



HAITI FOUNDATION OF HOPE

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MISSION STATEMENT

Haiti Foundation of Hope is a Christian organization addressing the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the people in the impoverished and underserved rural communities of northern Haiti.



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A PATIENT SHARES HIS GIFT OF JOY

Haitians always overwhelm me with their joy and appreciation of life. They laugh often, even when they are desperately trying to find food or clothing for their children. This sense of living often seems so foreign to me and I watch them constantly trying to understand how they can do this.

Fresnel was my second patient of the week. He was 23 years old and weighed 76 pounds. He came to the clinic from far away, riding on a donkey, with his elderly mother walking in front of him. Remarkably he had seen several physicians and been to hospitals to figure out the cause of his massive weight loss over the past three years. No one had been able to identify what disease was afflicting him.

I spent a long time with him, reviewing his records and trying to understand what disease process was slowing ending his life. I was at a loss, and had sent him to check his sugar for diabetes before he was to leave. It turned out his sugar was too high to read, and he had diabetes. We were thrilled to be able to treat him, and possibly give him life again. We sent him away until we could find insulin in a nearby town. He was the happiest person I'd ever seen, with a total sense of relief.

Unfortunately, it wasn't quite that easy and there were many obstacles to treating him. First, he lives in Haiti where very few take insulin and therefore education is a huge and difficult thing. Second, his vision was so poor from the diabetes that he couldn't draw up his own insulin. Third, he was poor and lived with 10 other people, all of whom barely had enough food to eat daily. Fourth, we finally figured out it wasn't just diabetes he had, but chronic pancreatitis, meaning he also needed pancreatic enzymes to live. These are expensive. Finally, Fresnel had massive abdominal pain after he ate, leaving him writhing in pain for at least an hour until it subsided to a low level of pain. I often found him on his stomach in the "ICU" with tears running down his face while moaning. His pain was horrible and we only had Tylenol to treat it.

Yet, despite all of this, Fresnel was the kindest, friendliest, and most thoughtful person I had met. He was often found in the ICU helping out other patients and their families. He walked around the clinic (he was with us for six days so we all knew him well)



Dr. Janan Markee and Fresnel.

trying to find ways to help. He always had a giving attitude with a huge smile. Having him around was a blessing.

So despite a life that was horribly difficult and in our eyes rather unfair, Fresnel had the gift of joy and was able to share it with us Americans and make our lives better.

Life is full of uncertainty in Haiti and here in Portland, Oregon. Patients come to me with cancer, diabetes, and multiple other problems, but the human spirit keeps them going. Haitians seem to have the skill of focusing on the good, not the bad. This inspires me and gives me a foundation of how I want to live my life and how I want to share with those around me.

By Dr. Janan Markee, medical team volunteer with Haiti Foundation of Hope.

EARTHQUAKE UPDATE:

It's been nearly six months since a devastating earthquake hit Haiti and the needs are still great. Here is a partial list of what Haiti Foundation of Hope is doing in the aftermath of the January 12 quake:

- Disaster relief funds were spent on food that was distributed in Port-au-Prince and Terre Blanche.
- Funds also went to vehicle expenses including fuel to transport live-saving supplies such as food and medicine.

- Funds were given to pastors to help those most in need immediately after the quake.
- A new covered waiting area has been constructed outside the Clinic of Hope to help with the increased number of patients.
- Two medical teams have been sent to the clinic and a third team is preparing to go this month.
- We are looking to the future to help address the needs of food and clean water. We have received a matching grant of \$15,000 from Medical Teams International to build new wells in three villages and to distribute seeds and fertilizer to farmers.



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Community Health

The community health volunteers in the Terre Blanche area are staying busy these days.

Since the diarrhea reduction program began last July, with the generous support of our donors and the SG Foundation, much progress has been made. The **27 volunteer health workers** and the **3 supervisors** have had regular training seminars, **visited 1,676 homes**, and held **community meetings for 2,548 people**. In addition to teaching families how to prevent and treat children's diarrhea at home, they have **referred 109 sick children** to the clinic for treatment. There has been so much community interest and participation that the funds for latrine

construction are building twice as many as originally planned. In December, the health workers will undertake a follow up survey to determine the impact of their work on the rate of diarrhea and the improvement in hygiene practices.

Earlier this year the program leaders, Dr. Avril and Mme. Vilia, were presented with a new motorcycle to help them travel to the villages for their community health work.

During their first visit with the motorcycle, they were able to deliver **82 vaccinations** to the village of Finel and **79 vaccinations** to Dubedou, while holding community meetings and providing family planning materials at the same time.

Plans are being made for the next three years and those involved in the community health program have decided to tackle the problems of maternal deaths and malnutrition.

They have designed a program to visit pregnant women for prenatal care, train traditional birth attendants in safer birth practices, provide emergency transportation in complicated labor, increase birth spacing, increase breast-feeding, provide micro nutrients and deworming to children, identify and treat malnourished kids, and increase the quantity and quality of food at home.

Stay tuned to hear more about this program and how you can be involved.

If you want to be removed from this mailing list or want to receive this newsletter by e-mail, call 360-993-0974 or e-mail givehope@haitifoundationofhope.org.



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