



SANTE TOTAL
Healthcare for Haiti's Poor

Fall Newsletter 2024



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.

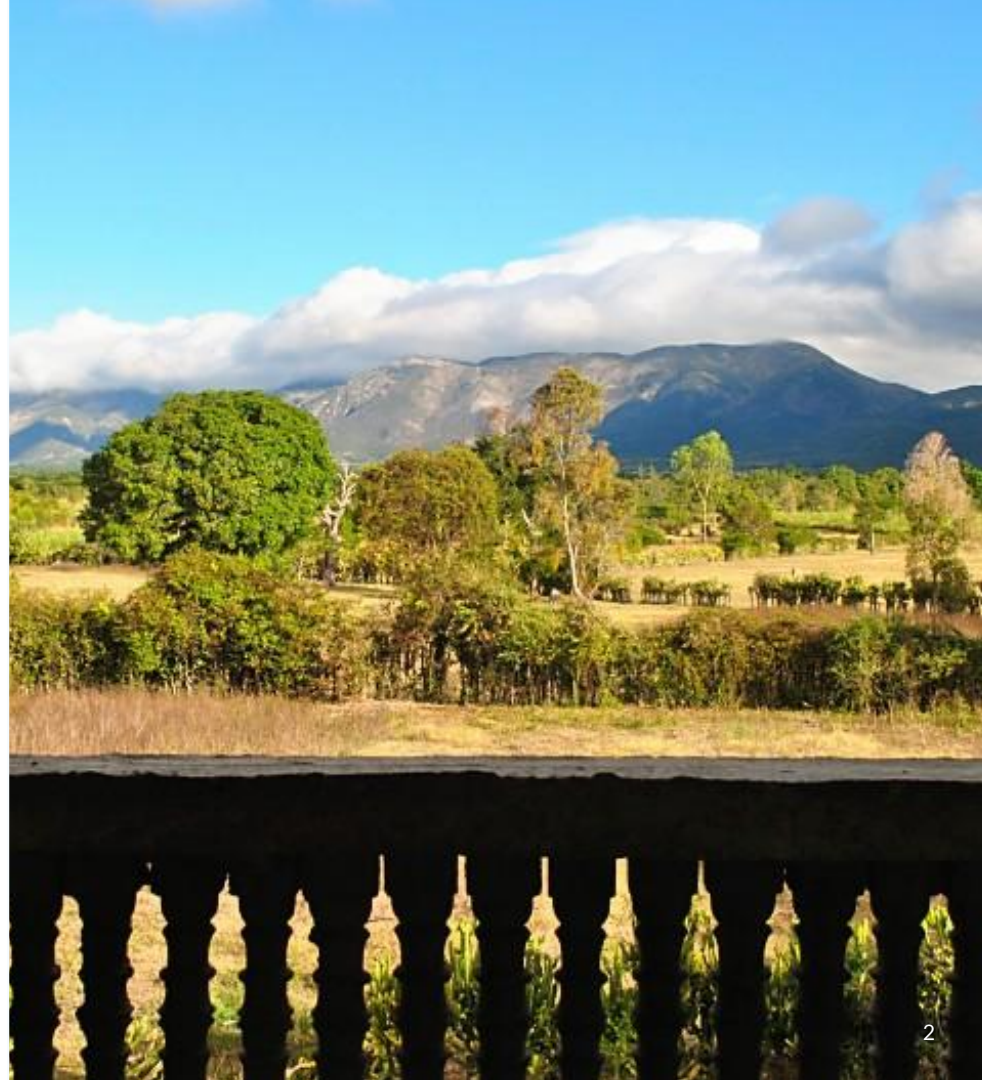
FUTURE MEDICAL TEAM DATES

On hold due to safety concerns

Be a part of the team! Contact us at

santetotal.healthcare@gmail.com

View from Mission House



Dear friends,

We thank you so much for your ongoing support of Sante Total. The situation in Haiti is still difficult despite the arrival of Kenyan soldiers to help keep order. Our Haitian partners, Gaby, Berteau, and so many others, are courageously struggling on to improve their community and to help people despite the terrible conditions.

Fuel is still expensive and scarce, making it difficult to transport food and vital supplies from one part of the country to the other. 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. Progress is slower than we hoped it would be, but Sante Total is doing our best to continue our work in the community. As you'll learn in this newsletter, we have hopes that the clinic will be ready to open this summer. We obtained another School Lunch grant thanks to the ongoing support of St. Thomas of Villanova Parish. Two of the students we have supported have graduated and are working on projects in Jacsonville, the medical student is almost finished and will be ready to start this summer, and the administrative student has one year of college left.

Gaby sends his greeting to all, saying "Hi guys. We still have a lot of problems in Haiti, but we continue to work hard. The gangsters are still in charge in the capital which makes life difficult. There are not enough Kenyans to control the situation, and we need more help. We don't really have a government, and they don't care about the poor people. Anyway, we try to do our best. The kids in school are learning better and the school is getting a good reputation. We hope to have 200 kids in the school this year. We are building a security booth at the gate to the school to make it safer. The problem is the government won't let us start school until October, I don't know why. 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! Please continue to support our efforts to help the conditions in Haiti improve!



Barbara Weis, MD MPHTM

Executive Director, Sante Total

In Memoriam: Dr. Paul Joseph Marquis, MD, Age 77

Dr. Paul Marquis died peacefully at his home on Sept. 24, 2024 at the age of 77. He worked for over 50 years caring for patients young and old in New York, North Carolina, South Dakota, and San Diego, spending most of his career at Ochsner Clinic in New Orleans, LA as a family practice doctor.

[Link to obituary here](#)



Sante Total Team, May 2019

Paul is on right

“The first time I met Dr. Marquis was while I was in medical school. At the time I was deciding between pursuing a career in OB/GYN and Family Medicine. Learning from him and watching him care for patients with such compassion and ease of knowledge truly open my eyes to how impactful a career in Family Medicine could be. I am grateful each day for the career path I chose; in part, due to the wonderful mentorships (both short and long) I had in Family Medicine. Thank you, Dr. Marquis. Sending thoughts and prayers to his lovely family.”

- Nicole DeValle, MD, Family Medicine Physician in Sacramento, CA



Nicole and Paul, September 2018

In Memoriam: Dr. Paul Joseph Marquis, MD, Age 77

Paul and I went on several Sante Total trips to Haiti starting in 2018. After arriving in Port-au-Prince on our first trip together, we ended up sitting next to each other in the back of a van where four of us were squished together in a seat meant for three. It was hot and we were all dripping with sweat because we had to keep the windows closed and there was no AC. I think after the first hour, he commented in a humorous way that his legs were both numb, but he never complained and made the best of it. I was immediately impressed with his energy, kindness and generous spirit. He had a great laugh and a wicked sense of humor. I admired the fact that he took some of the more difficult aspects of the trips in stride: difficult transportation, occasional breakdowns of the water system, sleeping on mattresses on the floor, and the crazy long days. After a long day, the group would play card games, and he was very good at grabbing a spoon when we played “Spoons.” He talked about his love of running, hiking and about his family.

Paul was also an amazing physician. It was often difficult to find experienced physicians to go on trips and having him along was wonderful for me as a pediatrician, because he helped me develop solid plans for the complicated adult patients. He was a calm presence in what could be a very chaotic place and always enjoyed taking the medical students and residents under his wing. He was an incredible teacher and many young physicians he mentored are better doctors now because of him. He also taught me so much! His knowledge of medicine and his dedication to helping all his patients, including those in Haiti, was inspiring. I will miss working with him and will not forget the lasting contributions he has made to the health of patients in Jacksonville.

He will not be forgotten.

Written by Dr. Barbara Weis, MD, MPHTM, Executive Director, Sante Total



Trip to Clinic. Paul second from right



Dr. Marquis second from right, front row

Update on the Political Situation in Haiti

Information adapted from articles from the Washington Post.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Haiti is currently facing a severe crisis due to gang violence, with the U.N. human rights office reporting nearly 4,900 people killed in gang attacks from January to September 2024.
- The country's transitional presidential council recently swore in a new acting prime minister, Alix Didier Fils-Aimé, despite claims from the previous premier that his ouster was illegitimate.
- The escalating violence has forced the main airports in the country to halt all flights, with the U.S. Embassy warning that travel to Haiti is "at your own risk." The Federal Aviation Administration has also prohibited flights from the United States to Haiti due to safety concerns.
- Due to ongoing political instability, Haiti is facing increasing food insecurity and health challenges, including a resurgence of cholera.

Project Updates



Educational Support

School Lunch Program



Boxes of food for school

The school is growing dramatically, and attendance has almost doubled: from 120 students to 200 this year. Gaby says this is because they have developed a good reputation, and parents are choosing to send their children there now.

They have reopened the middle school which was closed several years ago due to a teacher shortage.

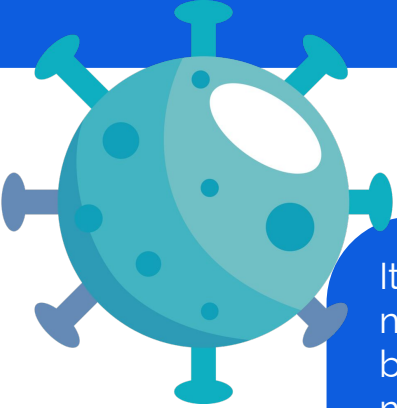
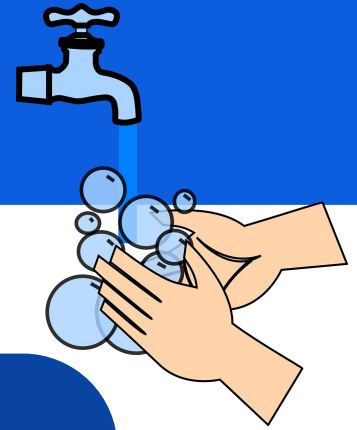
School Solar Panels

The solar panel project for the school has been completed as have the mini libraries for each classroom. Gaby is excited that they will finally have electricity and will be able to use computers!



Group of kids at school

COVID & Cholera Prevention



It is hard to tell how much COVID is around because there isn't much testing available. The vaccine is available, but not many people are willing to get it because they are afraid it will make them sick.

Cholera is on the rise in Port au Prince again, and we are hoping it won't spread to Jacsonville. We may need to launch another cholera prevention program if the numbers start to rise but we hope it can be contained.

Clinic Update

We are hoping that the clinic will be ready to open by July. Almost half the furniture from the grant supported by the Rotary of Ellicott City is finished. The furniture completion was delayed because it was difficult for them to obtain the materials, but it is still moving forward slowly. The microscope, centrifuge, computers, and other necessary items for the clinic are now in the Dominican Republic and BicoVensen, the medical student we have been supporting in the DR, thinks he will be able to transport the equipment to the clinic in the next six months. Gaby has located a local physician who is willing to work at the clinic one day a week and we are hoping to start this as soon as the furniture arrives. Our hope is that there is now a strong incentive to finish the clinic by July since BicoVensen will be done with his medical training. Luckily, Bico also has training in pharmacy and administration which will be extremely helpful to get things up and running.

In the meanwhile, we have continued to support families in Jacksonville who need help with their medical bills and medications.



Current progress on clinic construction



Furniture built from recent grant

Students & Scholarships

Ketteline

has finished her nursing degree and has been working as a nurse at the school. In addition, she provides screening 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

has one more year studying administration at the university and is doing well despite the chaos.

Bicovensen

is in his final year of med school in the DR, which consists of an internship. He is hoping that he can start working one week a month in the clinic starting in July, but he will need to spend a year working in a public health clinic in the Dominican Republic, which is a public service requirement for all who go to medical school there.



Bicovensen

Students & Scholarships: Ben Ben

Myrbensly (BenBen) graduated from pharmacy school on October 8th 2023 but he has not been able to find a job yet. He spent several weeks organizing all the medications and equipment we left in the storeroom in Jacksonville and will hopefully be ready to organize the clinic pharmacy and lab soon.

BenBen said: “Thank you for all you did, all you are doing for me and all you will do for me. You are in my heart.”



BenBen working

Grant from St. Thomas of Villanova Parish for School Lunch Program

We received a large grant from the St. Thomas of Villanova Parish again this year that covers the school lunch program, which has received its delivery of food for the year. We chose to extend the food program through the summer because there is so much food insecurity and the kids will now receive food all year. The food from HaitOne, the organization we work with, 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.

Update from CHEAHP (Centre d'Hebergement des Enfants et Adultes Handicapés de Pignon-*Center for the Handicapped children and Adults of Pignon*)



Christmas Party 2023

- Berteau continues to hold weekly meetings at CHEAHP. Food is more expensive, so we have increased support to \$500 a month.
- He also organized a huge Christmas party which was attended by over 350 people last year and he predicts attendance of 500 this year. Per Berteau: "Here thing still the same. The women are suffering lots of violence... We still working hard to see if we have something change...we live in a dictatorship with no elections for almost 10 years...things still not easy and this year our budget is for 500 people again and ewe need \$10 for each one. Foods, drinks and kits to go home included. The only once a year those people have chance to taste a good life. Many many kids always be there too. I know life is not easy there but if some things you can do I will be appreciate."
- Donations for this project will help us to increase the amount of food we distribute to the elderly and special needs population in the community.



Christmas Party 2023

New Projects: Organizing Pharmacy

- We hired BenBen and Garel, Gaby's son, to clean out the trunks and suitcases of supplies we left in the storage room. Many of the medications expired in 2019, but they were able to salvage the equipment and some of the nonperishable items such as gauze pads, crutches, etc. They worked very hard and they both did an amazing job! We now have a full inventory of everything left in the boxes. It was especially helpful to have BenBen there since he is trained as a pharmacist so knew all the medications. He is also trained in the safe disposal of expired medications so we are thankful that the medications will be disposed of safely!



Expired medication



Storage room before organizing



Storage room after organizing

New Projects: Small Store, School clinic, Medical trip to the Dominican Republic

- Berteau would like to start a small store in Jacsonville to provide easier access to staples like rice, potatoes, flour, pasta, canned mackerel, fruits and vegetables. Right now, many people have to walk an hour each way to the market and shops in Pignon if they run out of food because there is such a shortage of gas and it is so expensive. This is difficult for the older people and takes time away from the time they can spend working in their fields. **We need \$3000 of seed money for this project, so if anyone is interested, please let us know!**
- We are expanding the school health clinic so that it will be stocked with basic supplies the school nurse needs to care for the children such as band-aids, gauze, alcohol, medications for pain and fever, etc.
- Dr. Weis has worked with BicoVensen to organize a new Global Health trip to the Dominican Republic in December. During the time there, we will run a refugee clinic at a large Haitian church in Santiago de los Caballeros for Haitian refugees who often have difficulty accessing the public health clinics in the DR. We are hoping that these clinics will continue once a month with BicoVensen and his colleagues after we leave. Stay tuned for the results!



How to Contribute

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. Through all of the difficulties, the people of Jacsonville have 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.org or send a check to the address listed there or do both!

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



\$50

help feed a family for one week or help pay for soap and hygiene for cholera prevention



\$100

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



\$150

for hospital stays and medications



\$200

to support a student for a year

We're making progress with your generous support. Thank you to our 2024 donors!

Andrew Wallace

Dr. Sergei Robinson

Mike Quigg

Kristen and Raymond Sullivan

Virginia Dixon

Donna Cadwallader

Mark Spencer

Hubert and Pam Doughty

Garry, Greg, and Mindy Hollingsworth

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Unitarian Universalist Church of Rockville

Mark and Renee Matossian

Karl Irikura

Dr. Barbara Weis and Dr. Mark Stiles

Gwen and Tom Rowe

Warren Weis "Happy Birthday to my
sister, Barbara Weis"

Dr. Carl Mickman

Kris Kiefer

Donations in Honor of Dr. Paul Marquis

Thank you!

David Marcello: “In memory of Paul Marquis, who used his talents for the public good.”

Lynn Buffington: “This donation was made by Lynn Buffington and Don Nguyen in memorial to her late husband and Sante volunteer Paul Marquis MD. Thank you.”

Casey Burton: “In remembrance of Dr. Marquis. from Match Group.”

George Alvey: “IN MEMORY OF DR PAUL MARQUIS”

Jake Kupperman: “In loving memory of Paul Joseph Marquis”

Brian Flaxman

Laura Harvell: “In memory of Paul Marquis”

Paula Zeanah: “In honor of Paul Marquis, M. D.”

Michael and Patricia Supergan: “Donation in memory of Paul Marquis”

Karen Downey: “IN MEMORY OF PAUL MARQUIS FROM TELEWELD STREATOR, IL”

Lauren Finn

Lillian Moskin: “In memory of Paul Marquis”

2030 Associates

Lauren LeBon: “In memory of Dr. Paul Marquis”

Victoria Merritt

Angela Keyes

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