

Haiti Summer Service Project 2014: A Personal Report

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Dr. Bacchus-Horan teaching Principle Life Education

Last year, the Haiti Summer Service Project (HSSP) was met by a groundswell of interest among the leaders and the people of Cap-Haitien, Haiti's second-largest city. So, as the liaison for the project on behalf of WFWP USA, founded by Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, I determined that the work that WFWP and I had begun in 2008 to aid the citizens of Haiti, would continue. To be more specific, I wanted to put together a team that could teach abstinence to the youth and Principled Life Education to the adults. This was in addition to our traditional health seminars and mobile medical clinics.

While struggling to find the right volunteers and resources for this year's service project, I met a former mayor of Cap-Haitien who is currently running for mayor again in the upcoming election. Mayor Raphael Adelson just happens to have an office just two miles from my home in Tampa, Florida. This further convinced me that Heaven definitely wanted the Haiti Summer Service Project to continue.



GATHERING THE TEAM

As I reached out to the WFWP chairwomen, to my family and friends, and to the students of the University of South Florida situated near my house and from which many volunteers had come in the past, I realized that many of those who had gone with me to Haiti before would not be able to go this year. Still, with the support of WFWP USA President Angelika Selle, I pushed ahead.



It was at this time that I got a call from Mrs. Caryn Olsson, coordinator of Project Love IQ. She suggested that I call Dr. Richard Panzer, president of Barrytown College and founder of the Relationship Intelligence curriculum, which has been taught extensively in the U.S. I did, and Dr. Panzer graciously offered to not only let us use his materials but said he would like to come to Haiti for a few days and teach the educators and students himself. I was moved deeply by such a blessing from God.

At the same time, through Mrs. Gudrun Gavin, I connected with Mrs. Rose Gbadamassi, who had participated in the HSSP in 2011. Rose is a WFWP member in Minnesota and has a nonprofit organization called the Haitian Community of Minnesota. A health educator herself in Minnesota, she volunteered to oversee the health seminars this year. Next, my good friend, Dr. Dawn Bacchus-Horan, the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) national leader of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the WFWP leader there, offered to present the Principled Life Education for the ministers and families. And last but certainly not least, Mrs. Karrin Brady, of WFWP Maryland, volunteered to travel with me and offer her best to the Haitian people. Mrs. Brady heads a program in Maryland called Women of Wonder, a networking group.

RESOURCES FROM HEAVEN

As the volunteers began appearing, I turned my attention back to the need for supplies. We have been very fortunate each year that hospitals, clinics, doctors, and nurses in the U.S. have donated medical equipment and medicines to our service project. These resources are then given to the volunteer doctors and nurses from Haiti who help us care for the people in need.

This year, however, the donations were few and far between. With only a couple of weeks to go, we had fallen far short of our goals for food and other things for the participants in our seminars; and also our goals for medical supplies to take with us. It was at this juncture that several WFWP chairwomen rolled up their sleeves and went the extra mile in supporting the work. Minister Fannie Smith, WFWP coordinator in Illinois and new U.S. project coordinator for the WFWP Schools of Africa program, came all the way from Chicago to Tampa, and worked the phones to gather the much-needed contributions. She gave much appreciated moral support to all of us volunteers. Mrs. Linda Perry, Mrs. Susan Edwards, Mrs. Laura Hayashi of Miami, Mrs. Irmgard Baynes, Mrs. Laura Ortiz, Mrs. Shirley Chimes, and chairwomen

from across the nation contributed their time and energy to make it happen. In the end, all the monetary and substantial resources we had hoped for had arrived. We thanked God profusely!



JOURNEY TO CAP-HAITIEN

As it was not possible to meet in the States to journey to Haiti, our team of volunteers rendezvoused in Haiti's capital of Port-au-Prince on Saturday, June 21 to begin the work. There we were greeted by Mrs. Joanne Pierre-Severe, the Cap-Haitien WFWP leader, who had traveled down from Cap-Haitien to meet us.

Together we rode on a bus to Cap-Haitien, which is located on the northern, Atlantic Ocean coast. It was a wonderful trip. The Haitian countryside was fascinating for all of us: breathtaking mountain vistas, mango and banana trees, and a large beautiful blue sky. We arrived in Cap-Haitien that night and went directly to Mayor Adelson's house, as we had organized with him to stay there for the week. There we met the mayor and the local WFWP members, who had prepared a feast of local Haitian cuisine. After a sumptuous meal, we had a short meeting to prepare for the upcoming activities.

THE HSSP7 BEGINS

We attended Sunday worship service at the Eglise Evangelique Apostolique (Evangelical Apostolic Church), where later Dr. Panzer would be presenting the Relationship Intelligence curriculum. After a wonderful sermon by the pastor, we traveled to the Faculté De Droit (Law School). There Dr. Panzer spoke to 80 teachers of all grade levels.

The response was great, as the participants asked many pertinent questions and wanted to learn more. Dr. Panzer had brought many booklets and materials, all of which were received but were still not enough. Two of the teachers agreed to take responsibility to translate the curriculum into French. Dr. Panzer gave them each the Love IQ PowerPoint on a CD. He also downloaded the curriculum to many of their flash drives. All in all, it went well and they look forward to more developments. Mayor Adelson was present for the entire seminar.

DAY TWO WITH DR. PANZER

The meeting with the law students was just a warm-up. The next day, Monday, June 23, our team traveled to the Eglise Evangelique Apostolique City du Peuple, a church venue where Dr. Panzer was able to meet with and teach 174 students and parents the Love IQ. WFWP provided a nutritious lunch for all.

That afternoon, we visited the Foundation St. Jean, a hall where we could meet with the ministers' alliance of northern Haiti. The gathering of 54 clergy was organized by Rev. Jean Pheler Chery. The

alliance is known as the Association Des Pasteurs Evangeliques D' Haiti pour la Predication Sans Frontiere Department Du Nord. Dr. Panzer used graphics and charts to emphasize the importance of life choices, which are vital to all ages, not just the youth.

As there were some young teachers present, Dr. Panzer called one young man and one young lady to come up and role-play the proper way to relate to various situations men and women can find themselves in. Everyone learned that abstinence is the only certain choice to avoid pregnancy, AIDS, STDs, and regrets before one is married.

One recurring question from both youth and teachers was regarding how to deal with the media and its promiscuous influence on Haitians. Dr. Panzer emphasized individual responsibility to avoid falling into reckless relationships. This was Dr. Panzer's last day before heading back home to the U.S. Everyone thanked him wholeheartedly for the excellent insights and education he shared.



DR. DAWN BACCHUS-HORAN

On the third and fourth days, we were treated to the Principled Life Education lectures of Dr. Dawn Bacchus-Horan. Dr. Bacchus-Horan spoke to an audience of 377 people and shared that God created this world with purpose and vision. She explained that each and every person is a unique aspect of God and therefore has infinite value. She also explained that humankind disobeyed God and followed a self-centered plan, thus destroying God's dream for an ideal world. She told us about the heart of God, and how God's heart was broken by the first man and woman.

The Bible says that human beings grieved God to his heart. Dr. Bacchus-Horan also explained that the solution to all this lies in building a relationship with God and comforting His heart by doing the right thing in our lives. She went on to explain many deep concepts about God and his providential work in history. The participants were deeply touched by her knowledgeable presentation and requested that she come back and teach a larger seminar.

HEALTH SEMINARS AND MOBILE MEDICAL CLINICS

Mrs. Gbadamassi taught midwifery. She also presented a PowerPoint on the "Health and Wellness of the Mature Woman" to 160 patients who were waiting to see a doctor. She gave massage therapy to many of the people there. Mrs. Brady gave a presentation on Lamaze, a technique to help women in the birthing process. Volunteer doctors and nurses from the local area treated 200 patients.

THE ROAD HOME

Our team left Cap-Haitien on Sunday, June 29. We traveled back to Port-au-Prince to catch our flights back to the States. While there, we met with FFWPU Haiti national leader Rev. Theodule Paul and his wife Fujiko. Afterward, Mr. Martin, a lawyer I had met previously while traveling to Miami a few months ago, invited our team to dinner. He also gave us a small tour of Petionville, where the wealthy Haitians live. It was eye-opening. It was like any upper-class neighborhood in the U.S. It was such a contrast to the living conditions in Cap-Haitien and most of the rest of Haiti. Finally, Mr. Martin drove the four of us ladies to the Port-au-Prince airport.



CONCLUSION

I absolutely believe that God placed former Cap-Haitien Mayor Raphael Adelson (and the possible future mayor) in our path. He was instrumental in many ways in making this year's project such a success. Also, our WFP Cap-Haitien leader, Mrs. Joanne Pierre-Severe, and the local WFP members did a fantastic job of preparing everything and ensuring that the program ran smoothly. Once again, I owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Richard Panzer, Dr. Dawn Bacchus-Horan, Mrs. Rose Gbadamassi, and Mrs. Karrin Brady—our HSSP7 team—for their love and sacrificial offering in coming to Haiti this year. Also, I thank WFP USA President Mrs. Angelika Selle for encouraging and standing behind our efforts to continue the project. Altogether, my dream to help my native country is becoming a reality, thanks be to God!