, leaving the school to continue her classical studies as well as English. She studied diplomacy and worked for a time in customer service at Digicel, a mobile phone company.

Following the earthquake in 2010 she recognized the difficulties faced by women with reduced mobility and formed an organization to defend their cause and raise awareness of their needs – *The Union of Women with Reduced Mobility*. She attended several international conferences on the subject and championed, in Haiti, the laws on persons with disabilities written at the United Nations.

St. Vincent's Celebrates the Gift of an X-Ray Machine

"Se pou-n mache men nan laman". The Kreyol translates to "We must walk hand in hand" and it is the second line of the Haitian national anthem, which began the ceremony inaugurating the Japanese Embassy's gift of an x-ray machine to St. Vincent's Medical Clinic. It is a fitting description of how closely the Embassy and SVC have worked to achieve this installation over the past year.

SVC's new Medical Director, Dr. John Erickson Moïse, welcomed the assembled guests, who represented St. Vincent's, the Diocese of Haiti, and the Haitian government. Then, SVC Director, Père Duveaux spoke movingly of St. Vincent's founding by the Sisters of Saint Margaret 75 years ago and emphasized the Center's tripartite mission of education, health, and rehabilitation to help especially the weak and, most specifically, handicapped children.



X-Ray Room Dedication – The new x-ray machine at the Medical Clinic was dedicated on October 7 with a formal ceremony and extensive media coverage by local press. Touring the new facility are from left: Père Irnel Duveaux, Director of St. Vincent's, Aurélie Fièvre, former Director, and His Excellency Misuno Mitsuiki, Ambassador of Japan to Haiti.

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Gift of X-Ray Machine (continued from page 1)

Guest of honor, His Excellency Misuno Mitsuiki, the Japanese Ambassador to Haiti, stressed that this gift is part of the cooperation that his country has established with Haiti and will help to improve the situation of those with disabilities. Following the Ambassador, Mme. Soinette Désir, the Secretary of State for the Integration of People with Disabilities spoke.

Père Michelin of the diocesan Standing Committee blessed the room, and Mme. Aurélie Fièvre, Secretary of the SVC Board, presented Ambassador Mitsuiki with an artisanal table made from recycled wheelchair parts crafted by SVC students and faculty. Markenson Guerrier, the disabled representative from the Management and Leadership Committee, thanked everyone for their support and presence. And, finally, renowned Haitian hospitality flowed as St. Vincent's offered refreshments to everyone at the celebratory reception.

In the first three weeks that the x-ray machine was in operation, the Center processed 147 x-rays, showing how valuable this new service will be for

Art Classes – SVC recently hired Professor Bénold to lead art classes for students. Art, the school believes, encourages creative thinking and personal expression. The more advanced students are preparing art objects that will be on sale to visitors at Santo 17.



Dr. John Erickson Moïse Named Medical Director For St. Vincent's Medical Center

Dr. John Erickson Moïse was named Medical Director of the St. Vincent's Medical Center in Port-au-Prince in October 2020.

Born in Jérémie in 1977, he completed his classical studies in his hometown before pursuing university studies in Cuba where he spent six years in medicine. Returning to Haiti in 2008, he provided social service at Jérémie and then worked as a general practitioner at Saint Antoine de Jérémie Hospital, Doctor of the World (NGO), and teacher in different nursing schools in Jérémie.

Under the supervision of a Cuban staff, he obtained a certificate of specialization in family medicine (2009-2011). In 2012, he started a specialization in Orthopedics and Traumatology at the University Peace Hospital. In February 2015, he undertook a month-long rotation in Orthopedics at Palmetto Hospital in South Carolina, USA. In August of the same year, he began working with Médecins sans Frontières, and a month later, started working at the St. Vincent Center for Disabled Children.

In March 2016 Sainte Croix Hospital in Léogâne hired him as an orthopedic surgeon. A year later, in March 2017, he traveled to Shriners Hospital, Mexico City for a three-month training in pediatric orthopedics. Back in Haiti, he continued to put his expertise at the service of the population at the Sainte Croix Hospital in Léogâne, the Saint Antoine Hospital in Jérémie, and the St. Vincent Center for Handicapped Children.

He is married and father of a little girl.

North Dakota Funds New Medical Analysis Lab

Partnering with St. George's Church in Bismarck, the North Dakota Episcopal Foundation has funded a medical analysis laboratory at our downtown Port-au-Prince Medical Center.

Physicians are ecstatic at the fulfillment of this long-time wish, for it will immeasurably speed up diagnoses and subsequent treatment.

No longer will patients need to go elsewhere, at extra time and expense, to have very basic tests performed. Our gratitude goes out to the people in North Dakota who have made this possible.

Some of the most commonly requested lab tests include: complete blood count, sickle cell anemia, malaria, cholera, parasites, thyroid deficiencies, bone growth, and liver activity. Although not an exhaustive list, this indicates the many different diseases from which Haitians suffer and which can be reliably treated, once diagnosed.

While space is at a premium at the Medical Center, a laboratory does not require much; and St. Vincent's plans to "carve out" a dedicated laboratory from some currently little-used space on the second floor. The equipment has been ordered. The room retrofitting has

begun. Along with the recently-installed x-ray machine, the medical analysis lab greatly enhances our physicians' diagnostic ability.

Clinic physicians see some 500 patients monthly on this almost-half acre rectangular site. During the country-wide shut-down due to protests and an anticipated COVID-19 epidemic (which never really materialized) our staff in Haiti proceeded with renovating and improving the Medical Center so that we are now better able to serve those in need of healing.

Sign Language Training – As part of a concerted effort to encourage inclusion of all students in the life and learning at St. Vincent's, all teachers are now required to learn sign language and have a basic knowledge of Braille.



Demolition of Damaged Building – A three-story building on the corner of the downtown Medical Center, damaged and vacant since the earthquake in 2010, is finally coming down. The demolition project began in late October and should be completed by early December. Reconstruction of the perimeter wall is part of the project, providing greater security for the downtown medical facility. With the removal of the building, the entire site becomes available for future development.

SVC Director Thanks Donors

The SVC administration at the end of the year salutes all those who during this year have sacrificed themselves to allow the Center to exist and continue to serve the Haitian people and in particular children with disabilities.

Our feelings of gratitude are more than necessary taking into account the situation in Haiti where on two occasions we experienced great difficulties in the country which caused the closure of our activities.

I mean the lock period where everywhere in the streets there are violent protests and this COVID 19 ordeal. However, thanks to the understanding and diligence of the Board, we have stood our ground.

Thus, I bless the name of the Lord who endowed you with this generous heart to address the plight of people with disabilities and to all the staff of the Center. A big thank you to all of you for your prayers and your economic support. Your dedication and contribution to the advancement of this great work is a proof of the fulfillment of the love of God which opens up new horizons for us, and strengthens our hope to see our dreams come true day by day.

I firmly hope that with your unwavering support we will equip the Center with new infrastructure to promote the inclusion of the disabled in Haitian society. God bless you!

Père Duveaux
Director of SVC



Père Irnel Duveaux, Director of SVC, poses with students in the library.

Haiti Revalues the Gourdes

By fiat, the Haitian government has almost doubled the value of the gourde against the U.S. dollar. In September, one USD purchased approximately 120 gourdes. In October, that changed, overnight, to 62 gourdes to one USD. There are major ramifications to this act:

Imports are less expensive. Therefore, it is cheaper to purchase imported goods than those locally-produced. Imported U.S. subsidized rice put Haitian rice farmers out of business years ago.

Exports are more expensive, therefore, decreasing their appeal out-of-country. Among Haiti's major exports are rum, coffee, and textiles. The textile industry, one of Haiti's largest sectors, worries that it will collapse, thus adding to the already high unemployment.

Funds raised and sent to Haiti in US dollars will provide only half as much as they did earlier in the year.

St. Vincent's has a budget of approximately half a million dollars. But we pay our staff - faculty, caregivers, physicians, administrators, etc. - in gourdes. And we shop for medical equipment, food, and water in gourdes. As long as this exchange rate remains in effect, it will now cost twice as much to provide these salaries and services.

Support for St. Vincent's Center

Please consider a gift to this special mission in Haiti. Send your check to:

St. Vincent's Center, Haiti
925 Hertzler Road
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

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.



COVID Precaution — Students arriving for school get their temperatures checked, wear masks, and visit a hand-washing station on their way to class. So far, no cases of the virus have been reported at the school.