

# 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

## *Education: the road out of poverty for Haiti's youth*

Outreach has had an education program in Haiti for more than 25 years. Only 15 percent of children in Haiti receive a free public education. The rest must pay for it, or not go to school. Outreach to Haiti sponsors children and young adults from kindergarten through university level. Besides tuition support, Outreach provides tutoring and a computer lab. Students are also given medical, nutritional and dental support, as well as corrective eyewear, if needed.

Our goal is not only to enable children to attend school, but to provide the support they need to be successful in the classroom. The hurdles the children in Haiti face in getting an education are often enormous.

In a country where less than 15 percent of children finish secondary school, 95 percent of the students we sponsor pass each year. The state administers national exams at the end of ninth grade, and secondary school (Philo or thirteenth grade), that must be passed to move up in school. In 2016, all our students taking the exams passed.

We generally add students to the program at the primary grade levels, and support them as they advance, with the most successful ultimately attending university or vocational school. Currently we have 38 students in the post-secondary level, in many areas of study. We have expanded an internship program and added skill-building seminars for these students to better position them for employment when

they finish school — the ultimate aim of the education.

*Here are few of the many students for whom we are seeking sponsors:*



**Karima  
Pierre**

Karima Pierre is starting second grade and lives with her mother “I like reading. My teacher tells stories and makes us laugh! Going to school to get a good education is the best opportunity for me to succeed in my life. I want to be a doctor.”



**Moise  
Museau**

Moise Museau hopes to start third grade. He loves reading social studies, math and French. “After I lost my father, going to school was very difficult but thanks to your support I will keep going to school easily, so I thank you once more.” He hopes if he studies very hard, to become a “doctor, God’s servant.”



**Roodjerson  
Inelus**

Roodjerson Inelus is 7 years old and is being moved up to the third grade. He likes to read. “I thank you in the name of Almighty God for your sponsorship - it will allow me to stay in school to be helpful to my family and society.” His father has died this year.



**Jesula  
Joseph**

Jesula Joseph is starting fourth grade. “I study a lot and I always get my homework done. This school year I worked so hard, studied so much, that I didn’t have any time to have fun with friends.” She prays for good health and a life without the problems of getting enough food and a permanent home for her family of seven.

All the children say, “Thanks to your support I will keep going to school!”

### *Cost of Sponsorship*

**ANNUAL INVESTMENT**

- \$425** Primary school student
- \$500** Secondary school student
- \$800** Technical school student
- \$2,000** University student

*Any donation is greatly appreciated.  
We welcome all support!*

# Haiti's heroine of the hungry children has died

Madame Samson, a remarkable woman who cooked and served simple meals for hungry children in Christ Roi for the last 24 years, has passed away.

Madame Samson provided a midday meal to neighborhood children, citing this was often the only food they would eat all day.

In 1993, Madame Samson had approached Outreach to Haiti for funds for food and fuel so that she could offer a hot meal to 25 children, five times a week, on the small front porch of her home. She became our first partner in Haiti. More children showed up at her door because their families were simply unable to feed them. "Children come because they are hungry," she said many times.

When the number of children grew, a larger location was secured. With the

generosity of Outreach's donors, Madame Samson's focus on feeding hungry children remained steadfast. St. Mark's Church in Westbrook, Conn., sends generous monthly donations to support food programs like this, as do many individuals.

Because of her dedication, she watched hundreds of children grow to healthy adulthood. "Many of the children are now married with their own children," she once boasted. Many parents expressed their appreciation.

Madame Samson's commitment to community service lives on in her four children. One daughter is a nurse and the other regularly helped her with the feeding program. One son is a police officer and the other, Dr. Wilkens, helped with her meal program.

With Madame Samson's passing, the partnership with Outreach continues with Dr. Wilkens. As a boy, he was sponsored by the Outreach education program and now as a medical professional, collaborates with the clinic staff. He focuses on those children with moderate to severe malnutrition, providing nutritional supplements,

*Madame Samson with Bishop Cote several years ago.*



*Madame Samson feeding one of the neighborhood children.*



food, and medical oversight. The goal is to bring them to health in three to six months. This approach ensures the available dollars help the neediest children. Dr. Wilkens continues to reflect the passion and dedication to helping others that his mother instilled in all her children.

When learning of Madame Samson's passing, Ralph Stewart, an Outreach board member, said, "She was an amazing woman. She really lived out Gospel values. I feel blessed to have known her."

## *Bishop Toussaint thanks Outreach supporters*

At the Outreach to Haiti Gala, The Most Reverend Erik Toussaint, Auxiliary Bishop of Port-au-Prince, presented a compelling picture of the challenges and resolve of the Haitian people. He thanked everyone for the great work that is being done by Outreach to Haiti.

Bishop Toussaint has a long history with our organization. From 2000 to 2004, he was pastor of the parish of Fonds-Baptiste, an Outreach twin. When the 2010 earthquake struck, he was pastor of the Cathedral in Port-au-Prince and witnessed the death of Archbishop Serge Miot and Vicar General, Monsignor Charles Benoit, along with many others who died that day in the cathedral and chapel. He worked tirelessly to get the injured to hospitals and emergency centers, often going hungry and sleeping

outside because the rectory was so badly damaged.

Outreach's donors stepped up and helped the Haitians during this difficult time.

Bishop Toussaint said, "In 2010 Haiti experienced a great earth quake. In 2017, I am asking you to experience a 'heart quake.' Let your heart tremble for all who suffer throughout the world, especially the people of Haiti."

He expressed gratitude for all the ways Outreach is helping: providing medical care; sponsoring 200 students in elementary, secondary, trade schools and universities, and supporting parishes and the Archdiocese of Port-au-Prince through the twinning program.



*Rev. Chris Pappas, Bishop Toussaint and Rev. Gerry Kirby*

"I don't just applaud you because of the money you give; rather I applaud you because of the love in your hearts... you serve others in love and solidarity as witnesses of the Gospel."

# Immersion is key to understanding the magnetism of Haiti

For many years, Outreach has organized immersion trips that provide volunteer and cultural encounters for international visitors. As the word immersion suggests, our goal is to offer the traveler a variety of diverse experiences that will allow them to see more than just the poverty.

For example, one of the newer stops added to our itinerary is a visit to PeaceCYCLE ([www.peacecycle.com](http://www.peacecycle.com)). This small start-up organization repurposes discarded plastic water bags into usable bags, totes, and other items that are then sold. Victoria Wormell, a first-time traveler from Connecticut, was among those PeaceCYCLE impressed. Here is what she had to say:



A PeaceCYCLE worker sews a tote bag made from discarded plastic water bags.

“There truly are many sides to Haiti, and I was most touched by the hope I saw visiting PeaceCYCLE. While most all are familiar with the hunger and poverty of Haiti, PeaceCYCLE models a way to not only recycle but also provide jobs that bring dignity and a sense of community. You could see the pride on the faces of the workers as we toured their operation. It gave me hope for Haiti, a small yet powerful way to combat poverty and recycle at the same time.”



Visitors share a meal at the Mission House.

*“What the eye does not see,  
the heart does not feel”*

*(Haitian proverb)*

They visited PeaceCYCLE on their first day. What followed was volunteering at Mother Theresa’s hospital for children and Arc En Ciel an orphanage in the countryside, a visit to the Haitian National Museum and much more. The group also met with students from Outreach’s Education Sponsorship Program. Victoria, who now sponsors a high school

student in the program, hopes to have her teenager share her experience.

She says, “Haiti has so much to offer, and I hope to bring my daughter on an immersion trip in February 2018 so she can experience it for herself. I hope she gains a true understanding of the magnetism of Haiti, all of its many facets—not just the poverty—but also to learn how we can help facilitate change. I want her to see the richness of the countryside, and the peoples’ faithfulness to God which I experienced on my trip.”

For Victoria and countless others, what the eye has seen the heart has felt.

## Come visit Haiti!

In 2016, we recommended that many planned trips to Haiti be postponed because of unrest around the elections. Travel in 2017 has rebounded sharply! Twins are renewing relationships. First-time travelers are immersing themselves in Haiti to find out what it is like, and why so many people keep coming back. Aid workers are resuming their missions with a convenient, welcoming base from which to work. Read even more about the immersion trip experience in our Spring 2015 newsletter at [www.outreachtohaiti.org/newsletters](http://www.outreachtohaiti.org/newsletters)

Whether you are a seasoned visitor engaged in a twinning relationship, an aid worker looking to share much-needed skills, or a first-time visitor seeking a truly life-changing experience, Outreach has a place for you to stay and numerous ways to experience Haiti.

An immersion trip is scheduled for February 2018, or you can organize your own group. For more information on trip opportunities, or to be notified about other upcoming trips, call Rosanna at 860-800-3602, or email [info@outreachtohaiti.org](mailto:info@outreachtohaiti.org).

*espwa*

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## Outreach Partners visiting Haiti in 2017

Friends of Ecole Agape  
St. Elizabeth Seton, Rocky Hill CT  
St. Matthew, Tolland CT  
St. Anthony, Renton WA  
Bishop Cote  
St. Mark, Westbrook CT

Gannon University  
St. Mary, Coventry CT  
MATH: Medical Aid to Haiti  
Sacred Heart, Southbury CT  
Our Lady of Lourdes  
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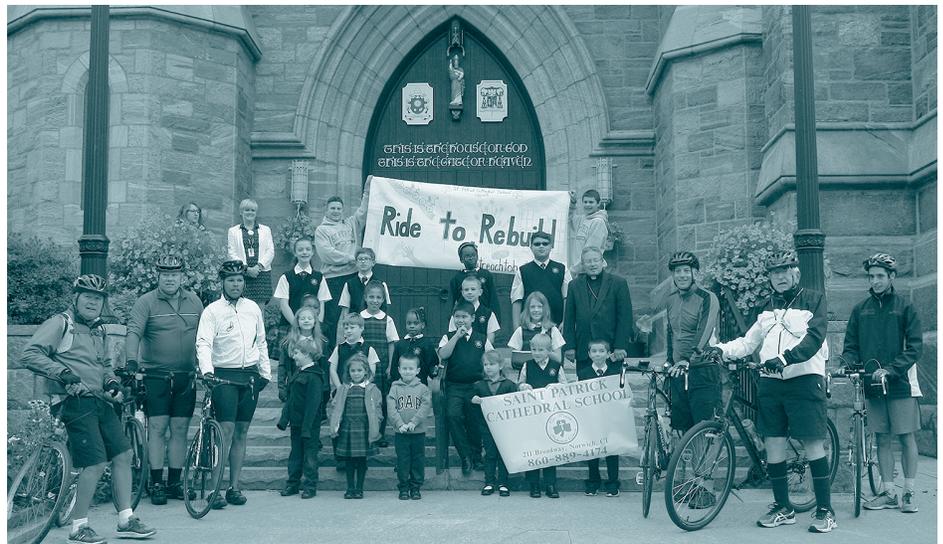
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## *Bike ride raises funds for Haiti*

A small team from Outreach to Haiti will start a five-day, 337-mile bike ride, touching five of the six New England states, on Sept. 25, 2017, to raise awareness and funds to support the mission in Haiti.

The goal of this year's ride is to raise money for the installation of solar power in the new Norwich Outreach Center in Haiti (construction to start early this fall). The Center has been in the planning stage for several years, with a capital campaign that met its target in late 2016.

Solar power is clearly a great power source for Haiti. With the intensity of the



*Day four of the 2016 ride stopped at Norwich Cathedral for Bishop Cote's blessing.*



sun, the system would quickly pay for itself. Besides being environmentally friendly, ongoing operating costs would be lower, allowing more money to go directly to helping patients and students.

The bike ride has been planned as a "virtual trip" across Haiti: the distance chosen for the trip is the distance from Jeremie on the West coast of Haiti, through the capital city of Port-au-

Prince, where Outreach is based, to Cap-Haitien on the North coast.

This is the third annual bike ride and upon completion, the total distance ridden will surpass 1,000 miles! In the first two years, the ride raised more than \$40,000.

See more on the ride on the website, and follow us at:  
[www.outreachtohaiti.org/ride-2017](http://www.outreachtohaiti.org/ride-2017)