

# Hearts with Haiti



*Fall 2022 Newsletter*



[www.heartswithhaiti.org](http://www.heartswithhaiti.org)

# Life is in full bloom at the St. Joseph Family

In August and September, Renee Dietrich, the Communications and Sponsorship Director for Hearts with Haiti and the Director of Communications and Development for the St. Joseph Family, traveled to Haiti for the first time since the start of the pandemic. Since 2002, she lived and worked in Haiti. However, because of COVID and the increasing insecurity and instability, she temporarily relocated to the U.S. and worked remotely starting in March 2020.

During her visit, Renee saw firsthand the many challenges in Haiti right now, but she also experienced many incredible joys of being back with the St. Joseph Family.

Renee reported that the SJF leaders are doing a remarkable job of maintaining and expanding the mission, even in the midst of constant uncertainty, skyrocketing prices, and daily violence. The residents at Wings of Hope are all happy and healthy. She saw a lot of growth since she was last with them. Lekòl Sen Trinite was busy preparing for the new school year, including gathering supplies and books purchased with support from our generous donors this summer. The start of school has been delayed by the violence and chaos, but when schools are allowed to open, LST will be ready. The SJ Community Outreach Center has begun dance classes to reach out to the youth in the neighborhood.

While she was there, Renee witnessed a new life skills program at Wings of Hope. The Wings residents are learning about self-care, hygiene, self-advocacy, nutrition, cooking, washing dishes, cleaning, making beds. The residents are learning new skills as well as

gaining self-confidence and seeing their value in being able to care for themselves and help around the house.

Those classes and self-confidence are providing an unexpected value due to the current situation in Haiti. There are times when some employees cannot get to work because of the violence and roadblocks. On those days, several of the Wings residents volunteer to help clean around the house. They are living the Haitian proverb, "Little by little the bird makes its nest."

The new solar power system at Wings is amazing, providing electricity 24/7 at Wings, as well as at LST and the Wings Welcome Center. This was made possible by a very generous Hearts with Haiti donor. Because of the lack of fuel available in Haiti, if

it were not for the solar power system, there would be no electricity at Wings. Being able to have lights, fans, and the ability to charge phones and other devices is life-changing for the Wings residents and staff.

While in Haiti, Renee was able to help complete some improvement projects at Wings and LST. New murals, both inside and outside the Wings facility are providing beauty to daily life. New benches will welcome the LST students back to school. Some necessary repairs were done at Wings of Hope.

**"To see the growth in self-confidence, maturity, and skills of the Wings of Hope residents in the past 2 1/2 years was absolutely incredible. To see their determination, and the level of care and compassion from the Wings staff, is inspiring."**

*~ Renee Dietrich*



# Lekòl Sen Trinite is ready for learning

Almost 300 students are registered at Lekòl Sen Trinite for the 2022-2023 school year. Books and school supplies have all been purchased, thanks to the generous donors to Hearts with Haiti. Improvements have been made to the LST building and the rooms are ready for learning.

However, the start to the 2022-2023 school year was delayed due to the violence and political and social protests in Haiti.

We are excited that this year ninth grade will be added to LST. This is the final step in the three-year plan to add the middle school classes to the school, a requirement from the Haitian Ministry of Education. The new classrooms for the seventh, eighth and ninth grades were completed with funding from HWH.

During the 2021-2022 school year, there were 263 students enrolled at LST. The school employed 21 classroom teachers, 4 arts education teachers, 2 after-school program teachers, 2 administration, and 5 support staff.

Besides a tuition-free quality education, the students receive all school supplies and books at no cost, are served a hot meal every day, and have access to after-

school tutoring and enrichment programs. The school administration reaches out to help their families whenever possible and necessary.



## WINGS OF HOPE BY THE NUMBERS

 Nights of shelter provided:  
**12,045**

 Meals for residents & live-in staff:  
**42,705**

 People employed:  
**45**

In 2021, we provided shelter, food, and clothing for 33 residents including: clean water, medicine, hygiene and medical supplies, therapy, hospital care, and Covid-19 prevention supplies.

***The current political, social, and economic woes in Haiti are increasing the daily challenges for the St. Joseph Family. The SJF leadership is doing their best to address the ever evolving situation. Some of the major challenges include:***

**WATER:** There are two types of water that must be purchased in Haiti — drinking water and non-potable water used for hygiene and cleaning. Purified drinking water is no longer available for purchase because of supply chain and fuel issues. Wings is currently purifying its own drinking water, five gallons at a time. Non-potable water is purchased in tanker trucks and held in a cistern at the facilities. Since February, the cost of a tanker of water has tripled.

**FOOD & SUPPLIES:** Because of the lack of fuel, protests, and insecurity issues, supplies of food and other necessary items are extremely limited, and when items can be found, the costs are skyrocketing. Between February and

September, the average cost for food and other vital supplies used by Wings increased by an average of 70%.

**MOVEMENT:** It is extremely dangerous, and often impossible, to move about Haiti in general because of protests and gang violence. Roads are often blocked with protests. Robberies and kidnappings are a common occurrence. This includes not only movement between cities like between Port-au-Prince and Jacmel, but also movement within communities.

**COMMUNICATION:** The communication companies are dealing with the lack of fuel, so they often must shut down cell towers. These means cell phones

don't always work. Most people use their cell phones for an internet connection also, so that cuts off their access to the internet and communication with the outside world.

**INSECURITY:** Because of the protests and gang violence many daily activities have been disrupted. Banks are often closed so people can't get funds. Businesses are often closed and supplies are limited. Fuel is available only on the black market and may cost \$20-\$40 per gallon when it can be found. Often, SJF employees can't make it safely to work because of roadblocks. The start of school was delayed because the students and staff could not travel safely.

## WAYS TO GIVE!

Donate by credit card or PayPal  
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Donate by check to our office

Donate stock by calling or email-  
ing us for instructions:  
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[info@heartswithhaiti.org](mailto:info@heartswithhaiti.org)

Choose "Hearts with Haiti, Inc" on  
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more sustainable future  
for the young people  
of Haiti since 2001*

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*Giving Tuesday is November 29*

# Generosity Unites Us All

Giving Tuesday is an opportunity for people around the world to stand together in unity—to use their individual power of generosity to remain connected and heal. Generosity gives everyone the power to make a positive change in the lives of others. Make your gift and help create a caring family for those facing the challenges of poverty and disability in Haiti.

### **DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT!**

Thanks to a very generous Secret Santa, all donations through the end of the year will be matched, up to \$50,000. So, give now to have your donation doubled!

All online donors to Hearts with Haiti on Nov. 29 are eligible for a drawing to win an original Christmas painting by an art student from the SJF.

**GIVING TUESDAY**

# The ARTS give LIFE

Hearts with Haiti is proud of its partnership with Broadway for Arts Education (BAE) which provides classes in art, dance, drumming, and singing for the students at Lekòl Sen Trinite, the residents at Wings of Hope, and those at the SJ Community Outreach Center. These classes provide enrichment and cultural awareness for the children. The classes allow the participants to develop their self-confidence and bring joy to their hearts.

HWH and BAE will hold their annual fundraiser for this program on November 5 in Richmond, VA.

**Donate to this event at: [www.heartswithhaiti.org](http://www.heartswithhaiti.org)**

