



SANTE TOTAL
Healthcare for Haiti's Poor

Fall Newsletter *December 2023*



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.

FUTURE MEDICAL TEAM DATES

On hold due to safety concerns

Be a part of the team! Contact us at
santetotal.healthcare@gmail.com



Dear friends,

We thank you so much for your ongoing support of Sante Total. The situation in Haiti has continued to deteriorate, and our Haitian partners (Gaby, Berteau, and so many others) are courageously struggling to improve their community and to help people despite the terrible conditions. Fuel is expensive and scarce, making it difficult to transport food and vital supplies from one part of the country to the other, and the banks are still difficult to access because of heightened security. This is making it difficult to get anything done at the clinic or any other projects, as you can imagine. Gaby said that many families don't have enough food, and the UN confirms that Haiti faces tremendous food insecurity.

Despite the difficulties, people go to work and to church, kids go to school, and life goes on in Jacsonville. Sante Total is doing our best to continue our work in the community. As you'll learn in this newsletter, we have completed a Cholera prevention project, obtained two Rotary Grants for furnishings and equipment for the clinic thanks to the Ellicott City rotary club, and obtained a School Lunch Grant thanks to the St. Thomas of Villanova Parish. Two of the students we have supported have graduated and two are working their way through school.

Gaby sends his greeting to all, saying "Hi guys. I was lost in this crazy world. Haiti is a headache continuously. Consider what the riots did, the actions of the gangster, Lord have mercy! It is harder to administrate the activities in the community. Anyway, we still have hope, another tomorrow is possible. Thank you for the support Sante Total is giving for the community. It is a bright spot during a very difficult time."

Thank you so much from the bottom of our hearts!

Barbara Weis, MD MPHTM

Executive Director, Sante Total



Current Environment in Haiti

Information gathered from Human Rights Watch, PBS, and the New York Times.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Since the assassination of President Jovenal Moïse in July 2021, Haiti has descended into a crisis characterized by **political deadlock, extreme violence, and dire humanitarian conditions**.
 - Haiti lacks a single democratically elected official, and the caretaker government led by Prime Minister Ariel Henry has been struggling to organize elections.
- **Criminal gangs** have taken over, especially in Port-au-Prince.
 - Between January and June 2023, **2,094 homicides** were committed (67.5% more than the second half of 2022), and kidnappings continue to rise.
 - ~195,000 people have been displaced due to violence since 2022.
- **Corruption** is rampant, and many of the criminal groups have alleged ties with senior political officials and police officers.
- 30% more children in Haiti are suffering from **life-threatening malnutrition** this year compared to 2022.
- **Cholera** has been on the rise since January and February, with 33,661 suspected cases and 2,439 confirmed cases.

Current Environment in Haiti

Information gathered from Human Rights Watch, PBS, and the New York Times.

HIGHLIGHTS

- This summer, the Haitian Women's Soccer Team competed in the **World Cup** for the first time ever!
- Although the circumstances in Haiti are dire, other countries are **stepping in to help**.
 - In October, the U.N. Security Council approved sending an international police force led by Kenya to Haiti. Kenya signed on to send 1,000 police officers, and Washington pledged \$100 million and logistical support. Though the police force is currently on hold, the hope is that they will soon deploy to Haiti.
 - If international assistance does succeed in pushing back the gangs, there's still a need to address Haiti's lack of governance and political power vacuum.
- Despite these circumstances, we are forging ahead with our projects because **we can still help**! Our projects are designed to develop local resources and to provide health care, nutrition, education, and so much more, and our Haitian partners need our support now more than ever. Thank you for helping us reach our goals!

Featured Board Member: Carl Mickman, MD

Carl Mickman, MD, Board Member is an emergency medicine physician specializing in point-of-care ultrasound with a profound commitment to global health. Originally from Minnesota, Dr. Mickman's journey in humanitarian work began in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina when he relocated to New Orleans to contribute to the city's rebuilding efforts and served as a high school science teacher for two years. He attended medical school at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center and became involved with Sante Total in 2011, when he spent 7 weeks with two other researchers conducting a community needs assessment. The outcomes of this study laid the foundation for impactful initiatives like handwashing and latrine construction within the community. With a total of 13 visits to Haiti, Dr. Mickman immersed himself in the local culture, learning Haitian Kreyol with the help of the children, two of whom are now pursuing higher education in pharmacy and administration. His enduring connections with these individuals and the wider community remain a testament to his genuine and lasting impact.

Favorite thing about working with Sante Total:

providing medical care to individuals who have never received formal healthcare



While Dr. Mickman is currently based in New Orleans, his dedication extends to working with Lakota and Ojibwe tribes on Indian Reservations. In addition to his extensive work in Haiti with Sante Total, he collaborates with several other global health organizations, focusing on expanding the use of ultrasound use in resource-limited settings. Dr. Mickman's teaching efforts have spanned multiple countries, including Haiti (Project Medishare), Mozambique (PLEDGE Health), Rwanda (PURE), Uganda (Global Emergency Care) and Democratic Republic of Congo (Doctors Without Borders). He is currently working on expanding ultrasound quality improvement and accessibility with the Indian Health Service.

Project Updates



COVID-19 Update

COVID-19 Update

It is still difficult to estimate the prevalence of COVID in Jacksonville because there isn't much testing. The vaccine is available, but not many people are willing to get it because they are afraid it will make them sick.

Cholera Prevention Project

- Myrbensly Desir (Ben-Ben) notified us in February that his pharmacy school did random cholera testing on stool samples and found a very high prevalence rate. Thanks to the support of the UU Congregation of Rockville and other donors, **we were able to launch our cholera prevention program in June.**
- The intrepid team (including Ben-Ben, Maisson (admin student), Ketteline (nurse), Elinot, and Garel) spent 10 days visiting 295 households and the school and churches in Jacsonville providing health education on modes of transmission, signs and symptoms and preventive measures.
- They reached **1327 people** (586 adults, 270 youth, 471 children) & distributed **16 hand washing stations**, soap, and clorox to all the households and discussed water sanitation.
- Due to their efforts, Jacsonville had very few cases of cholera. Per Ben Ben: **"Together we did a good job. Thank you Sante Total."**



The Cholera Project Team



A hand-washing demo at one of the schools



Clinic Construction

Furniture Grant



The furniture grant supported by the Rotary of Ellicott City provided funds to build benches and chairs and to purchase equipment. The furniture is almost completed, and thanks to another equipment grant, we were able to obtain a microscope, centrifuge, computers, and other necessary items for the clinic. Since we cannot fly to Haiti, we are in the process of moving the equipment to the DR thanks to Dr. Joel Goodman, and are hoping that when the border opens, Bico, the medical student we have been supporting in the DR, will be able to get it to Jacsonville.

In the meanwhile, we have spent **thousands of dollars to support patients** from the community who need funds for medical care. We recently paid for the cast for a 3-year-old who broke her leg in a terrible accident. She waited three days for a cast because the family couldn't afford to pay for it until Gaby intervened.

Students & Scholarships

We have invested **over \$18,000 dollars in scholarships** for students who will help us staff the permanent clinic including: one medical, one nursing, one pharmacy and one administrative student.

Ketteline

has finished her nursing degree and has been working as a nurse at the school. In addition, she helps with screening at blood pressure clinics for patients. As soon as we have a physician to work in the clinic, she will spend some days helping there.

Maisson

is in his third year of administration at the university and doing well despite the chaos.

Bicovensen

is in his final year of med school in the DR, which consists of an internship. When the border with the DR was closed, it put him in a difficult situation because they have refused to renew all Haitian student visas, but he is hoping to make it through the end of his training by using his student ID.



A picture of Bico after receiving his intern badge

Students & Scholarships: Congratulations Myrbensly (Ben-Ben)!



Ben-Ben with his mom at his graduation

- Myrbensly (Ben-Ben) graduated from pharmacy school on October 8th **at the top of his class** and gave the graduation address.
- He will hopefully be able to start **organizing the clinic pharmacy and lab** soon.
- Here are some photos from the graduation ceremony and his Laureat address.



School Update

The school currently has **120 students** enrolled. They have reopened the middle school, which was closed several years ago due to a teacher shortage. Gaby said in a recent message “About the school, it is going well. We are doing the examination for the school year. Three more will be done before ending the academic year.”

We received a **large grant** from the St. Thomas of Villanova Parish again this year, which covers the **school lunch program**. Although the delivery was difficult due to fuel and security issues, the school has received its delivery of food for the year. The food could not be delivered to Jacksonville directly and the many recipients in the Jacksonville area had to work together to pick it up in Cap Haitian. The food from the organization is being supplemented with local food to make it “taste more like the Haitian food the kids are used to. Otherwise, they won’t eat it” per Gaby.

The **small libraries project** is moving forward, and they are using the books provided by the small grant facilitated by the Dells family in the classrooms.

Several generous donors provided the funds for the **solar panels** to provide basic electricity to the school. Gaby is still getting estimates for this project so he can try to get a reasonable price.



St. Rose Kindergarten and First Grade Class



St. Rose Opening Ceremony

Update from Berteau's Group

- Berteau continues to hold weekly meetings at **CHEAHP** (the Center for the Handicapped and Aged).
- He also puts on a huge **Christmas party** which was attended by over 350 people last year. Food is more expensive, so we have increased support to \$500 a month.

Donations for this project would help us to increase the amount of food we distribute to the elderly and disabled in the community.



Berteau at a weekly CHEAHP meeting



CHEAHP meeting



Berteau's Christmas Party Motto

How to Contribute

The background of the slide is a photograph of a sunset or sunrise. The sky is filled with large, billowing clouds that are illuminated from below, giving them a warm, orange and yellow glow. The sun is partially visible as a bright, glowing orb behind the clouds on the right side of the frame. The bottom of the image shows the dark, silhouetted tops of various trees and bushes against the lighter sky.

Dear friends of Sante Total,

Mesi Anpil (thank you so much), for your generous donations of time, energy, and money, and your willingness to help! Sante Total is counting on your participation to continue our projects in Haiti.

Why? Because Haiti is still the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere and the recent political turmoil has caused suffering in Jacsonville. Our friends are struggling with inflation, gang violence, and gas, food, and medication shortages. The gangs even forced Gaby to close the Elementary School and threatened to kill the kids if they came to school. Through all of the difficulties, he has persevered, and we are excited that school has reopened and the clinic is done and we are moving forward with furnishings and buying equipment.

Invest with us in Haiti. You will not regret it!

If you would like to donate in someone's honor as a holiday gift, we will send you cards that you can gift to your favorite person.

Please lend us your support this giving season! Together, we can make a difference!

You can donate directly online at www.santetotal.com or send a check to the address listed on our website.

Here's to the hope that someday soon, we will work ourselves out of a job!



\$25 will pay for soap and hygiene stations for 3 families to prevent spreading of cholera and other illnesses



\$50 will feed a family of four for one week, especially important now that food access is limited



\$75 will support the "Center for the Handicapped and Aged program" for a week



\$100 will support a student's education at St. Rose for the year and pay for their school lunches



\$150 will help pay for hospital stays, medications, and so much more!

We're making progress with your generous support. Thank you to our 2023 donors!

Dr. Barbara Weis

Andrew Wallace

Cary and Meredith Kettenring

Hoenes Family Foundation

Philip and Elise Stiles

Kristen and Raymond Sullivan

Liliane P. Floge

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Parishioners of St. Thomas of Villanova

Dr. Carl Mickman

Dr. Nicole DeValle

Dr. Cathlin Milligan

Eric Delss

Special thanks to those who donated on Giving Tuesday!

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Dr. Paul Marquis

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