

MATH+ News

Winter 2019
Issue 8

M E D I C A L A I D T O H A I T I Helping Haitians Heal Haitians

Bittersweet - A Decade Milestone at a Time of Strife

Dear Friends,

As we mark the 10-year anniversary of MATH, Haiti is again in the grips of a humanitarian crisis. Political and economic turmoil has essentially shutdown the country causing widespread shortages of everything, including food and medicines. Traveling within Haiti is virtually impossible which has necessitated changes in our Haitian projects and forced the cancellation of multiple MATH mission trips.

Haiti will overcome the current crisis and its people will continue their difficult life journey. Right now, it is more important than ever for MATH to fulfill its mission of *Helping Haitians Heal Haitians*.

Thank you to everyone who have made MATH possible.

Rick Thibadeau, President & Founder of MATH



IN MY OWN WORDS

Stephen Moran, DDS | Dame-Marie Mission Team Volunteer



It was a distinct pleasure and privilege to be a new member of the September 2019 Dame-Marie mission trip and offer dental services to 50 patients. A few patients received preventative care but many required extractions due to the lack of dental care we take for granted in the US. The journey to this isolated village was arduous and allowed me to see both the beautiful countryside and the crushing poverty in the villages along the way. Crowds of patients arrived and waited in long lines; some in rags, many in their Sunday best, all hopeful that they would be helped. It was wonderful to witness and be a part of such a talented and dedicated group of Americans and Haitians working together to provide medical services to a population so desperately in need and so grateful that we were there. It was most gratifying, both personally and professionally, to have been a part of this effort!



What a difference a decade makes!

A snapshot of the progress MATH has made thanks to you — our volunteers, donors and partners.



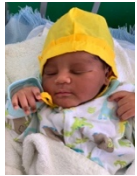
2009 HUMBLE BEGINNINGS – MATH is founded and dedicated to providing medical care to underserved villagers around Port-au-Prince, with the goal to put in place a continuum of care through a collaboration with Haitian medical partners, who are on the front lines. A mobile clinic staff made up of a Haitian doctor and 3 nurses begins weekly visits to four sites. Initially run from the bed of a borrowed pick-up truck, primary health care and medications are provided to ~200 patients weekly and US-based teams visit 1-2 times a year.



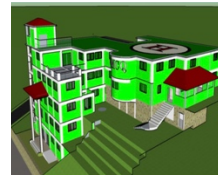
2013 EXPANDING REACH OF SERVICES – Centre Medico-Chirurgical du Quartier (CMCQ) is opened under the direction of Haitian surgeon, Dr. Wilkens Gilbert, and staffed by Haitian medical and administrative personnel. The neighborhood and mobile clinic arm, Karavan Lasante, offer maternal and pediatric health care, medications, and basic laboratory testing at five sites. Annual patient visits have grown from 9,000 to 17,000 and US-based mission teams provide vision/eyeglass clinics and collaborate on OB / GYN, ultrasound and laboratory services.



2014 SURGICAL SERVICES CHANGE LIVES – Medical professionals and support from St. Francis Hospital (Hartford, CT) and beyond provide surgical services at Hôpital de la Communaute Dame-Marienne (HCDM) in Dame-Marie in collaboration with the Antoine family. To date, 21 mission weeks have provided over 450 life-changing surgeries and 5,000 health care visits in this remote and impoverished fishing village of 40,000.



2016 SAVING MOTHERS IN DAME-MARIE – This project provides a Haitian OB/GYN and an anesthesiologist on-site 24/7 to handle childbirth emergencies and prenatal visits. Over 100 emergency Cesarean sections, 850 full-term deliveries and 6,500 prenatal visits have been performed.



2016 A HOSPITAL WHERE THERE WAS NONE – Our partner in Haiti, Dr. Wilkens Gilbert, begins construction of Hôpital Bellevue-La-Montagne (HBLM). The ambulatory care clinic is open for the 100,000 villagers in and around Marlique, and surgical services, dental and other specialties are to be added in the years ahead.



2017 HELPING HAITIANS HEAL HAITIANS – Surgeons, anesthesiologists, and specialists from Port-au-Prince travel to Dame-Marie on MATH missions bringing skills, expertise and passionate care to their fellow countrymen. Haitian student nurses from a local university receive clinical training, and CMCQ / HBLM staff continue to be a welcome sight to the villagers needing primary, maternal and pediatric health care.

TODAY – Through the years, MATH's mission to *Help Haitians Heal Haitians* has been steadfast through periods of natural disaster and civil unrest. The current turmoil in Haiti has necessitated cancellation of mission trips and changes to clinic operations. Haitians clog the streets protesting fuel shortages, governmental corruption, crippling inflation and a spike in crime. Protests have turned violent and the US Department of State advises against non-essential travel to Haiti. Most businesses are shut down and schools have been closed for months now. Transportation within Haiti has virtually ceased leading to dire shortages of essentials, most importantly food and medical supplies and reports from our Haitian medical partners indicate that malnutrition and starvation are increasing. **In this crisis, many healthcare facilities have closed, yet the painstaking efforts of our Haitians partners have kept our hospitals and clinics open. They continue to provide medical services up to six days per week. Open clinic and hospitals are indeed a welcome sight to villagers, who make their way on foot to receive care in an emergency and for acute or chronic illness.**

LOOK TO THE FUTURE – Our Haitian medical partners benefit tremendously from a collaborative relationship with MATH. The partnership is a two-way street with funding and appeal efforts coming from both entities and Haitian personnel eager to serve, collaborate and receive additional training in surgical and clinical practices when U.S. mission teams visit. We have come a long way and have goals for the future.

Dame-Marie: Full-time, on-site Haitian surgical team – Hôpital de la Communaute Dame-Marienne is the only medical facility within a 5-hour walk and general surgery is scheduled only when surgical teams visit. With the recently cancelled mission trips, over 75 surgeries were not performed, and patients suffer while awaiting the next surgical mission team to safely make their way to Dame-Marie.

Port-au-Prince: Fully outfit and open the new operating rooms – Newly constructed Hôpital Bellevue-La-Montagne awaits proper equipment (e.g., anesthesia, electrosurgical, surgical tools etc.) to facilitate life-altering surgeries for villagers who, up to now, have no access or cannot afford life-altering / life-saving surgery.

This progress has been possible because of you, our donors and volunteers. THANK YOU!

2020 Calendar

Events

6th Annual Winter White Party, February 2, 2020

11th CT Walks for Haiti, April 25, 2020

Mission Trips

Dame-Marie

February 08 – 15 2020

May 23 – 30, 2020

September 12 – 19, 2020

November 07 – 14, 2020

Port-au-Prince

February 15 – 22, 2020

May 20 – June 06, 2020

September 19 – 26, 2020

November 14 – 21, 2020

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Medical Aid to Haiti, Inc.

80 South Main Street | West Hartford, CT 06107

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