

# MATH News

Winter 2017

Issue 4

M E D I C A L A I D T O H A I T I

Helping Haitians Heal Haitians

## HELP WANTED!

Dear Friends,

It's a "good news/bad news" situation. The good news is that MATH's mission in Haiti continues to grow! The more challenging news is that in order to meet these needs, two things are crucial – *more funds and more volunteers*. Adequate funding allows us to maximize the essential healthcare provided in Haiti by both the Haitian doctors and nurses who staff our medical missions. Here in Connecticut, it takes many interested and dedicated volunteers to provide the variety of skills needed behind-the-scenes to sustain an effective non-profit such as MATH.

Spread the word if you or someone you know can join us in *Helping Haitians Heal Haitians*, we're seeking volunteers for the following:

- ✓ **Marketing** – Brochures, newsletters and social media updates convey our mission to prospective donors. If you are creative and have experience in desktop publishing, copy writing, web design and social media savvy, we need your skill.
- ✓ **Grant Writing** – Grants are one of the most abundant and potential sources of funds for MATH, yet we're only scratching the surface. We're looking for an experienced grant writer to solicit grant-making organizations on behalf of MATH.
- ✓ **Development** – Fundraising for a charitable organization takes a special kind of person, and we desperately need that person. If you have Development experience – especially at the Board level – we'd love to have you on our team.

Please send me an email at [info@medicalaidtohaiti.com](mailto:info@medicalaidtohaiti.com) or call me at (860) 930-5582 if you'd like to discuss these volunteer opportunities. Thank you.

*Rick Thibadeau, President & Founder of MATH*



## IN MY OWN WORDS

Thomas H. Gorin, MD | Board Member, MATH

If you only know Haiti from news stories about the physical destruction from hurricanes and earthquakes, or the corruption of those who help themselves and not the people they serve, you are missing much of what is special about this Caribbean island country and its people.



There is a certain spirit in the people that energizes me each time I go and makes easy my decision to return. It is visible in the lives of the Haitian people who struggle to feed and clothe their families, to educate their children, and keep them healthy. Despite these hardships, there is a resilience and joy. What Haitians need from us is simply *opportunity*. I give my support and time to Medical Aid to Haiti because MATH's projects are partnerships providing opportunities to Haitian doctors, nurses, and staff so they may fulfill our mission of Helping Haitians Heal Haitians. I can only hope to improve the lives of the Haitians we serve to the same degree that their "spirit" enriches mine.

## An Opportunity



*The MATH mission teams serving Dame-Marie have included several Haitian medical professionals with specialties in anesthesiology, general surgery and OB-GYN. Team members take time from their families and their jobs to become an integral part of our mission of Helping Haitians Heal Haitians.*

*Dr. Esther Antoine-Dardignac and Dr. Benouchea Pierre have both been a participant in several Dame-Marie hospital missions and provide anesthesia support as part of the Saving Mothers of Dame-Marie project for one week each month since October 2016.*

*We asked them to share their experiences serving with MATH and their impact on the good people of Dame-Marie.*

"We do not really have the words to express our feelings when we have the opportunity to work with you, the very fact of doing this work that should be ours, that of caring for our brothers and sisters, all this translates your humanity with regard to the Haitian people. In fact, for me, Esther Antoine from Dame-Marie, your support for the people of my community facilitates the realization of my dreams of improving the level of health care at Dame-Marie.



Dr. Clark O'Brien flanked by Dr. Benouchea Pierre (left) and Dr. Esther Antoine-Dardignac (right) in the operating room at Hôpital de la Communaute Dame-Marienne

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L-R: Fr. Alvin LeBlanc, Anne D'Orvilliers, Rochelle Bard, Dr. Michael R. Bourque and Nicole Bard Lian at the Rochelle Bard and Friends present: Music from the Movies concert on October 1.



Dr. Soanna LaGuerre, Dame-Marie mission team member, (left center) with her father, Ricot LaGuerre (left), her cousin, Shawne Verna, RN (right center), and her boyfriend Jannel Fils-Aime (right) enjoying the wines presented by Missing Link Wine Co. and West Side Wines and Spirits at Autumn's Palette Wine Tasting and Auction on October 20

**Save the Date: Sunday, February 25, 2018**  
The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Winter White Party will be held at Salute, Hartford, CT.  
Join us for an afternoon of fun, food, music and teacup raffle

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"And for me Benouchea Pierre, who is not from Dame-Marie, I am sometimes moved not only because of the obvious will of the people of this locality who are looking for the health care generally considered a luxury in this country, but also the demonstration of their gratitude after receiving the care. All of this has a positive impact on our personal lives and being part of the MATH mission puts us face-to-face with the reality of our brothers and sisters' daily lives and also to feel useful when we contribute to the well-being of others.

"Finally, we still have to wish you courage, because we are witnesses to your sacrifices. Even when there is no infrastructure in our country, you are always determined, motivated to make this long journey, no matter how tiring, for the purpose of bringing your support in medical care for Dame-Marie. Best regards!!! Benouchea and Esther"

*Dr. Esther Antoine-Dardignac* is an anesthesiologist working with Nos Petits Frères et Soeurs in Haiti. She graduated from ELAM (Escuela Latino-Americano) Facultad #2 in Santiago, Cuba in 2006 and completed residency in anesthesia at Hôpital de l'Université d'Etat d'Haiti (HUEH) 2016. Dr. Antoine-Dardignac has been married for eight years to her husband, Hugue Dardignac, and they live with their 5-year old daughter, Andriana Sterline, in Port-au-Prince.

*Dr. Benouchea Pierre* is an anesthesiologist also working with Nos Petits Frères et Soeurs. She attended medical school in Haiti at Université Notre Dame d'Haiti and completed a residency in anesthesia at HUEH in 2015. Dr. Pierre married her husband, Saveur MacKendy, in 2014, and they live with their 20-month old son, Beckendy Angel Saveur, in Port-au-Prince.



L-R: Dr. Marie Yolaine Chery, Dr. Benouchea Pierre, Dr. Joseph Glavylove, Dr. Esther Antoine-Dardignac and Dr. Michael R. Bourque with headlamps donated by The Church of St. Timothy, West Hartford, CT

## 2018 Calendar

### Mission Trips

#### **Dame-Marie**

February 3 – 11  
May 19 – 26  
September 8 – 15  
November 3 – 10

#### **Port-au-Prince**

February 11 – 18  
May 26 – June 2  
September 15 – 22  
November 10 – 17

### Upcoming Events

#### **CT Walks for Haiti**

Saturday, April 21  
St. Peter Claver  
West Hartford

#### **Volunteer Appreciation Picnic**

Sunday, June 10  
Winding Trails  
Farmington

## Purpose of My Life...

*Since 2014, the fixed clinic has provided primary medical care and is gaining a reputation for quality care in OB-GYN and pediatrics.*

**MATH**  
PORT-AU-PRINCE  
PROJECT

*Dr. Wilkens Gilbert, Medical Director, and Pharah Ilvers, RN, Head Nurse Coordinator, and the staff of CMCQ and Karavàn Lasante are shining examples of Haitians healing Haitians. We asked Pharah to introduce herself with some biographical information. Here is what she shared:*

"My name is Pharah Ilvers and I am 26 years old, a Registered Nurse and a law student. I was born in Cap-Haitien and stayed there until I was 23. I don't have much free time, but when I do, I like to read and watch medical or law series like Grey's Anatomy or Suits or Scandal. I also like to write and spend time writing story or thoughts about Haitian life. My childhood was not easy like many Haitians but I have very good memories. Of course, I have bad memories too.



Karavàn Lasante mobile clinic team - L-R: Pharah Ilvers RN, Dr. Edyl Mystal, Maelie Marius RN, Fresly Toussaint, Prénord Ilvse, Hermeline Charles RN

"One person I liked spending time with was my grandmother. She was so wise and so sweet and spent one week per month with us. One day she was washing clothes and felt a pain in her chest and died. I was 9 years old and standing right next to her. The doctor said we could have saved her if we knew what to do to reanimate her, and I think that was the day I decided to work in the medical field.

"My mom liked the idea but knew I needed good basics to get into a good medical university. I was so excited to go to this new school but the first day I got in, a neighbor told me this school was too good, too expensive and I won't have the level enough to graduate. I went home and talked to my mom, who told me that when someone says you can't do something, you can give up and make that person happy, or work hard and make yourself happy. I choose to work hard and make myself happy.

"I have worked hard making the honor boards in high school and nursing school, and will graduate from law school on December 17. I am a nurse working for Karavàn Lasante, the mobile clinic. I like educating patients. I like to see the happiness in their eyes when they get well. I feel what I am doing is important. But most of all, I know that their life is very important and count. They trust me and I don't want to let them fall.

"I hope one day, to have a master degree in public health and have the knowledge to try bigger things. For now, I am doing my part as a nurse and that makes me so happy. My work gives me a sense of purpose to my life. Helping others is the biggest thing that someone can make in their whole life."

## TO DONATE, VOLUNTEER, ADVOCATE OR FOLLOW US:

**MATH**  
Medical Aid To Haiti

Medical Aid to Haiti, Inc.  
80 South Main Street | West Hartford, CT 06107  
To donate or for more information, please call 860-760-7009  
or visit us at [www.medicalaidtohaiti.org](http://www.medicalaidtohaiti.org)



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