



SANTE TOTAL

*Healthcare for Haiti's Poor*

## Winter 2019 Newsletter

*Sante Total, which means “Total Health” in Haitian Kreyol, aims to provide sustainable healthcare to rural communities in the central plateau region of Haiti. We believe you can only improve health through eradicating the disease of poverty. The Sante Total approach considers the entire person – physical health, well-being, education, and employment, to be essential to health and quality of life.*



Sunrise from the clinic

### **FUTURE MEDICAL TEAM DATES**

**January 26 – February 1, 2020**

**May 23-30, 2020**

Be a part of the team! Contact us at

[santetotal.healthcare@gmail](mailto:santetotal.healthcare@gmail.com)

Dear friends of Sante Total,

I would like to start by thanking you all for your support of Sante Total. Without your help, we would not have been able to support the wide range of projects that are currently running in Jacsonville.

I write this letter with a heart full of admiration for our friends and colleagues in Haiti. As many of you know, the struggle between President Jovenel Moïse and a surging opposition movement has led to violent demonstrations and barricaded streets across the country, rendering roads impassable and making living conditions even more difficult. Outrage over allegations that the government misappropriated billions of dollars meant for social development projects provided the initial impetus for the protests which have continued to intensify over the past months.

Against this backdrop of chaos, Sante Total has continued to do our best to support the community of Jacsonville. We hope that you will think of the people of Jacsonville, Haiti, during this season of giving and share generously to support the projects needed to improve their quality of life.

Current giving opportunities include:

**Medical clinic furniture and supplies:** We need to raise \$6000 for exam tables, chairs and equipment for the new clinic.

**Ongoing expenses for medical trips, medications and future clinic personnel:** We spend approximately \$3000 on medications per trip and will need money for staff salaries for future clinics.

**School lunch program:** \$100 will provide school lunches for one child for the entire school year

**CHEAHP seniors program:** \$100 will sponsor weekly food and meetings

**Sustainable Agriculture Program:** FanFan is starting a “plow and oxen” project and they are continuing to work on other sustainable agriculture programs.

**Educational Support:** We are spending over \$10, 000 a year to support students from Jacsonville. This money covers the tuition, room and board of several students: two teachers, one University student (Maisson) who is studying education, a nurse and a medical student who is studying in the Dominican Republic.

For a more detailed update of our activities:

**May Trip:** Despite the difficulties, four brave Docs went to Haiti from May 4<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>, treating over 320 people. I was one of them and quickly developed an incredible appreciation for this team. We worked long days, pulling all our own charts, counting out all of the medications, then spending long hours in the evening finishing and filing charts, and had a rewarding time (at least I did) doing it. The Haitian dental team saw over 80 patients and is working very hard to do more prevention to preserve adult teeth. They did plenty of extractions, but also filled cavities and performed routine cleanings. We plan on continuing this service because there is a huge need for this service. Lack of dental care and the habit of chewing on sugar cane do not fit well together!



May 2019 Trip Participants

We saw many of our chronic patients, but also saw some new faces, many of them from Jacsonville. In addition to the standard rashes, high blood pressure and diabetes, we are now managing two more insulin dependent diabetics, helping them to buy their insulin. We are also working to find surgery for an 11 month old with a cleft palate who needs surgery to close the opening that connects her mouth and nose so that she will be able to eat and will be able to learn to speak, but the difficulties with roadblocks and transportation have made it difficult to obtain care for her.

The trip was very different from the big trips I've been on in the past but was good in different ways. We collaborated much more closely with our Haitian colleagues who helped us with the vitals and in the pharmacy area. We didn't really notice the unrest that week because Pignon was quiet, but we did experience very bad traffic in Port au Prince going to and from the airport. Imagine my chagrin when we arrived at the airport and finally had WiFi and I received 5 text messages from the State Department about riots in Port au Prince! Unfortunately, Haiti was too unstable for us to go in September, the first trip we have cancelled since 2009!

We will resume our trips in January and hope that the country will stay quiet!



**School Lunch Program:** We have prioritized the school lunch program because for many children of Jacsonville, school lunch is the only meal they receive all day. The rates of malnutrition and wasting are increasing as the cost of food increases and the transportation problems have caused a scarcity of all necessities.

We received a grant for \$4000 from the St. Thomas of Villanova Parish for the School Lunch Program and raised an additional \$2000 of matching funds and located an organization that provides food for school lunches at a greatly reduced cost. Unfortunately, the gas shortages and road blocks have brought transportation to a halt. The organization tried to ship the food from their warehouse and the truck was attacked by desperate, hungry people, and all the food was stolen. The truck was also damaged, so we will not be able to receive any food from them until things improve. We have now sent money directly to Gaby to buy the food locally, but the price of food has soared. A bag of beans costs almost twice as much as it did last year and other food prices have also almost doubled. We will continue to support this project to the best of our abilities because early nutrition is so important for the children of Jacsonville!



**Permanent Clinic:** Thanks to the Rotary Club of Ellicott City and the architect, Bruno Reich, as well as the hard work of Gaby Thelus and the other Haitians in Jacsonville, the clinic is progressing nicely. Despite the difficult working conditions, transportation issues, and shortage of supplies, the electrical work and plumbing are done, the windows and plastering have been completed, and they have started working on the tile floors and bathrooms. We are hoping that the clinic will be finished by March, and we can then work on furnishings and personnel. This project has become even more urgent with the current situation and our inability to provide our usual medical trips!



Truck Delivering Concrete for Construction of the New Clinic Building

**Sustainable Food Project:** John Gallini has continued to work on sustainable agriculture projects with FanFan. We will be providing 2,500 for an expansion of a project to provide plows and oxen to the farmers to improve the yield of their fields.



**Seniors program:** Berteau has continued to provide weekly meetings and monthly dinners for the retired and medically fragile of Jacsonville. We will be providing money for their Christmas party, which will include a dinner and small gifts for all. It has been such a difficult year that this party will be extremely important to boost morale!

**Jacsonville - The Orchard:** FanFan visited Jacsonville in late September 2019 to provide a report on the status of the trees in the orchard and those distributed to farmers. The plans to keep the land cultivated so that a second crop could be grown had not yet been started. This has led to the trees growing slowly since they competed with other vegetation for water and nutrients. FanFan also noted that *“I notice the soil of Jacksonville can grow well Cherry, Papaya and Tamarin. In addition to the Citrus adapts well there too but mango can not grow well except if we improve the soil. In general, people of Jacsonville do not plant Avocado there because they think that fruit does not adapt to their soil. So, all the farmers who received Avocado planted them in other areas.”*

When FanFan returned in December, the field had been cultivated and was ready for planting, which should provide a better environment for the fruit trees.

**Jacsonville – The Farmers:** Most of the seedlings distributed to the farmers in Jacsonville seemed to be doing well. Cherry trees had already produced fruit.



M. Fones – Cherry grows well and is already producing fruit!

**Chantal – The Nursery:** The fruit tree nursery in Chantal continues its work of producing seedlings for the farmers.



The Chantal Nursery

**Chantal – The Farmers:** A large number of seedlings were distributed to farmers last spring. Many of those seedlings are doing quite well.

**Chantal – The Plow Project:** In August, we provided funds for the purchase of two oxen and a plow. Three months later there are already fields planted with beans. Fanfan sent photos of a dozen fields that had been plowed.



**Next Steps:** We plan to continue supporting the Chantal nursery as long as there is a demand for the seedlings. We still hope to obtain MayaNut seeds to see how that might fit. We will also continue to monitor the progress of the trees that have been planted, both in Jacsonville and Chantal. Also in Chantal, we will purchase another pair of oxen and a plow in order to increase the amount of land available for planting.

**Educational programs:** We have started supporting Bicovensen Zephir, a third year medical student who is studying in the Dominican Republic. The medical schools there are more organized and provide a better education than those in Haiti, and the country is much more stable. We are excited to be supporting another medical student from Jacksonville! Unfortunately, the students who have been training to become teachers have not been able to start school yet this year because of the political situation. We will be supporting two elementary school teachers, and Maisson is going to start his college degree in education as soon as the schools open, which we hope will be very soon!

In closing, Mesi Anpil (thank you so much), for your generosity. As always, I am in awe of the generosity you have all showed through your donations of time, energy, and money, and your willingness to help! Here's to the hope that someday soon, we will work ourselves out of a job! I wish you all a Happy Holiday season and safe journeys!

Sincerely,

Barbara Weis, MD, MPH&TM  
Executive Director, Sante Total

### Funds Needed For Sante Total

Please consider donating to Sante Total. We are running very low on funds which will make it difficult for us to continue to support our projects in Jacksonville. We are making progress, but please remember we still need ongoing financial support to continue projects throughout the year! Our cupboards are looking quite barren! Even \$20 can go a long way in Haiti. **Please designate: "Sante Total" for your contributions.** There are two ways to give a tax-deductible donation:

1. **Visit our website** at [www.santetotal.org](http://www.santetotal.org) and make a donation via Paypal.
2. **Write a check** payable to: "Sante Total" and mail it to: Sante Total, 2901 Ridgelake Drive, Suite 205, Metairie, LA 70002

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Lisa Reed  
Dr. Charles Grassi  
Dr. Barbara Weis  
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